

Pleasant Activities List

Try different activities to distract yourself from pain and improve your mood.

- Go fishing
- Text, email, or call friends/family
- Get your hair cut or nails done
- Take a walk, exercise, or stretch
- Do yard work or gardening
- Read a book or magazine
- Watch or participate in sports
- Go to the park
- Organize
- Woodwork
- Surf the internet
- Look into classes you'd like to take
- Plan a trip
- Draw or paint
- Walk your dog/play with your pet
- Listen to music
- Watch a movie or your favorite show
- Take or edit pictures

- Repair or fix something
- Start or finish a project
- Go to the pool or beach
- Plan something nice for others
- Go for a drive
- Decorate or re-arrange your home
- Knit or sew
- Sing or play an instrument
- Do hobbies (e.g., building models)
- Visit with family or friends
- Enjoy a hot bath or shower
- Chat with your neighbor
- Write or journal
- Play games or do puzzles
- Go shopping
- Meditate or pray
- Other activities/ideas?

Adapted with permission from K.M. Phillips, Ph.D.

Pleasant Activities Schedule

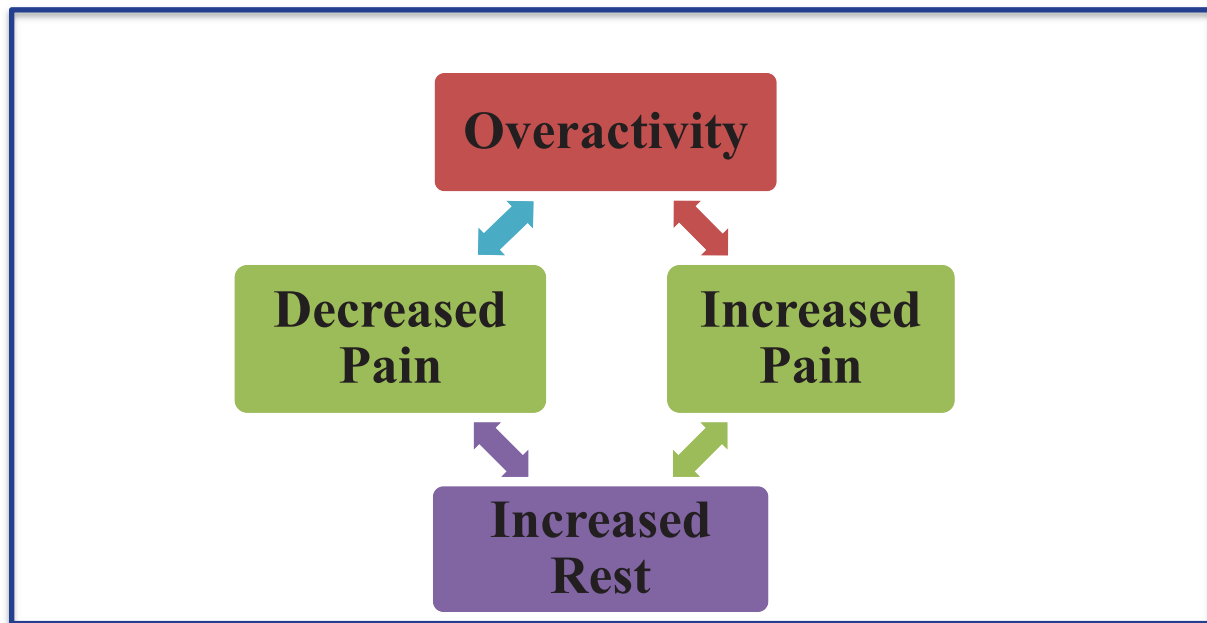
Choose at least two pleasant activities that can be scheduled over the course of the week. Place an 'X' to schedule and circle the X when completed.

Activity	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Gardening		X		X		X	

Remember to use proper pacing when engaging in activities.

Pacing Activities

Some people are prone to “pushing through” pain in the name of accomplishing a task and will not stop until it is complete, while others may be preoccupied with fears about harming themselves and avoid activity altogether. Sometimes those with chronic pain use a “good pain day” when they are feeling better to try to complete one or more rigorous activities that have fallen by the wayside. The next day, they wake up with increased pain levels and rest for a day or more to recover. This **Overactivity Cycle** may happen on a recurring basis and can lead to negative consequences such as increased stress and anxiety, decreased efficiency, lowered self-esteem, and avoidance of any activity.



Engaging in a moderate, safe level of activity on a regular basis is how to avoid this cycle. Using the skill of pacing, where time is the guide for activity engagement, can be a helpful strategy. Pacing is about balancing activities, planning ahead, and working “smarter not harder.”

How To Pace

Estimate how long you can safely do one of your regular activities (e.g., yardwork, dishes) without causing a severe pain flare and set that minus one minute as your "active" goal time for the activity. Approximate the amount of "resting" time you will need in order to safely resume activity or continue your day.

Remember

Approximated times may need to be adjusted after pacing begins. Stick to time-based pacing goals whether you are having a 'good' or a 'bad' pain day to avoid the crash-burn/over-activity cycle or the avoidance/inactivity cycle. Moderation is the key!

Spread out activities during the week and be reasonable with the schedule so you can succeed.

Use the table below to record how you pace activities this week. Use the sample as your guide, where each period of activity and rest equals one cycle. In the examples provided, 10 / 15 (1) indicates *working for 10 minutes, resting for 15 minutes for one cycle* of pacing.

	Sample	Activity 1	Activity 2	Activity 3
Activity	Yard Work			
Active Goal	10 minutes			
Rest Goal	15 minutes			
Day 1	10 / 15 (1)			
Day 2	10 / 15 (2)			
Day 3	10 / 15 (3)			
Day 4	15 / 15 (1)			
Day 5	15 / 15 (2)			
Day 6	15 / 15 (3)			
Day 7	20 / 15 (2)			