

Chores at Home

How to Conserve Your Energy

If your health has changed, ask your doctor when it's safe to do these chores again. If a job is too hard, ask for help or hire a professional.

Cleaning

- Plan your cleaning schedule. Spread heavy and light tasks throughout the day and week. Don't try to clean the whole house in one day.
- Store cleaning supplies on each level of your home, or in each room where they are needed. (For example, each bathroom might have its own set of cleaning supplies). This way, you won't have to carry items with you.
- If you must carry items, put together a small cleaning kit that's easy to carry.
- Use a lightweight vacuum. Walk slowly as you work. Avoid jerky movements.
- Use long-handled dusters, mops, dustpans and other items. Try a long-handled sponge to clean hard-to-reach bathroom surfaces.
- Wipe down the shower or bathtub each time you take a bath or shower.
- Pace yourself. Take rests when you need to. Use both hands to work, if you are able.

Making the bed

- Use a lightweight bed cover.
- Straighten the covers as much as you can **before** you get out of bed.
- Move the bed away from the wall, so you can get to both sides.
- To avoid bending, raise the height of the bed by placing blocks of wood under each leg.
- Make one side of the bed before moving to the other side. This way, you won't have to walk back and forth.

Ironing

- Buy permanent-press clothing. This requires little or no ironing.
- Take clothes out of the dryer as soon as the cycle is done, so the clothes don't wrinkle. If too much time has passed, place a damp towel in the dryer and run the dryer again for a few minutes. This helps get the wrinkles out.
- Sit while ironing. Adjust the ironing board to a comfortable height.
- Use long, smooth, circular motions.

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Laundry

- Find an easy way to carry your laundry to the washer and dryer, so you make as few trips as possible.
 - **If laundry room is on the same floor:** Use a rolling cart or a walker basket.
 - **If laundry room is on a different floor:** Use a cloth or plastic bag with handles. Taking a laundry basket up or down stairs can tire you out, block your vision and affect your balance.
 - **If laundry room is in the basement:** Plan ahead to avoid extra trips up and down the stairs. You might bring other work with you, so you can stay in the basement until the laundry is done. Bring a cordless phone. Have a chair ready so you can sit to work or rest.
- Store often-used items within easy reach.
- Do laundry more often to avoid large loads.
- Sit in a chair or use a reacher to load laundry into the washer or dryer. This way, you won't have to bend as much.
- When folding laundry, sit at a table with your arms supported.
- If you use a clothesline, adjust it to a comfortable height. (Avoid working with your arms overhead.) Use a clothespin holder that slides along the clothesline.