

HOW TO SET A BASELINE

It is important to work out your tolerance level or time for each activity or exercise in your plan. The tolerance is how much of the activity or exercise you can do without overdoing it.

Using walking as an example:

- Choose the best time of the day for you to walk and select a good place to start e.g. up and down the garden path.
- Walk at your own pace for a sensible period of time that you can manage today. You may have to make an educated guess at this stage, but use your knowledge and experience to work out how much is manageable for you.
- If you know you have a tendency to overdo things at times, then recognise this, deliberately do less of the activity than you would normally.
- Record the amount of time, or distance you have walked.
- Repeat the experience the following day, walking as much as you feel you can manage that day.
- Record the amount of time, or distance you have walked.
- Repeat the experience again on the third day, using the same principles, and record the outcome.
- Average the scores and divide by two to find the baseline (or start point) for walking.

Worked Example

Record Sheet	Activity = Walking
Day one	5 mins
Day two	3 mins
Day three	4 mins
Total	12 mins
Average (divide by 3)	4 mins
Baseline (divide average by 2)	2 mins
Day four	2 mins

Once you have worked out your baseline follow it for at least three days. Then decide how much and how often you would like to progress it.

The baseline is very important. Once you have worked it out it will enable you to start the activity, or exercise, at a level which is manageable for you.

Evaluate

Stick to your baseline each day and make yourself a plan about how to move your baseline up (slowly).

After several days using the plan, look back and decide if changes need to be made. It is often helpful to identify any barriers that prevent you from sticking to your programme; once identified you can start tackling, or overcoming these barriers.

Pacing up Exercise and Activity

There may be various activities which you wish to increase, such as your exercise programme, activities around the house like ironing or gardening, shopping etc.

Work out your baseline for each activity you wish to increase. Remember try not to tackle too many things at once.

Daily Target

Set daily targets or goals by which to increase your chosen activities. Do not do more than your target for that day, even if it feels like a good day. This levels out your activity cycling, and helps you begin to plan your activities better.



Re-evaluate at Regular Intervals

Carry out your planned programme for the next week, and at the end of the week look back at the record and set targets for the coming week.

Record

Keep a daily record of achievements. This will help you monitor your progress and adjust as necessary.