



U.S. PAIN
FOUNDATION

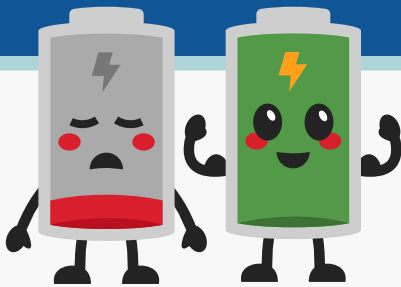
WHAT IS PACING?



Pacing means taking breaks and not doing too much at once.

Instead of using all your energy at once and feeling worse later, pacing helps you spread out your energy so you can do more and feel better.

Your body is kind of like a phone battery. If you use all your energy at once, your battery can run low and need extra time to recharge. Pacing helps you save some battery so you can keep doing the things you enjoy throughout the day.



Why is Pacing Important?

- Helps reduce pain flare-ups
- Gives you more control over your day
- Helps you save energy for things you enjoy
- Helps your body and brain stay calmer

Pacing means listening to your body and learning when to **keep going, slow down, or stop**.

Remember: Taking breaks is NOT being lazy. Breaks help your body recharge so you can do more later.

Tips for How to Pace!

How to Pace Your Day

- Break big tasks into smaller steps
- Take breaks **BEFORE** you feel super tired
- Switch between easier and harder activities
- Plan your day so you don't do everything at once
- Save some energy for fun things too!

School

- Do homework for 20–30 minutes, then take a short break
- Tackle your hardest assignment first
- Switch between subjects
(math → reading → break)

Activities & Sports

- Take breaks if your body starts hurting
- Start slower before going full speed
- Hydrate, snack, and give your body the fuel it needs

Social Events & Fun

- Hang out for a set amount of time, then rest
- Take quiet breaks throughout busy events or parties
- Pick activities that match your energy level that day

Some days you may be able to do more. Other days your body may need extra rest—and that's OK.

Pacing Zones: Red, Yellow, Green



RED ZONE (STOP & REST)

Your body needs a big break now.

How it might feel:

- Strong pain or discomfort
- Very tired or worn out
- Dizzy, upset, or overwhelmed

Examples:

- Your pain is getting worse or you can't focus
- Your body hurts and feels weak
- Everything feels too loud or stressful

What to do:

- Stop what you are doing
- Sit or lie down
- Ask for help if needed



YELLOW ZONE (SLOW DOWN)

Your body is giving you a warning.

How it might feel:

- Starting to feel more pain
- Getting tired
- Harder to focus

Examples:

- Your focus and energy are fading
- You're starting to feel stiff or sore
- You're starting to feel drained

What to do:

- Pause for a short break
- Slow down what you're doing
- Stretch, snack, hydrate, and recharge



GREEN ZONE (KEEP GOING)

Your body is keeping up with what you're doing.

How it might feel:

- Comfortable or low pain
- Good energy
- Focused and calm

Examples:

- You're able to focus
- Your body feels OK and you have energy
- You feel relaxed and happy

What to do:

- Keep going, but don't overdo it
- Take planned breaks before you get tired
- Keep listening to your body



REMEMBER:

- It's better to take breaks early than to keep pushing until you crash.
- Everyone's body gives different clues. Learning what your body needs takes practice.
- You know your body best. Pay attention to it and practice pacing to help you stay in control!