

# Tips to Conserve Energy



* Dansereau, D. Physical Therapy Coach. 2012. Accessed: March 25, 2013. <http://www.my-physical-therapy-coach.com/exercise-and-myasthenia-gravis-mg.html>
* Myasthenia Gravis Foundation of America . 2010, Accessed: March 25, 2013. <http://www.myasthenia.org.au/html/lifestyle.htm>l

References

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* Myasthenia Gravis Foundation of America [www.myasthenia.org](http://www.myasthenia.org)
* Muscular Dystrophy Foundation

<http://mda.org/disease/myasthenia-gravis>

* UNC Department of Neurology

<http://www.med.unc.edu/neurology/divisions/myasthenia-gravis-1>

* North Carolina Support Groups <http://www.myasthenia.org/LivingwithMG/MGFAChapters/Carolinas/SupportGroups.aspx>

## Resources for MG Patients

#### **Use grab bars, shower/bath chairs when bathing**

#### **Perform grooming activities sitting down (styling hair, brushing teeth)**

#### **Eat smaller meals more frequently to avoid fatigue of chewing/swallowing**

#### **Spread out chores into smaller tasks, avoid performing all in 1 day.**

#### **Avoid using strong chemicals that can aggravate symptoms.**

#### **Plan daily outings to avoid unnecessary trips.**

#### **Wear comfortable clothes and shoes when shopping**

#### **Shop in air conditioned stores and stores with places to rest if needed**

#### **Use public transportation and accept help from others.**

#### **Use assistive devices for prolonged activity and/or in the community for safety.**

Myasthenia Gravis

### Decrease fatigue and Improve Endurance to achieve daily activities

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Living a Healthy, Active Lifestyle

***There are many factors that can exacerbate symptoms of MG. When choosing daily activities these triggers should be avoided as much as possible:***

* **Stress**
* **Infections**
* **Missed or Excessive Medication**
* **Lack of Sleep**
* **Surgery**
* **Pregnancy**
* **Raised core temperature**
* **Excessive Heat**
* **Excessive Exercise and Overexertion**

## **Symptom Triggers of Myasthenia Gravis:**

Myasthenia Gravis is a chronic autoimmune disorder affecting neuromuscular transmission causing fluctuating weakness of voluntary muscle groups. Fatigue and overexertion are common issues “Myasthenics” face. However, maintaining a healthy level of activity is important to avoid risk factors for other diseases and to sustain current level of endurance.

All recommendations given by your physician should be followed well as taking prescriptions as directed. Energy conservation techniques should be used to reduce fatigue for a planned exercise/activity. To give patients tips to conserve energy, physical therapist, Dierdra Ricks, developed the acronym, **PACE**:

* **P**eak dosage, planning daily activities
* **A**dapt home, adequate rest, assistive equipment, ask for help
* **C**onserve energy, check-ups with doctor, cool temperatures
* **E**motional stability, Exercise in moderation, Eliminate unnecessary tasks

If approved by your health care provider, routine exercise can be performed safely with simple modifications. First, avoid factors such as the ones listed to the right to avoid exacerbation of MG symptoms that may increase fatigue.

Prior to beginning exercise, make sure your body is properly hydrated. Use exercise variation by alternating muscle groups such as beginning with the arms and then switching to trunk or leg exercises to avoid overexertion of one muscle group. Low repetitions of resistive weight exercises should also be performed.

Aerobic exercise should be low intensity with careful attention to fatigue. Always listen to your body. If symptoms of fatigue begin (muscle fatigue or shortness of breath): rest for 15-minutes. If symptoms do not resolve, exercise should be discontinued. Once post-exercise, if you are too exhausted to perform daily activities, the exercise intensity was too high. Consider decreasing intensity for your next session. If experiencing overexertion, get adequate rest and use ice as needed for any painful muscles.

# Myasthenia Gravis (MG) & Fatigue