

Energy Conservation

There are many environmental triggers and stimuli that can contribute to post-exertional malaise (PEM) and prolong recovery from a crash/relapse.

- When you are in a crash/flare-up, reduce all energy demands to allow your body to recharge.
- When you are not in a crash, it is important to prioritize your energy for what is most important.

Here are some tips for saving energy, reducing symptoms of PEM, and recharging your body:

Physical Activity	
Exertion	Use a disability placard
	Use a wheelchair or mobility aids or devices
	Sit down while showering
	Ask others for help
	Learn to say "no"
	Keep essential items nearby
	Put chairs throughout your living environment to sit and rest
	Take rest breaks when talking
	Use joint braces
	Prioritize and plan movements
Orthostatic	Reduce time in upright positions
	Lie down frequently
	Elevate legs frequently
	Increase fluid intake
	Increase sodium intake (first, check with your medical provider)
	Increase electrolyte intake
Physiological	Wear compression clothing when upright (thigh-high or abdominal are most helpful)
	Body temperature may fluctuate, have layers to put on and take off
	Use cold packs on neck or other body parts to reduce overheating

Emotional	
	Minimize emotionally triggering stimuli
	Positive & negative emotions use energy
	Avoid emotionally charged interactions, conversations, or media
	Use calming techniques
	Observe your breathing
	Give yourself permission to rest

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Cognitive/Brain Activity	
	Prioritize & plan cognitive efforts
	Limit reading, speaking, texting, watching media (computer, TV, phone, screentime)
	Avoid making big decisions in a crash
	Reduce or shorten periods of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problem solving • Concentrating • Multitasking

Sensory and Environmental Stimuli	
Sight/Visual	Eye mask
	Tinted lenses
	Hat with visor
	Dim electronics
	Blue light glasses
Sound	Earplugs
	Noise-canceling headphones
	Noise machines
Touch	Loose clothing
	Minimize abrasive linens and bedding
	Weighted blankets (deep pressure can be soothing for some)
	Reduce contact with chemical products (e.g., hygiene or cleaning products)
	Rest in comfortable positions that help you relax
	Use joint braces or other supports when resting
Odor	Minimize cooking odors
	Avoid chemical odors
	Reduce environmental odors (candles, perfumes, etc.)
	Minimize chemical products

For more ideas for managing your symptoms, check out the [PEM Crash Survival Guide](#).