Pacing Upright Activity

Many people with long COVID, ME/CFS, and dysautonomia have decreased blood flow to the brain when they are in upright positions (sitting, standing, walking). This is called orthostatic intolerance or OI.

If you have symptoms of orthostatic intolerance, then you will benefit from pacing your upright activity to ensure that you get enough blood to your brain throughout the day.

### Orthostatic Intolerance

| When transitioning from lying down to sitting or standing, gravity exerts a force that decreases blood flow to the brain | Normally, your body can quickly adjust to ensure that enough blood gets pumped to your heart and brain | When this fails to happen, you experience symptoms of orthostatic intolerance |

### Common symptoms of orthostatic intolerance

- Lightheadedness
- Dizziness
- Fatigue
- Slowed cognitive processing
- Anxiousness
- Blood pressure change
- Weakness
- Numbness
- Fullness
- Discomfort
- Headache
- Sensory sensitivity
- Chest discomfort
- Heart rate change
- Breathlessness
- GI symptoms
- Tingling

### Types

- Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia (POTS)
- Orthostatic Hypotension (OH)
- Neurally Mediated Hypotension (NMH)

When you notice symptoms of orthostatic intolerance:
- Lie down
- Elevate legs above the level of your heart
- Wear compression clothing
- Use cold packs on abdomen, neck, or legs
- Increase intake of sodium, electrolytes, and water (if approved by your medical provider)

For More Information: Bateman Horne Center Orthostatic Intolerance Handout