

Respecting New Limits

Respecting new limits with a chronic illness requires acknowledging the changes in your body and adjusting your life accordingly. Sometimes it's easier to adjust your physical self rather than your mental self. You also need to set boundaries, be kind to yourself, and find ways to adapt and flourish within those limitations. It will take time and be a process of self-discovery and learning to prioritise your well-being, which can be challenging.

Ways to do this include:

1. Acknowledge and accept your limitations:

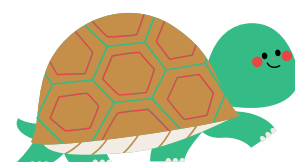
- **It's okay to grieve the loss of your former self.**
- **Identify your new normal.** Recognise what activities you can still do and what require modifications or assistance.
- **Prioritise tasks.** Create a daily checklist and rank tasks by priority, focusing on what's most important and letting go of less essential ones when needed.
- **Listen to your body.** Pay attention to pain signals and fatigue, and adjust your activities accordingly.

2. Set boundaries and communicate them:

- **Say no (and be okay with it).** For some of us, saying no is not in our vocabulary. It's crucial to learn to say no to activities that will push you beyond your limits, even if it means disappointing others
- **Be honest about your limitations:** Share your boundaries with friends, family, and colleagues, and explain why certain limits are necessary.
- **Communicate your needs:** Don't be afraid to ask for help when you need it.

3. Adapt and find creative solutions:

- **Modify activities:** Find alternative ways to participate in activities you enjoy, such as using assistive devices or breaking tasks into smaller steps.
- **Seek support:** Connect with support groups or online communities for people with chronic illnesses.
- **Explore new hobbies:** Discover new activities that fit within your energy envelope.



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4. Manage stress and prioritise mental health:

- **Practice mindfulness and relaxation techniques:** Meditation, deep breathing, and yoga can help manage stress and improve overall well-being.
- **Seek professional support.** If you're struggling with anxiety or depression, consider seeking therapy or counselling.

5. Advocate for yourself:

- **Become your own advocate.** Learn about your condition and the available treatments, and don't hesitate to seek second opinions.
- **Communicate with your healthcare team.** Work closely with your doctor to develop a management plan that works for you.

6. Focus on what you can control:

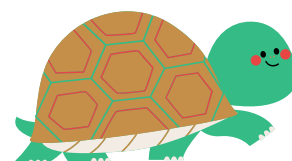
- **Focus on your strengths:** Identify your remaining abilities and focus on what you can do.
- **Find joy in small things:** Appreciate the simple pleasures in life and find ways to create positive experiences.

By acknowledging your limitations, setting boundaries, adapting your lifestyle, and prioritising your well-being, you can learn to live a fulfilling life with chronic illness.

This information sheet was created from Google's AI overview, which used a range of open-use sources including Better Health Channel (Victorian Government), Emerge Australia and Johnson & Johnson:

<https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/servicesandsupport/managing-long-term-illness-and-chronic-conditions#:~:text=If%20you%20have%20a%20long,relieve%20or%20manage%20your%20symptoms.>
<https://emerge.org.au/adjusting-to-living-with-a-chronic-illness/#:~:text=Be%20kind%20to%20yourself,find%20meditation%20or%20mindfulness%20helpful.>
<https://www.jnj.com/health-and-wellness/6-resilience-tips-for-living-a-better-life-with-a-chronic-illness#:~:text=Give%20yourself%20permission%20to%20let,he%20feels%20up%20to%20more.>

This factsheet is part of our Club Tortoise program for pacing with energy-limiting conditions.



For more information or help managing your condition:

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