

What is a setback?

A setback or pain flare up may disrupt your daily routine or activities and last for a few days to several weeks. It can often be due to a severe increase in pain or severe tiredness or other reasons. A setback stops or limits many activities and can make you feel down, disappointed or frustrated.

What could trigger a setback?

Setbacks can be caused by many factors such as feeling very low, having a virus infection, family illness, crisis with a child or elderly relative, working overtime or going on holiday, worry over debts.

An example of a setback Stefan had:

Stefan found these issues were linked to his latest setback.

- My tooth pain with infection
- Getting angry with my brother, John.
- Sleep problems, waking hourly
- Fallen out with the neighbours
- Worrying about Angela, my sister who drinks too much alcohol and who will look after her children
- Not enough money to pay the telephone bill

Look at your last or current setback. Write down what may have contributed to it.

TIP: Sadly setbacks are inevitable. The **good news** is what you do during a setback will make a **real** difference to the following.

- ◆ The impact that it has on your day to day life
- ◆ The length of time that it lasts
- ◆ The frequency of them

“So, how do I manage a setback?”

- ◆ Don't Panic!!
- ◆ Don't stop everything and totally rest up for several days. Setbacks are only a short term problem
- ◆ Rest for a at most several hours and then become gently active for a time. Then repeat this pattern during the worst pain flare up only. The longer you rest the more difficult it is to get going again.

Some ways to manage setbacks

- Tick those you will try in your current or next setback.
- Keep doing your exercises, reduce by half your normal level for a few days.
- Reduce sitting, standing and walking times limits to half your distance or times
- Use heat or ice packs.
- Increase your relaxation time by 50% or more time.
- Use your pacing skills through the day and night.
- Set yourself easy short term goals.
- Prioritise what must be done during the setback and leave difficult activities for another day or let someone else do them.
- Plan to slowly to increase your exercises and activities over days to regain fitness.
- Keep a diary of what helps to manage the setback this time. Inform family and friends what they can do to help
- Review (don't dwell on) recent activities that may have caused the setback. Think more on what can you learn from this setback?
- If you need medication then take it regularly "by the clock," reduce gradually as the setback improves.
- Remember where you were before this setback. Focus on your achievements and not on the setback itself.

What will I do in my next setback?

Write down your plan. When a setback comes you need to know what to do and when quickly to stay confident and in control.

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