Keeping up your strength to prevent deconditioning

What is deconditioning?

Deconditioning means losing strength. Deconditioning is a decline in the ability to do activities that you do every day. These activities include getting out of bed, bathing and eating by yourself.

Why does deconditioning occur?

Deconditioning happens from not being active.

What can I do about it?

There are many things you can do to prevent deconditioning. The important thing is to be as active as you can. Check with your nurse before you start.

To keep active:

- ✓ get up out of bed for every meal
- ✓ get out of bed and walk around your room
- ✓ get up to the bathroom

To keep muscles strong:

- ✓ relax and squeeze your leg muscles for 5 minutes every 2 to 4 hours
- ✓ do arm exercises while in bed
- ✓ do all your own bathing and grooming routines such as brushing your hair, brushing your teeth, and washing your face.

If you need to rest in bed due to your medical condition, keep as active as possible in bed.

Other things you can do to prevent deconditioning:

Keep safe:
- ask staff to keep the pathway clear to the bathroom to decrease your risk of falling
- have proper shoes brought in from home such as running shoes or shoes with a non-slip sole

Physiotherapists:
- are specialists in walking and can provide expert help if needed. Work with them!

Nutrition:
- eat and drink or ask for supplements
- talk with the nutritionist if you do not feel like eating

Medication:
- ask for medication for pain if you find it too painful to get up and be active

Sight:
- wear your glasses
- turn the lights on to make sure your area is well lit to prevent you from falling

Pace yourself:
- take a break between activities so your body has time to heal

Sleep:
- keep active in the day to help you sleep at night
- avoid sleep medication
- keep to your sleep routine that you do at home if possible

Keep your mind active:
- do activities that bring pleasure such as reading, crossword puzzles or looking at magazines