

Pacing Myself

A guide to feeling better after an illness

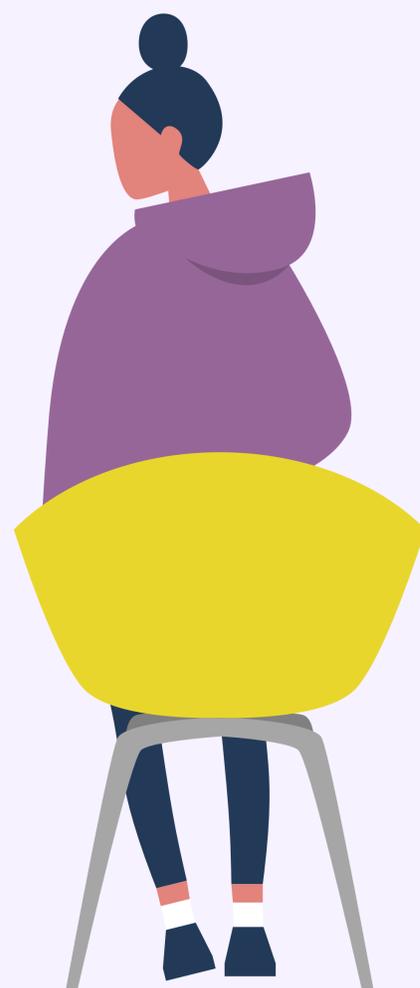


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Pacing Myself: How to do it

Illnesses can affect each of us in different ways. Some of us might find we're more tired than normal afterwards, which can be a confusing and frustrating time. Especially if we used to have lots of energy.

It is important that we don't put pressure on our bodies after an illness, such as doing activities that can take up lots of energy, as this can slow down the healing process and make us feel ill for longer. Pacing ourselves is something that can help.

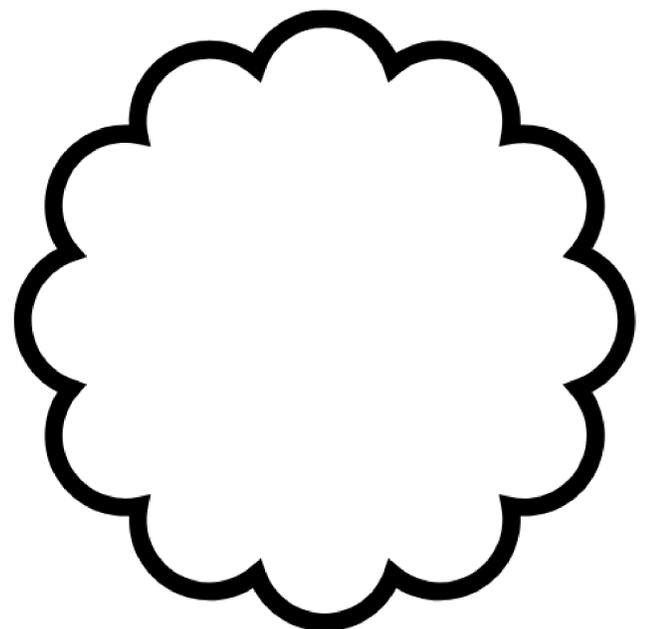
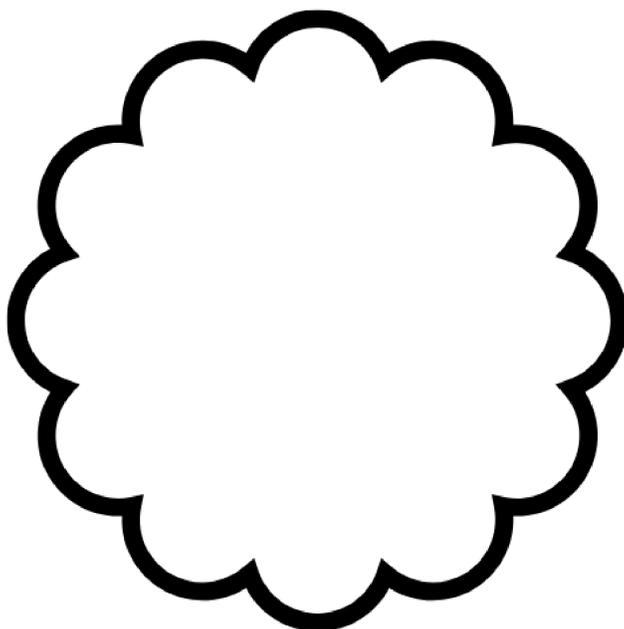
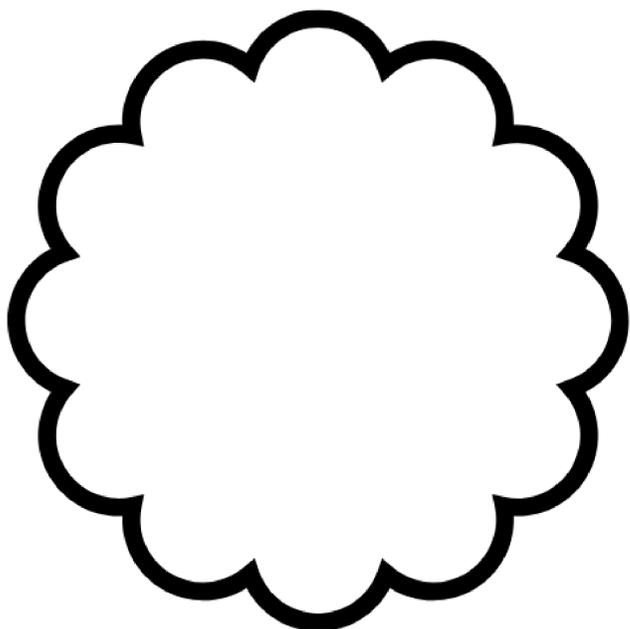
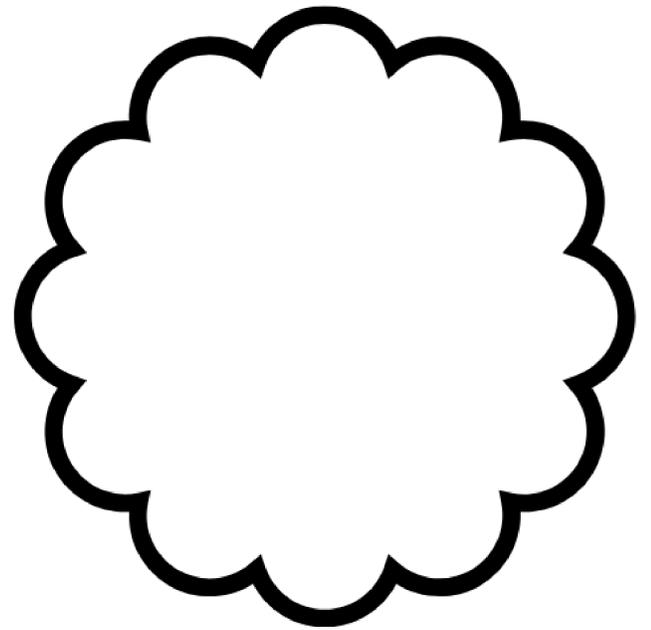
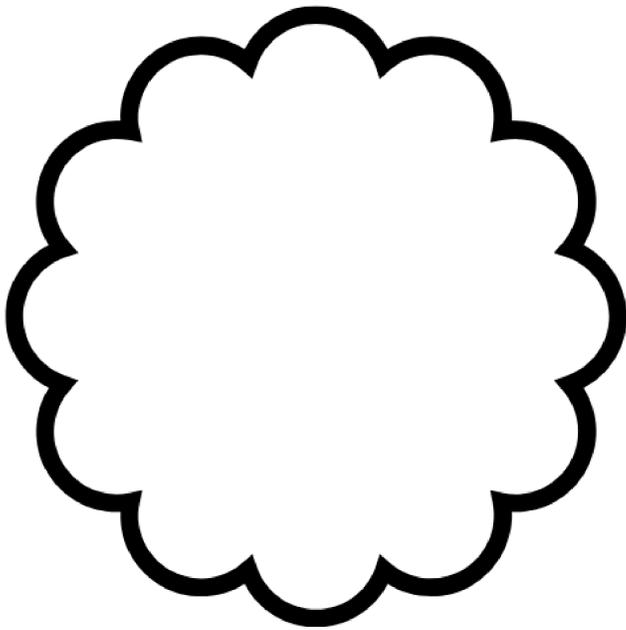
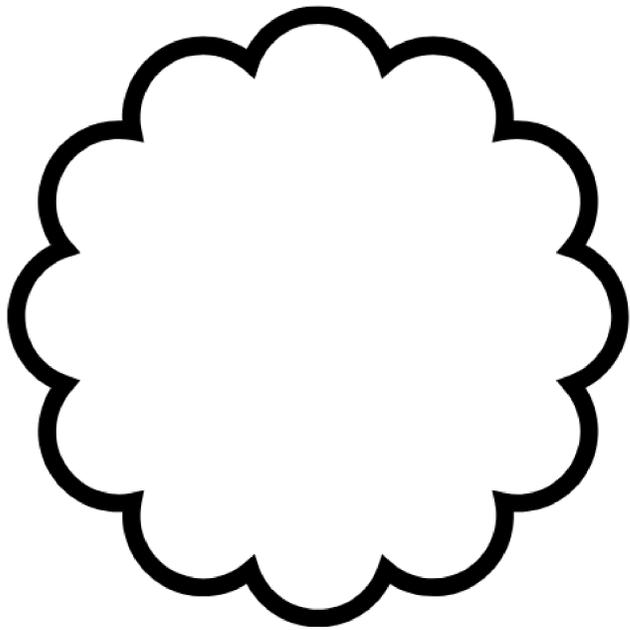
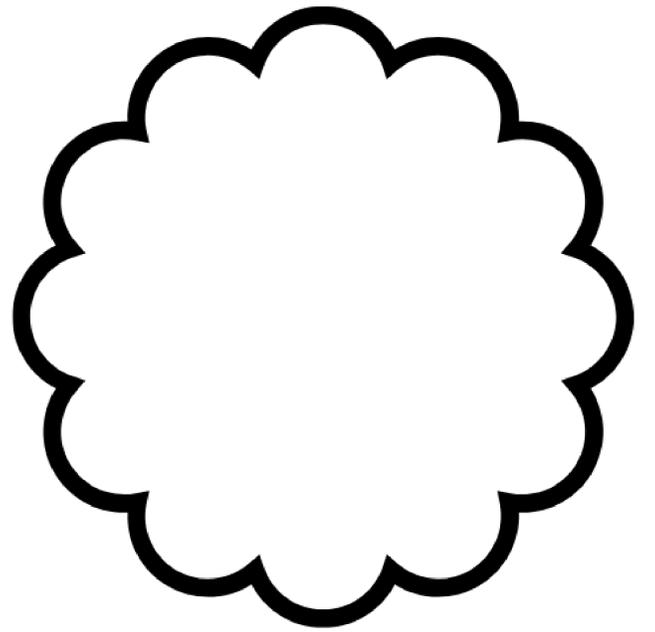
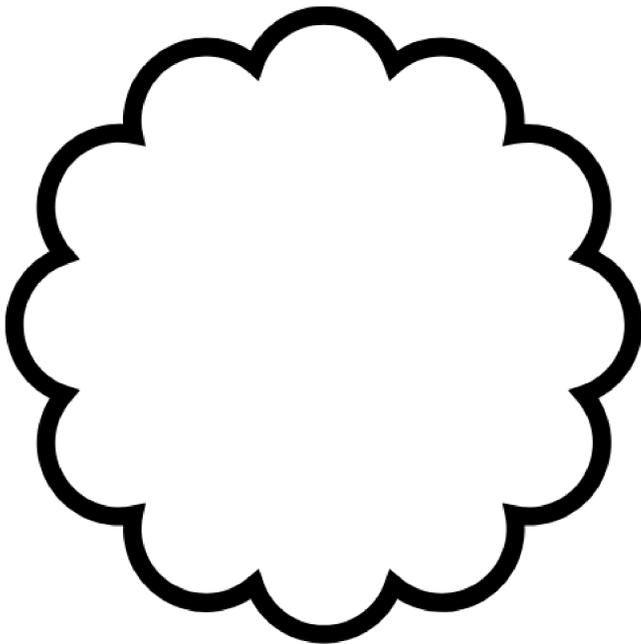
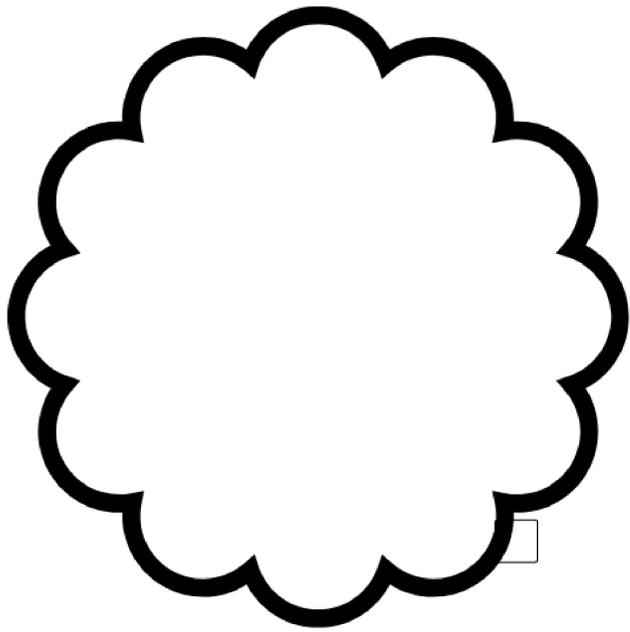
'How can I pace myself?'

- Don't push yourself. Your body may need more rest than usual and that's okay.
- Be honest about how you feel with others. If you're not feeling good- let someone know.
- Ask for help if and when you need it.
- Be kind to yourself. How long it takes people to get better from an illness is different for everyone.



How can I be kind to myself?

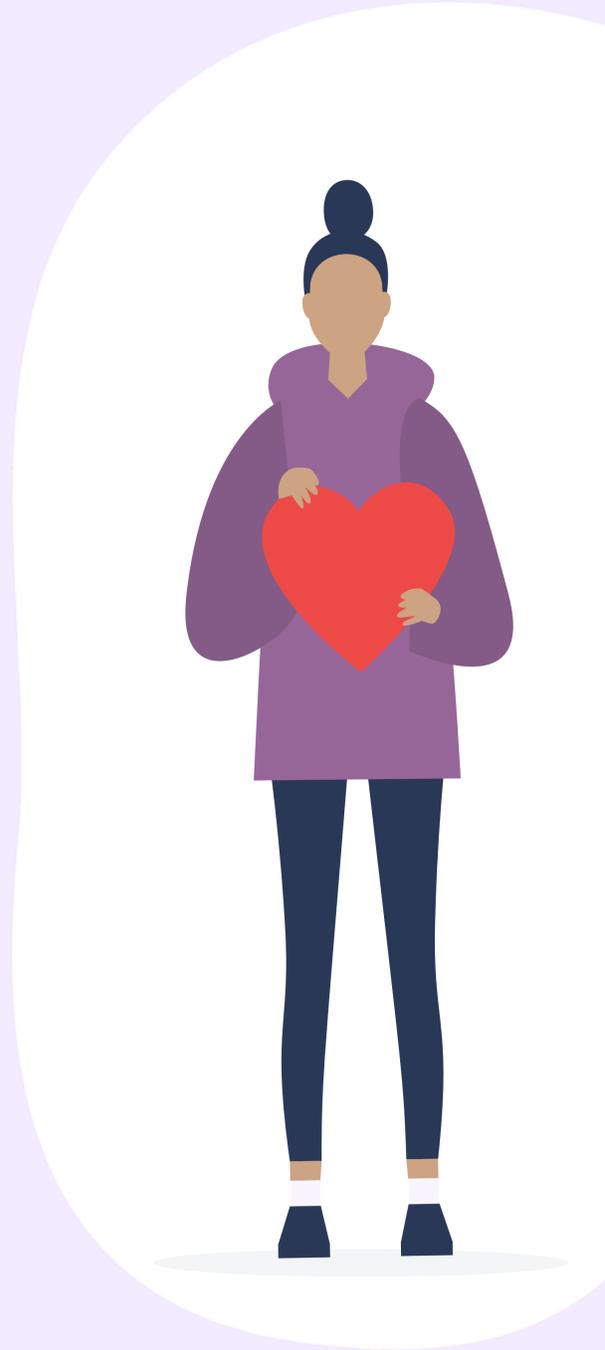
Fill in the bubbles below with ways that you can be kind to yourself. For example, watch your favourite movie, speak to a good friend, listen to your favourite music.



Listening to my Body

Our bodies are always sending us different messages. For example, it tells us when we're hungry, thirsty, in pain, happy, sad or ill.

Listening to our bodies and learning to give it what it needs is a great way of helping us start to feel better, especially if we've been poorly.



How can I listen to my body?

- Close your eyes, take some deep breaths and ask yourself 'How am I feeling? Do I need to take a break or get some rest right now?'
- Our bodies can send us signals that let us know when we're doing too much. These signs could be feeling more achy, tired, or stressed than normal. Take some time to think about your own signs, what might they be? You can write them in the space below:



My Sleep Diary



Day of the week	Time I went to sleep	Time I woke up	How many times I woke up through the night	How I feel today
Monday				
Tuesday				
Wednesday				
Thursday				
Friday				
Saturday				
Sunday				

How to practice self care

Self care is about finding the things that help us feel better. Regularly practising these things is a great way to support our health and wellbeing. Below are a few ideas:

Quiet time: This may involve reading a book, listening to music or taking a nap.

Going to bed earlier: We often don't realise how important sleep is when it comes to our health. Getting a good nights sleep can help us feel more energised the next day.

Saying no to things if we're feeling tired: Saying 'No, I don't feel up to that today' may be a challenge but is an important form of self care. Especially if we have lots of hobbies and like to keep busy.

Getting some fresh air: Getting outside can help boost your mood.

Drink more water: Keeping hydrated can help keep headaches at bay!

Do things at the same time every day: These don't have to be anything big. It could look like starting the morning with things that can help boost our mood or give us energy. For example: listening to uplifting music after waking up, making the bed, having breakfast before leaving the house.

Can you think of anything else you do that helps you feel better? You can write them down here:



Uplifting things I can do

Decorate this page and fill in your ideas in the spaces below!

Morning

- Listen to music
- Eat breakfast at home
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

After School

- Chat to a friend
- Get some fresh air
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Activities

- Go for a walk
- Watch favourite movie
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Bedtime

- Have a warm drink
- Turn off my mobile
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Understanding my body's energy levels

After being poorly, our body may work a little differently to how it did before. As it has taken up a lot of energy to help us heal. This could mean that we don't have as much energy to do things throughout the day.

Keeping an energy diary may be a good way to track how different activities make us feel. Writing down the things we've done, at what time, and how we felt afterwards, can help us know when we have the most energy and to plan to do things around those times. It can help us know at what points we will need to plan time to rest.

Understanding my energy with the 'Spoon Theory Exercise'

The spoon theory was developed to help people with long-term fatigue (tiredness) understand and explain how different activities affect their energy.

In this exercise, spoons equal one unit of energy. Let's try it out!

You have 20 spoons for the day...

It's Monday morning and you've woken up early. You got a lot of sleep last night but still feel really tired and have to get ready for school. How many spoons (units of energy) do you use up doing the following:

- Get a shower:
- Make breakfast:
- Get dressed:
- Travel to school:

How many spoons you have left for the rest of the day? Each person is different, some of us will need more spoons for certain activities than others. If you find that by the time you get to school you are running low on spoons for the rest of the day, you might want to let a teacher know and plan time to rest when you get home, rather than activities.

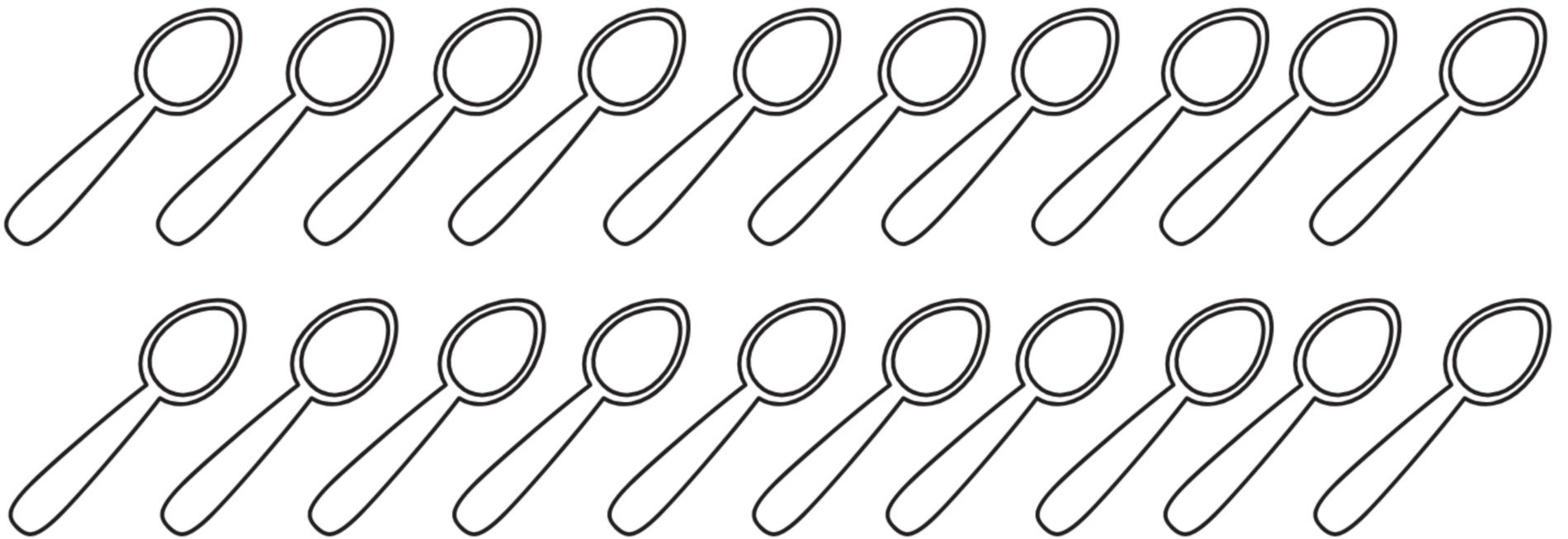


The Spoon Game

Write a list of things you have to do during your day (using the last page as an example), give each activity a number of spoons to see how many spoons you use during a day.

Day/ time:

Activities:



How many spoons do you have left for the rest of the day?

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