

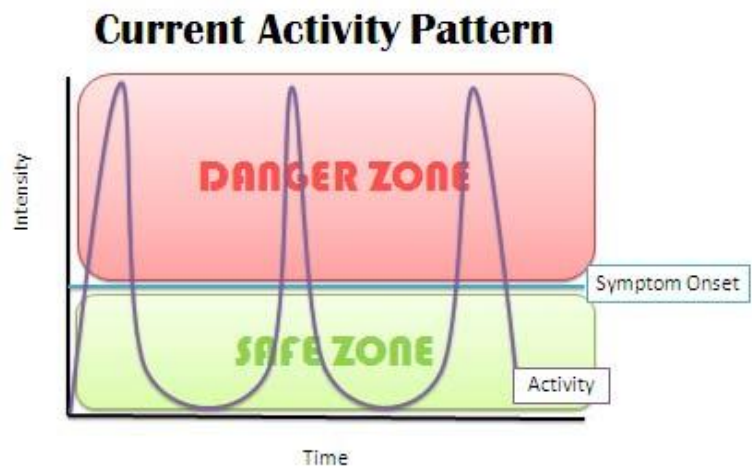
SPORT CONCUSSION
Planning and Pacing

- Your brain does not function as efficiently or effectively as it did before your brain injury.
- You may have been told to rest, but not told how to come out of rest.
- You may have returned to your pre-injury level of activity, but struggle with being able to complete tasks well, efficiently, or have ongoing symptoms.
- Remember that **what** you do, and **how long** you do it for, can impact your degree of symptoms

The Pacing Graphs Explained

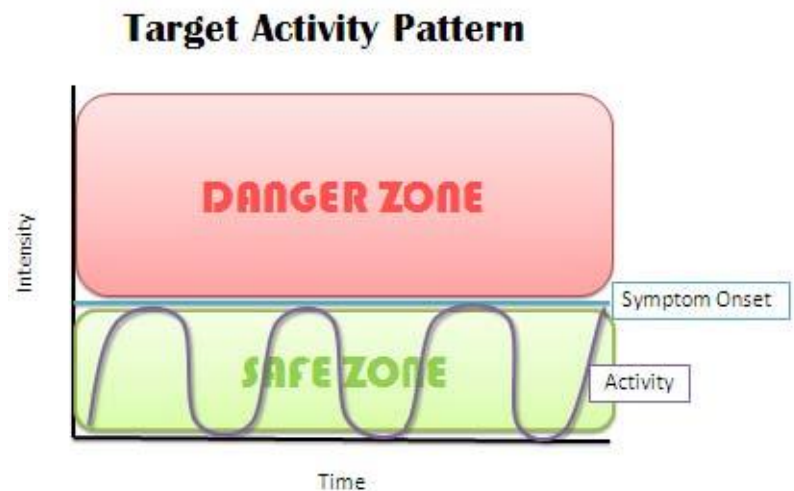
The green (safe zone) represents when you are symptom-free, or your baseline symptoms. The red (danger zone) represents when your symptoms are increased.

Your Current Activity Pattern may look like this if you continue to work, study, exercise, and in effect push through your symptoms. You end up crashing and may need hours or days to return to baseline.



Your Goal: To gradually increase activity tolerance without increasing symptoms or crossing the symptom threshold (into the 'danger zone'). Therefore, planning and pacing of activities is very important.

You should aim to remain below your symptom threshold to promote recovery.



Use your timer to set time restrictions for activities to ensure that a task is stopped prior to symptom onset. This will allow you to monitor your response to activity and teach you how to self-pace and self-monitor.

Additional Strategies

- Start with shorter bouts of exercise or activity with rest in between OR
- Try switching between different types of activities (e.g., switching from reading to walking).
- **Doing nothing at all will not promote recovery, but doing too much each day may cause prolonged symptoms.** Therefore, completing structured, paced activities throughout the day with rest breaks as appropriate is ideal.
- **Use a Planner/Agenda/Technology**
 - Plan your day in advance. This promotes scheduling of necessary rest breaks into your day, and activities across a number of days, rather than trying to ‘push through’ and get things all done at once.
 - **If you have memory issues**, an agenda or technology aid may assist you, with remembering appointments, upcoming tasks/commitments and sending out reminders (in the case of technology solutions).
 - **Track your activities** to help you determine any cause and effect or patterns of setbacks which may occur during your recovery. Tracking activities and symptoms in the journal/agenda can also help with determining if there is a relationship between certain activities and symptom onset.

Using strategies to plan and pace your day will help you reach your **long term activity goal** to be able to engage in activities for longer periods of time without making your symptoms worse.



Summary

- Many patients return to activities too quickly, or participate in symptom provoking activities for too long.
- We encourage you to participate in activities below the level of symptom onset in order to gradually build tolerance. As tolerance increases, symptoms may not occur as quickly, and many patients begin to recover and have fewer symptoms as time progresses.
- Stay conscious of the danger zone, even when symptoms begin to subside, as it is easy to slide into old habits of pushing through symptoms.