

## Effective Self-Care for Those with Limited Mobility

Those with limited mobility face challenges when they emerge into public space and attempt to participate in society. There are not yet standards to prevent having to walk more than 15 meters without a chance to sit and rest or having to stand more than a minute unsupported.

So how can one manage the negative health consequences and social pressure to walk too far or stand too long?

### Manage oneself:

- ✓ Know how far you can walk safely on an average day.
- ✓ Evaluate yourself daily based on amount of sleep, pain level, walking history.
- ✓ Schedule lightly, with days “off” or only one demanding event a day.
- ✓ Permit yourself to cancel or reschedule as needed.
- ✓ Resist feeling you have to conform to the walking speed of those around you.
- ✓ Sit proactively whenever possible.
- ✓ Take pressure off joints by leaning on counters, carts, etc.

### Recognize emotional stressors:

- ✓ The need to ingratiate yourself with others to ensure goodwill.
  - Even when you feel tired, irritable, & in pain.
- ✓ The tension of constant self-advocacy.
  - “Your car is just over there”
- ✓ The pressure of guilt tripping as part of social pressure to walk too far.
  - “If you would just walk to the top of the jetway...”
- ✓ Having to insist on being addressed directly
  - When your “pusher” is asked instead of you.
- ✓ Being ignored when asking for help
  - If you have walked too far without a mobility aid.
- ✓ Dealing with passive aggressive responses
  - “If you want faster help, you can fly a different airline.”

### Engage support from others:

- ✓ Request help: “please bring it to me” or “I need help.”
- ✓ Take an advocate with you.
- ✓ Find ways to offset social isolation.

### Plan ahead:

- ✓ Gather information on distance to be walked and seating options.
- ✓ Engage a representative to act for you if the distance to be walked is too far.
- ✓ Contact the facility and ask for a resolution to the distance issue.