



## Be Pain Smart – Physical activity

### Getting back into leisure

Leisure activities, having fun and enjoying yourself are key parts to managing your pain. Getting back into leisure on a regular basis helps your mood, overall health, fitness and to live a fulfilling life.

Soon after your brain injury, doing fun and enjoyable things was probably put on the back-burner. Your focus was on other things, such as learning to walk again, building up your strength, or coping with memory problems. Perhaps you tried doing things you enjoyed before, but this failed because you had trouble getting organised, your physical limits stopped you or you did not have enough energy. Maybe your chronic pain got in the way and stopped you from doing more.

Think about the things you did for pleasure before your brain injury. What were your interests, hobbies, leisure and recreational activities that you loved? If your ongoing limitations from your brain injury or your pain is preventing you from doing these activities, then you need to come up with some new leisure activities. Even if you still enjoy your old activities, you can try new ones too.

It is important to make a plan to help you get back into leisure to help you manage your pain. Read through the steps below to help you put your plan together for getting back into leisure.





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### My plan for getting back into leisure

#### Step 1 – What are the things that interest you?

From your own ideas and/or the ones below, think of five possible leisure activities you want to try. There are many possibilities – here are some ideas.

Art	DIY/home improvement	Kayaking	Swimming
Baking	Drawing/doodling	Knitting/crocheting	Tai chi
Basketball	Filmmaking	Lego/model building	Tennis or table tennis
Bicycling	Fishing	Martial arts	Travelling
Billiards/pool	Flower arranging	Photography	Weightlifting
Bowling	Golf	Pottery	Writing letters, poems, stories
Camping	Gym classes	Rowing/boating	Yoga
Canoeing	Hiking/walking	Sailing and boating	
Chess	Horse riding	Sewing	
Cooking	Ice/roller skating	Singing	
Crafts	Jewellery making	Skiing and snowboarding	
Dancing	Karaoke	Surfing	

#### Step 2 – Pick one

Pick the activity you would like to do. If this is your first time trying something new, choose something simple and easy to access.

#### Step 3 – What are the possible barriers?

Before you get started, consider the possible problems and hurdles you may meet when you try to do this activity. Make sure you factor in your limits due to pain.



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### Step 4 – What are the potential solutions?

Think about ways you can get around these barriers. You might need to ask for help or get someone to support you to do this. Use the '[Pacing](#)' tool to help you manage your pain during the activity.

### Step 5 – Action plan

Now you need to make an action plan. This part takes a lot of thought because you must figure out what, where, when, who and how. Ask yourself these questions and write them into the plan. You might not need to answer all of the questions.

1. **What** leisure activity are you doing? What is it going to cost? What do you need to take with you?
2. **Where** are you going? Where do you meet?
3. **When** are you going – the day, date, time?
4. **Who** is coming? Who do you need to tell you are going?
5. **How** do you get there? How do you get home?

The big question is, how will you feel when you do the leisure activity and what would you get out of regularly doing this activity?

Try one activity first – test it out, then come back and try another one. There is no reason you cannot do more.

Read the example below and then try it out yourself.



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### My plan for getting back into leisure

#### Step 1 – What are the things that interest you?

Write down five leisure activities you want to try.

1. *Fishing*

2. *Bush walking*

3. *Kayaking*

4. *Bowling*

5. *Cooking*

There are so many possibilities – here are some ideas:

Art	Dancing	Jewellery making	Singing
Baking	DIY/home improvement	Karaoke	Skiing and snowboarding
Basketball	Drawing/doodling	Kayaking	Surfing
Bicycling	Filmmaking	Knitting/crocheting	Swimming
Billiards/pool	Fishing	Lego/model building	Tai chi
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### Step 2 – Pick one

#### My leisure pick

*I would like to try fishing.*

### Step 3 – What are the possible barriers?

Think about the possible barriers and put them in the 'Barriers' column.

### Step 4 – What are the potential solutions?

Work out the ways you can get around these barriers. These go in the 'Solutions' column.

BARRIERS		SOLUTIONS
<i>Carrying my gear. My fishing tackle is heavy to carry.</i>		<i>My old mate, Ben, said he will come with me and help me carry the gear and any fish we catch.</i>
<i>Travelling to my favourite fishing spot always flares my pain.</i>		<i>My favourite spot is 1.5 hours away, but there is an okay spot about 15 minutes from my home. I will start going there and then I can slowly travel further. Ben said if I really want to go to my favourite spot, we could stay at his mate's place that lives 20 minutes from the spot.</i>
<i>Sitting down for too long makes my pain worse – I can only sit for 20 minutes.</i>		<i>Ben said he will drive the 15 minutes to the river. I will take my comfy camping chair and put my timer on so that I change position every 15 minutes.</i>
<i>I always think about going fishing, but I just never seem to make it happen.</i>		<i>I talked about this with Ben and he said he will pick me up next Saturday, no matter what. We even talked about doing this once a month and asking some of our other mates to come along.</i>



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### Step 5 – Action plan

Let's put together an action plan to get you back into leisure. You need to figure out what, where, when, who and how. Ask yourself the following questions and then write them into the plan. You might not need to answer all of the questions; just fill in the ones that help you with this leisure activity.

#### WHAT?

**What is the leisure activity?**

*Going fishing.*

**What is it going to cost?**

*Bait \$20*

*I have everything else.*

**What do you need to take with you?**

*Rods*

*Knife*

*Bait*

*Tackle box*

*Esky with drinks*

*Net*

*Snacks*

*Bucket*

#### WHERE?

**Where are you going?**

*Bulli Beach.*

(Address)

**Where do you meet?**

*Ben will pick me up from my place.*

(Address)

#### WHEN?

**Day?**

*Saturday*

**Date?**

*2nd November*

**Time?**

*6am to 10am*



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### WHO?

**Who is coming?** Ben and I.

**Who do you need to tell you are going?** I'll let my flatmates know to expect me back around 10ish.

### HOW?

**How do you get there?** Ben will pick me up.

**How do you get home?** Ben will take me home.

### THE BIG QUESTIONS

**Imagine how you will feel when you do the activity** It will be great to finally get the rods out. I have always loved fishing and it helps me to unwind and relax. It will be good to spend time with Ben when other people are not around because I find it hard to keep up. At least with Ben there, if my pain gets bad, he can carry the gear and drive home.

**What would you get out of regularly doing this activity?** We have already talked about doing it once a month. It will be great to do something with my mates, but not feel pressure to talk the whole time. Sometimes I do not know what to talk about or cannot remember what I have been doing to keep a conversation going for too long. I reckon I will feel more calm and less stressed out.

Now it is your turn to have a go. Work through the steps and fill in the parts below, so you can make an action plan.



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1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

There are so many possibilities – here are some ideas:

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## Step 2 – Pick one

My leisure pick

## Step 3 – What are the possible barriers?

Think about the possible barriers and put them in the 'Barriers' column.

## Step 4 – What are the potential solutions?

Work out the ways you can get around these barriers. These go in the 'Solutions' column.

BARRIERS	SOLUTIONS



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### Step 5 – Action plan

Let's put together an action plan to get you back into leisure. You need to figure out what, where, when, who and how. Ask yourself the following questions and then write them into the plan. You might not need to answer all of the questions; just fill in the ones that help you with this leisure activity.

#### WHAT?

**What is the leisure activity?**

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**What is it going to cost?**

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**What do you need to take with you?**

#### WHERE?

**Where are you going?**

(Address)

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**Where do you meet?**

(Address)

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## WHEN?

Day?

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Date?

---

Time?

## WHO?

Who is coming?

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Who do you need to tell you are going?

## HOW?

How do you get there?

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How do you get home?

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### THE BIG QUESTIONS

Imagine how you will feel when you do the activity

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What would you get out of regularly doing this activity?

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***Once you have had a go, try another leisure activity and remember to pace yourself!***