

# A Day in the Life



## of an Autoimmune Arthritis Patient

Created by the International Foundation for Autoimmune Arthritis



*Getting out of bed in the morning can be a challenge when you have autoimmune arthritis due to inflammation and stiffness in your body, as well as on occasion still feeling fatigued—even after a full night of rest. But with a little planning and disease management you may be able to wake feeling just a little more refreshed.*

## Waking Up

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# Getting Ready

### Planning

#### A little planning can go a long way!

- Write lists of what you need to take or do that next day and prioritize your time and energy
- Get your clothes ready the night before.
- Put everything you will need for the next day in one spot or bag ready to grab and go; so you don't forget things.
- Take a bath or shower before you go to bed. Not only can it help your body relax and produce a more restful nights' sleep, but it's a safeguard in case you simply need that extra time in the morning.
- Keep early morning medications, a glass of water, and crackers on a table beside the bed.

If getting out of bed is difficult use forearms and palms to push yourself up instead of knuckles, consider using bed risers, have something sturdy to lean on as you get up, and keep floor clear of items to reduce risk of falls.

**Autoimmune Arthritis lends physical challenges but remember to work with your doctor or to find gadgets and methods that work well for YOU and your lifestyle!**

### Waking Up

Your alarm just went off. Although you slept for 6-8 hours you feel winded, like you just ran a marathon. Your body is very rigid, which typically lasts for 30-90 minutes. You have somewhere you need to be today but you know if you force getting up too fast you risk paying for it later during the day.

Stop. Do some deep breathing, inhale through the nose and exhale through the mouth. Slowly stretch your arms and legs. While this won't make your flare go away, it will get your body in motion and warmed up to handle the day better.

### Supporters

Think about a situation when you experienced physical exhaustion. Perhaps you took part in some extreme exercise or briskly walked up a hill or just finished hanging all the holiday lights on a two-story house. After the task your muscles were weak, you may have been out of breath, and you physically could not do much more for the rest of the day. While chances are after a few hours of rest or a good night sleep, you were refreshed and rejuvenated, this is not the case with Autoimmune Arthritis diseases. At times patients will wake up from a night of sleep feeling winded and exhausted.

