



PULMONARY HYPERTENSION  
ASSOCIATION OF CANADA

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# Helping your child manage their energy

These tips may or may not be appropriate for your situation. Use any of these ideas to help your child conserve and manage their energy at school and in the community.

## Managing energy

- Help your child learn tools to pace themselves throughout the day. Let them know it is okay to sit down and take a break. As your child gets older, they will become better able to advocate for themselves and plan their day with consideration for their energy levels.
- Help your child plan their day to save as much energy as possible. Plan trips ahead of time and pace yourself. For example, if you plan on going to the zoo in the afternoon, avoid having a busy morning to reduce fatigue.
- Consider the terrain outdoors – upward slopes and inclines can be difficult. Plan routes accordingly and take breaks along the way.
- Use elevators or escalators when available.
- Assist your child (in an age-appropriate way) with daily tasks like getting dressed and ready to leave the house.

## Weather

- Plan your activities on hot/humid days for the early morning or evening when it is not as hot outside. Schedule frequent drink breaks. Look for cool and shady places to stop and rest.
- On cold days, keep your child's oxygen tubing close to their body to prevent it from freezing or cracking. You may want to run the tubing inside winter gear.
- Cold weather can make breathing difficult. Try using a scarf or neck warmer that can be pulled over the face to warm up air before it hits the lungs.
- Windy weather can make breathing difficult. Try to avoid prolonged exposure to wind.

## Clothing and footwear

- Layers allow kids to control their body temperature and avoid using extra energy to stay warm or cool down. They can add or remove layers when needed.



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- Consider hats and hoods to protect against wind and cool temperatures.
- Consider clothing that is comfortable and easy to wear. Stay away from clothes that are difficult to put on and remove.
- Fabrics should breathe and move with the child.
- Consider comfortable shoes and boots with treads.
- Slip-on shoes and boots may be better than those with laces.

## Activities

- Consider community classes and lessons that are not focused on physical exertion, such as pottery, art, music, programming, science, robotics, debating or public speaking, gaming (esports and other electronic games, board games, role-playing games), book clubs, and crafts.
- Consider roles within athletic teams to ensure continued involvement and conserve energy (team manager, scorekeeper, equipment manager, etc.).

## General mobility

- Once your child is out of a stroller, consider using a wagon or cargo bike to cover distances.
- As children age, manual or electric scooters, bicycles, and balance bikes allow them to keep up with their peers in the schoolyard, on school trips, and in the community.
- For children on oxygen, a cart on wheels can provide more independence without the need to carry the tank. Contact your oxygen provider to get one for your child.
- An oxygen backpack could be useful for children who are strong enough to carry their oxygen tank on their back. Contact your oxygen provider.
- Accessible parking permits issued by your province/territory allow you to park closer to entrances and exits in many places. Your doctor can help you with the required documentation.

For more information and resources for families of children with pulmonary hypertension, visit [www.phacanada.ca/pediatrics](http://www.phacanada.ca/pediatrics)