www.oregonpainguidance.org/paineducationtoolkit

# Taking small steps can lead you back to the life you want:

**Break down an activity into its parts**

**Make it social**

**Think about whole body movement**

**Make a plan**

**Try something new**

**Get prepared**

**Pace yourself**

**And remember:** **Make a plan for flare-ups, they're normal! Your health care team is here to help.**

## HOW PAIN AND ACTIVITY WORK TOGETHER:

When you move less and less, your brain becomes accustomed to that decrease in activity. As the brain learns pain, more and more activity becomes connected with the pain response even when you are doing things that aren't harmful.

## WHAT CAN MAKE THINGS BETTER:

Gradually increasing your activity helps your brain rewire itself so that you can move more easily. It's normal to have some pain or discomfort as you get moving again. You may be a little *sore*, but you are *safe*. Over time, you will become more active and healthy and your pain will likely improve.
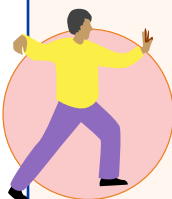
### It may seem overwhelming to start increasing your activity when you are hurting, but small steps get you closer to your goal!

#### BREAK DOWN AN ACTIVITY INTO ITS PARTS

- Try focusing on parts of an activity, such as strength, balance, flexibility, time, and location.
- What are the parts of your activity?

#### SIMPLE THINGS THAT GET YOUR WHOLE BODY MOVING

- Simply swinging your arms when you are walking gets more of your body moving.
- Tai chi and yoga are exercises for your whole body.
- Any movement is better than none, so keep it simple and fun.

#### TRY SOMETHING NEW

- Try some new things, like going to a new park or a community event.

#### PACE YOURSELF START LOW, GO SLOW

- Watch this video about pacing
- See how to gradually add activities safely.
- Small steps get you closer to your goal!
- This is a process so be patient with yourself.

#### MAKE A PLAN & GET PREPARED

- Planning ahead can help you change a habit.
- What clothing and shoes will you need?
- Do you need transportation?

#### MAKE IT SOCIAL

- Doing things with other people or with your pet is a great way to get back in action.

### This is a process so be patient with yourself.

**My short-term goal:**

**Steps to reach my goal:**