



Managing kitchen tasks with one hand

Following an upper limb amputation some of the domestic activities that you might have engaged in before may pose challenges for you. You may need to find new ways of doing tasks, use some specialised equipment, or perhaps ask others to help you get the task done.

Here are a few ideas to assist you:

Kitchen tasks

Cooking can hold some challenges and this is largely dependent on what foods you choose to cook. There is a range of different assistive devices available to help you in cooking and your occupational therapist or independent living centre should be able to assist you with details of suppliers. Some items that may be useful include:

- A spike board for holding ingredients while you chop them.
- A variety of sharp knives to minimise the force required during chopping.
- A belli-clamp, this is a gadget that enables you to use your hip/stomach to hold jars steady while you use your hand to open the lid.
- A food processor or manual chopping device that will cut larger quantities of ingredients.
- A saucepan handle stabiliser—these are sometimes available as a magnetic unit that sits on the top of your hotplates, or else a screw-on unit that attaches to the side of your oven, and will stop saucepans/frying pans rotating while you are stirring items.

- An electric can opener
- A selection of non-slip mats
- A wheeled trolley—this may assist you to carry a number of ingredients or utensils from one place to another without making multiple trips.
- Pump pack dispensers/ plastic sauce bottles—to put ingredients such as oil or mayonnaise.
- A buttering board—this is a board with small edges around one corner which enables you to stabilise the bread against the edge and prevents the bread from slipping around.

It is important that you consider where you position yourself when carrying out tasks. Sometimes it is easier to sit down to do certain things, for others it may be easier to stand up by a bench to put you in a better position to utilize your prosthesis. Make sure if you have a prosthetic elbow joint and/or wrist unit that you position them correctly prior to starting so that your prosthesis is in the optimal position to be of use. Keep a close eye on your prosthesis if you are working near heat as a cosmetic glove may burn or melt, and a metal terminal device can get very hot.

The Independent Living Centre provides information, advice and trial of independence equipment to enhance the quality of life for people with disabilities. It is staffed by occupational therapists and physiotherapists.

The Independent Living Centre
www.ilcaustralia.org

Resources for upper limb amputees

www.tadvic.asn.au
Phone: (03) 9853 8655
TADVIC is a Voluntary organisation based in Kew whose members construct and modify equipment for people with disabilities. They also have 10 branches in rural Victoria and throughout Australia.

www.amputee-coalition.org
An American website with resources and articles relating to limbloss.

www.aboutonehandtyping.com
This site contains a lot of frequently asked questions and resources for one hand typing.

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