NHS Advice

from the ME/CFS e-Learning programme
https://www.e-lfh.org.uk/programmes/mecfs-elearning/

There are 3 key elements of self-management that a person can try whilst awaiting an appointment with the ME/CFS service.

Energy management (energy conservation or pacing)

The first key element is not to use more energy than they have, often described as an 'energy envelope'.

People should be advised to:

- manage their daily activity and not 'push through' their symptoms
- plan activity balanced with the need to rest and convalesce
- prioritise their 'important' activities whether that be work, school or family life

Activity management

Unlike other conditions, progressive exercise programs do not benefit people with ME/CFS.

Exercise, whether physical, mental or emotional, can trigger post-exertional malaise (PEM). People experiencing PEM, should not undertake exercise outside of their programme of activity.

It is important to ensure that any exercise is bracketed well within the 'energy envelope' and does not result in a worsening of symptoms.

Diet

A healthy balanced diet with good fluid intake is important for good health, and may have some positive impact on symptom level.

The natural response of many people with ME/CFS when experiencing symptoms is to reach for high-energy, high-carbohydrate or caffeine-based supplements. These are known to cause peaks and troughs in energy levels and exacerbate symptoms.

There is no evidence to support routine vitamin or mineral supplements or probiotics as either a cure or even symptomatic relief for people living with ME/CFS.