

Tips for Coping With Fatigue





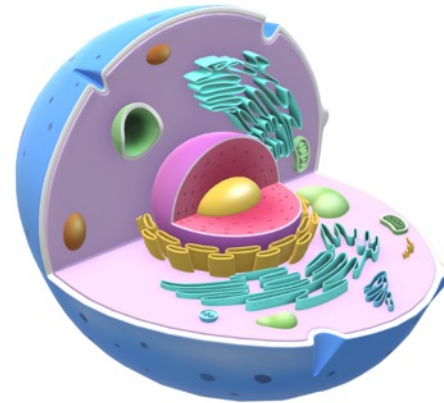
Fatigue is one of the most common side effects of cancer and its treatment.

Fatigue is when you feel very tired or exhausted most, or all, of the time. Nine out of ten people with cancer (90%) experience fatigue and it affects everyone differently. It is a “tired” that does not go away with rest.



What causes it?

You may experience fatigue if cancer treatment damages healthy cells in addition to the cancer cells. Or fatigue might happen as your body works to repair damage caused by treatment. Some treatment side effects — such as anemia, nausea, vomiting, pain, insomnia and changes in mood — also may cause fatigue. Anemia.



Get treated for medical conditions or causes that make fatigue worse.

Tell your doctor if you're experiencing fatigue. You should be screened for:

- Pain or its treatment, especially narcotic pain medication
- Emotional distress, such as anxiety or depression
- Poor nutrition or electrolyte imbalances, such as abnormal levels of potassium, calcium, and magnesium
- Anemia, an abnormally low level of red blood cells
- Sleep disturbances, such as sleep apnea or restless leg syndrome
- Medication side effects
- Other medical conditions, such as heart, lung, or hormone problems



Tips

- It is important to focus on what we can change when managing fatigue. We cannot change a diagnosis, a treatment path, getting older, etc.
- We can try to change pain management, how one is coping/depression, our nutrition, our sleep habits, management of other possible health issues, muscle fatigue, and blood levels. We can also look at how we manage our time and prioritize what we can get done in a day.
- Sugar and excess carbs such as those found in alcohol can make sugar levels spike and plummet. Therefore, they can make fatigue worse.



Tips

- It is important to learn your limits with your energy and try not to overdo too much. You want to steadily grow in endurance but going way beyond your limits one day can cause great consequences for the next few days.

- Exercise is highly recommended to those with fatigue as building back muscle increase energy. It can also increase mood, help memory, and keep you at a healthy BMI, (body mass index).



- You can start very small, perhaps 5 minutes a day or by starting physical therapy. Livestrong and the YMCA have also developed a great program for cancer patients.



Tips

- 30 minutes a day as recommended for many adults is not realistic for most patients. It is important to start small and add to it as you can tolerate it.
- Relaxation, mindfulness, and CBT Therapy can improve quality of life and help people cope better. Some people also do better with medication for anxiety/depression as well.



- It is important to eat enough protein and healthy fats to promote healing.
- Keep hydrated, drink 8- 8oz glasses of water a day.

Tips

- Practice good sleep hygiene. Don't watch TV or play on screens for 30 minutes before bed. Only sleep or be intimate in your bed. Other activities in the bed can make your brain more stimulated before sleeping. Don't eat right before bed. Consider a sleep study if apnea suspected.
- Some people get Ritalin/Methylphenidate on occasion to help them have more energy for special events. Taking it daily will lessen its ability to help but it can give a boost for a special day or when trying to start back to an exercise routine.



- Light Therapy, Dr. William Redd

- Fatigue is challenging. It is important to plan ahead, ask for help, and to prioritize what you need done



Meredith

Discover what time of day your body is at its peak and try to schedule what you need to do during these times

Allow yourself breaks

Break bigger tasks into smaller tasks

Ginseng Tea- Mayo study 2gram a day about 8 weeks improvements





David

Find ways to be social, even on the transplant floor

Exercise

High Quality Foods instead of junk food

When able, get involved (He helps others going through the journey now)

Fatigue is no joke, get the rest you require and it helps you get more done



Let go of the shame with fatigue.

LET YOURSELF REST

If you're exhausted, rest.

If you don't feel like starting a new project, don't.

If you don't feel the urge to make something new,
just rest in the beauty of the old, the familiar, the known.

If you don't feel like talking, stay silent.

If you're fed up with the news, turn it off.

If you want to postpone something until tomorrow, do it.

If you want to do nothing, let yourself do nothing today.

Feel the fullness of the emptiness, the vastness of the
silence, the sheer life in your unproductive moments.

Time does not always need to be filled.

You are enough, simply in your being.

Jeff Foster

