

Managing Fatigue



The type of fatigue commonly felt with cancer can be different than feeling tired at the end of a hard day. While one person may feel too tired to get out of bed, another may be able to continue a normal routine as they have always done. Fatigue can last for different periods of time. Some may feel relief after treatment ends, but others may experience it for longer periods of time.

Fatigue can affect various parts of your life; how you eat, how you feel about yourself and others or how well you take care of yourself. Causes of fatigue may vary from person to person.

Common causes of fatigue are:

- Chemotherapy
- Radiation
- Immunotherapy
- Surgery
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Treatment Side Effects
- Pain
- Medication
- Dehydration
- Infection
- Low blood counts
- Lack of sleep
- Anxiety and Depression
- Lack of Exercise
- Malnutrition

Symptoms of fatigue:

- Low energy
- Increased sleep, waking up tired
- Unable to focus or think clearly
- Feelings of sadness and irritability
- Decreased desire to do the things you normally enjoy doing

How to cope with fatigue

- Plan your day with time set aside to rest
- Do the most important things when you have energy
- Accept that less important things may not get done
- Ask others for help
- Try deep breathing exercises, reading, or playing calm music as a way to relax
- Be as active as you can without overdoing it
- Keep a record of how you feel each day and share with your care team
- Eat a healthy balanced diet
- Notify your care team of any fatigue, depression
- or sadness you may be experiencing

Call your medical oncology care team if your fatigue continues or worsens, disrupts your daily routines, if you have troubles sleeping, feel out of breath or your heart is racing.