



Is It Normal to Have Fatigue With Cancer?


by NEWLIFEOUTLOOK TEAM

Cancer Fatigue During Treatment

Since fatigue can be a problem for some people during cancer treatment, it's important to know how to manage it. You should perform activities that you need to do when you have energy and then leave relaxing and rest during times when you're low on energy. Perform easier or shorter versions of your normal exercise, since you may still be adapting after the treatment. Stress will make your fatigue worse, so if you're feeling stressed about your treatment or about your life after treatment, you should talk to your health care team and learn about managing stress.


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THE FACTS ABOUT FATIGUE



Some Conditions^{1,2,3} with fatigue as a symptom

- Medications
- Pain
- Sleep Disorders
- Substance Abuse
- Anorexia
- Arthritis
- Cancer
- Diabetes
- Chronic Fatigue Syndrome
- Fibromyalgia
- Lupus
- Multiple Sclerosis
- Anemia
- Asthma
- Depression
- Parkinson's Disease
- COPD



With Fatigue You May Feel

- Tired
- Weak
- Exhausted
- Weary
- Worn-Out
- Heavy
- Slow
- Lethargic


What is Fatigue?

Fatigue is:
Lack of Motivation
Lack of Energy
Wearing Out Easily
Real

Fatigue isn't:
Lack of Passion
Laziness
Just Being Tired
Fake or Imagined

Fatigue Can Affect:

- Your mood
- Physical function
- Work performance
- Social interaction
- Family care
- Cognitive performance
- School work
- Community activities
- Sense of self
- Your appetite



Measuring Fatigue

The Fatigue Severity Scale (FSS) is a self-reported questionnaire used to measure your fatigue. It consists of ...

NINE Questions, each rated on a scale of 1-7

To score the Fatigue Severity Scale either add all items together (this will range from 9-63) or find the mean by adding your items together and dividing by 9 (this will range from 1-9).

In either case, the higher the number you calculate is, the more fatigued you are.

Tips for Reducing Fatigue

1 Quantity & Quality of Sleep

- ✓ Have a regular bed time and wake up time
- ✓ Use your bed just for sleeping
- ✓ Do quiet activities if you're not sleepy
- ✓ Room should be dark and quiet

2 Proper Nutrition⁴

- ✓ Get daily value of vitamin and minerals
- ✓ Find out about proper nutrition at choosemyplate.gov
- ✓ Contact your doctor or a nutritionist/dietitian so you can get the most out of what you eat

3 Regular Exercise

- ✓ Choose an enjoyable exercise
- ✓ Do what you can and then try doing a little bit more each day
- ✓ Try tai chi and yoga to combine stretching, breathing, and calming exercises

4 Relaxation

- ✓ Avoid stress or stressful situations
- ✓ Do what you find relaxing: read a book, do yoga, sit outside, listen to music, etc.

5 Balance Work and Personal Life

- ✓ Spend your time off work with family, friends, or doing preferred activities
- ✓ Limit the amount of work you bring home with you

6 Avoid Drug Use

- ✓ Avoid stimulants including: coffee, nicotine, methamphetamines, cocaine
- ✓ Avoid sedatives

© National Parkinson Foundation
<http://www.parkinson.org/NationalParkinsonFoundation/About/Healthcare/What%20does%20fatigue.pdf>
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<http://www.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/003616.htm>
 © Mayo Clinic
<http://www.mayoclinic.org/symptoms/fatigue/basics/definition/20002004?from=results>
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<http://www.cancer.gov/acs/pressroom/2012/04/20120401a/20120401a.pdf>
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<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/>
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<http://www.parkinson.org/NationalParkinsonFoundation/About/Healthcare/What%20does%20fatigue.pdf>
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<http://www.ccohs.ca/osh/safety/fatigue/fatigue.html>
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<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2399974/pdf/0000000000000000.pdf>

Resources:

1. Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety
<http://www.ccohs.ca/>
2. National Cancer Institute
<http://www.nccih.nih.gov/>
3. National Library of Medicine
<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/>
4. National Parkinson Foundation
<http://www.parkinson.org/>
5. United States Department of Agriculture
<http://www.choosemyplate.gov/>

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