

# Your Energy & Activity

For most people, "fatigue" is a temporary condition - something you feel after you wash the kitchen floor or mow the lawn, and that goes away after a nap or rest. But for cancer patients, fatigue is a common medical condition that can be chronic and can severely affect their quality of life.

What is fatigue? Most people think of weakness or exhaustion as signs of fatigue. But there are other less obvious indicators too. "I just don't feel like myself" is a common statement made by cancer patients experiencing fatigue. Pain in your legs, difficulty climbing stairs or walking short distances, shortness of breath after only light activity are all signs of fatigue. Fatigue can also affect the way you think and feel - it can cause you to have difficulty concentrating, loose interest in the things you used to enjoy, and make you impatient.

Here is a list of techniques to help lessen your fatigue:

- Get plenty of sleep at night and allow time during the day for periods of rest.
- Take short walks or do some light exercise if possible. Try easier or shorter versions of the activities you enjoy.
- Eat a well balanced diet and drink plenty of fluids.
- Ask family or friends to help you with tasks you find difficult or taxing.
- Get up slowly to help prevent dizziness after sitting or lying down.
- Join a support group - sharing your feelings with others can ease the burden of fatigue.
- Cultivate interests that can be less strenuous, like knitting, listening to music or reading.
- REMEMBER, you don't have to do everything - save your energy for things you find most important to you!