

Fatigue

Fatigue is the most common side effect of cancer and cancer treatments. Symptoms of fatigue include weakness, tiredness, trouble thinking, lack of energy, and dizziness. You may feel fatigued due to the cancer itself or as a side effect of treatment. Fatigue can also happen because of medication side effects, stress, changes in sleep patterns or quality of sleep, eating and drinking less, or being less physically active. Cancer-related fatigue can make it hard to prepare meals and to eat well, which can greatly affect your quality of life and tolerance to treatment. It is important to get enough nutrition to provide your body with energy and to stay strong.

Tips for Dealing With Fatigue

- Ask friends and family to help with grocery shopping and food preparation.
- Try grocery or meal delivery services to save energy on buying and preparing foods.
- Keep ready-to-eat and easy-to-prepare foods on hand to make meals easier.
- Prepare large amounts of food when you feel your best and freeze individual portions for later.
- Choose foods and drinks that are good sources of calories and protein.
- Drink at least 8 cups of fluid per day to stay hydrated.
- Try not to go for more than 4 or 5 hours without eating.
- Enjoy your meals in a pleasant environment.
- Try high-calorie, high-protein nutritional drinks as they are easy to consume and can make up for lost calories at meals.
- Consider limiting naps to less than 1 hour so they don't affect your eating or your nighttime sleep.
- Stay as active as you can. Check with your health care team for activity recommendations.
- Schedule activities at times when you have the most energy during the day.
- Talk to your health care team about yoga, massage therapy, and psychosocial interventions that have been shown to help with fatigue.