

# How to Manage your Fatigue

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## What is cancer-related fatigue?

It is a feeling of tiredness that can last a long time and does not go away with rest or sleep. Fatigue is usually worse during treatment. For some patients it can last for months or even years after treatment is over. Fatigue can make you feel:

- Very tired, weak, heavy or slow
- Like you cannot think or remember things
- Worn out
- Like you do not have the energy to see people or do things you love

## What causes cancer-related fatigue?

It may be caused by:

- Cancer itself
- Cancer treatments
- Nausea and vomiting
- Pain, depression or anxiety
- Anemia (low red blood cell count)
- Lack of physical activity and exercise
- Nutrition problems
- Other medical problems
- Fatigue before treatment
- Medications
- Emotional distress
- Sleep problems

## What can I do to manage my fatigue?

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### Be active

Exercise is the best way to make your fatigue better. Try to get 30 minutes of moderate exercise on most days. Talk to your health care team about how to exercise safely.

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### Improve your sleep

Talk to your health care team about problems that may disturb your sleep, like depression, anxiety and stress.

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### Manage stress and emotions

Talking to someone about your feelings or doing activities to relieve stress and anxiety can help your fatigue.

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### Pace yourself

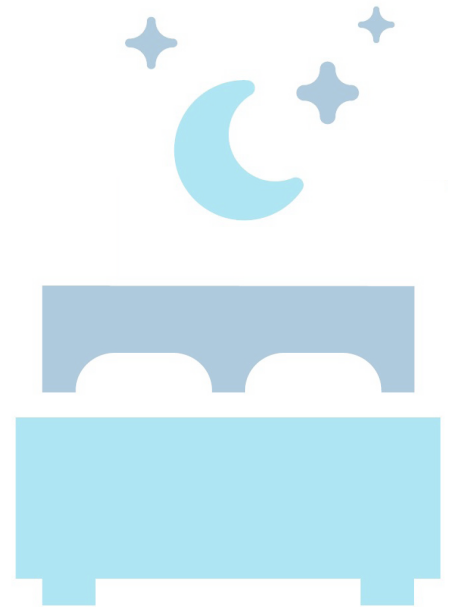
Use your energy wisely to do the things that are most important to you.

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### Eat well

Eat healthy foods and lots of variety to have more energy. To stay hydrated, drink at least 6-8 glasses of water or other liquids every day (unless your doctor told you to drink more or less).

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***Finding and treating the causes of your fatigue is important to help you feel better.***

## When should I talk to my health care team?

Tell your health care team how you are feeling at every appointment. They want to know about your fatigue. Do not be afraid to ask about your questions and concerns.

Tell your health care team right away if you have any of these symptoms:

- Dizziness, loss of appetite or falls
- Fatigue that is suddenly much worse
- Sudden shortness of breath or a fast heart beat
- Unexplained bleeding or bleeding that does not stop
- Anxiety, depression or feelings of not coping well



**For more information, talk to your health care team or visit [www.cancercare.on.ca/symptoms](http://www.cancercare.on.ca/symptoms)**



*Information adapted from Cancer Care Ontario's How to Manage Your Symptoms - patient guides.*

*This is information only and does not replace medical advice. Always ask your health care provider if you have any questions or concerns.*