

Side Effects - **Fatigue**

Fatigue is a common side effect of many cancer treatments. People often describe cancer-related fatigue as feeling extremely tired, weak, heavy, run down and having no energy. Fatigue that does not get better with rest or sleep is one of the most common complaints during the first year of recovery. For some, fatigue gets better over time and others may feel energy loss years later.

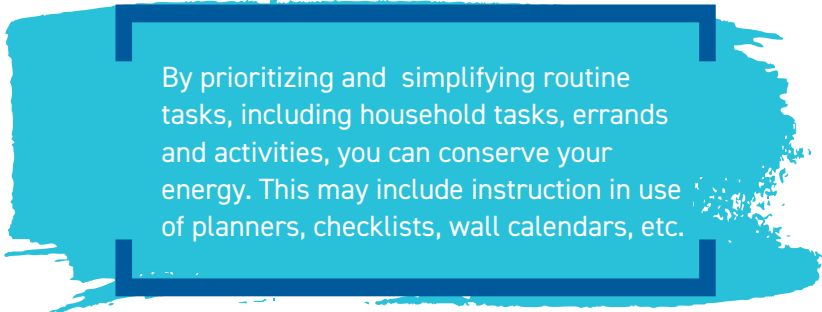
Ways to manage

You may be advised to take these and other steps to feel better:

- **Plan your day.** Be active at the time of day when you feel most alert and energetic.
- **Save your energy by changing how you do things.** Sit on a stool while you cook or wash dishes. Take short naps or rest breaks between activities.
- **Let others help you.** They might cook a meal, run errands or do the laundry. Ask for help with important tasks.
- **Choose how to spend your energy.** Try to let go of things that don't matter as much now.
- **Think about joining a support group.** Talking about your fatigue with others who have had the same problem may help you find new ways to cope.
- **Make a plan that balances rest and activity.** Choose activities that are relaxing. Many people choose to listen to music, read, meditate, practice guided imagery or spend time with people they enjoy. Light exercise may also be advised by your doctor to give you more energy and help you feel better.
- **Plan time to rest.** If you are tired, take short naps. Too much sleep during the day can make it difficult to sleep at night. Try to sleep and wake up at the same time every day.
- **Eat and drink well.** Meet with a registered dietitian to learn about foods and drinks that can increase your level of energy. Foods high in protein and calories will help you keep up your strength. Some people find it easier to eat many small meals throughout the day instead of three big meals. Stay well hydrated. Limit caffeine and alcohol.

Talk with your health care team about:

- Exercise programs that might help, such as walking or biking
- Relaxation exercises
- Changing your diet or drinking more fluids
- Medicines or nutritional supplements that can help
- Specialist who might help you, such as physical therapist, occupational therapist, oncology dietitian or mental health care provider



By prioritizing and simplifying routine tasks, including household tasks, errands and activities, you can conserve your energy. This may include instruction in use of planners, checklists, wall calendars, etc.