

EXERCISE & FATIGUE

It is important for a person with cancer to remain as physically active as possible. Exercise as much as your condition allows to help keep muscles functioning. Physical activity also helps prevent problems associated with long-term bed rest, such as stiff joints, breathing problems, constipation, skin sores, poor appetite and mental changes.

EXERCISE: WHAT TO DO

- Do as much daily self-care as possible.
- Take a walk every day.
- Try to do active or passive range-of-motion exercises as instructed by your nurse, doctor, or physical therapist. Active range-of-motion is the movement of a joint without any help from others; passive range-of-motion is the movement of a patient's joint by someone else.

EXERCISE: DO NOT

- Stay in bed with little movement.
- Let others do for you what you can do for yourself.
- Try to perform any range-of-motion exercises without first consulting the nurse, doctor, or physical therapist.
- Move any joint if it is painful.

CALL YOUR DOCTOR ABOUT ANY OF THE FOLLOWING SYMPTOMS:

- Progressive weakness
- Blurred vision
- Increased pain
- Numbness
- Headaches
- Tingling



EXERCISE & FATIGUE

Fatigue is the most common side effect of cancer treatment and differs from the tiredness of everyday life. It can appear suddenly, and can be overwhelming. It is not always relieved by rest, and can last for several months after the treatment ends.

Because cancer treatment-related fatigue can affect many aspects of a person's life, including the ability to do usual activities, it should not be ignored. Recent studies have shown that exercising during treatment helps reduce fatigue.

FATIGUE: WHAT TO LOOK FOR

- Feeling like you have no energy
- Increased sleeping
- Lack of desire to do normal activities
- Decreased attention to personal appearance
- Feeling tired even after sleeping
- Difficulty concentrating

FATIGUE: AVOID

- Forcing yourself to do more than you can manage

CALL YOUR DOCTOR ABOUT ANY OF THE FOLLOWING SYMPTOMS:

- Unable to get out of bed for more than a 24-hour period
- Confusion
- Progressive worsening of fatigue

FATIGUE: WHAT TO DO

- Plan rest periods to conserve energy for important things.
- Schedule necessary activities throughout the day rather than all at once.
- Engage in light activity.
- Get enough rest and sleep.
- Eat a nutritious diet including plenty of liquids.
- Remember that fatigue caused by treatment side effects is temporary and that energy will slowly improve when blood counts return to normal.
- Let others help you with meals, housework, or errands.



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Information provided by the American Dietetic Association
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