

# Coping with fatigue

About fatigue and some practical suggestions to help manage it

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Supporting you...



## What is fatigue?

Fatigue is quite common for people with a brain tumour. Fatigue is not the same as just feeling tired; it goes beyond normal tiredness and can feel relentless and debilitating.

## The impact of fatigue

Fatigue could have a significant impact upon your ability to perform daily tasks or stay focussed on something. Additionally, friends, colleagues and loved ones may not appreciate quite how difficult coping with it can be.

Fatigue could also cause you to become frustrated and angry because you find you are no longer able to achieve the things you used to do. The stress of this could make your situation feel worse. Learning about fatigue may be a helpful way of adapting and coming to feel more in control of your new situation.

## Causes of fatigue

Fatigue can be caused by:

- The tumour itself
- The impact of surgery
- Effects of chemotherapy and radiotherapy
- Medication, such as anti-seizure medication
- Pain
- Stress, anxiety or depression
- The need to focus on certain tasks
- Poor diet or a poor sleep pattern

## Fatigue in caregivers

Fatigue is also very real for loved ones and carers, who, whilst not experiencing the physical impact of the brain tumour or treatment, can be deeply affected by the emotional and psychological pain of facing a loved one's diagnosis as well as the physical demands of caring.

The simple tips that follow can be useful for both you and your carers but please also see our leaflet 'Care for Carers' for further help.

[Read more...](#)

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## Simple basics that may help you

- Eat a balanced diet and stay hydrated. Taking in enough fluid is vital
- Maintain a regular sleep pattern
- Try gentle physical activity such as restorative or hatha yoga, Tai Chi or walking
- Be kind to yourself and consider adjusting your expectations accordingly. It might be helpful to get to understand your new limits and how they impact on your life, and then work towards adapting to your new normal.

## Get to know yourself

- Tune in to your body and recognise what causes you to feel fatigued. This might be physical activity such as shopping, or having to concentrate for long periods of time, such as when listening to visitors
- Learn what you need in order to feel rested and relaxed, e.g. soft music or silence
- Keep a diary to record how you feel, both physically and emotionally. This will help you to recognise, and then adapt to, or change, any patterns

## Positive action you can take

- Plan your week to avoid several tiring activities in one day and try to spread them out
- Take regular rests or naps to enable recovery in between more tiring events
- Be honest with others about how tired you feel and what you can manage
- Ask for help with daily activities, such as shopping and housework
- Consider talking therapies like counselling. Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) on its own, or as part of the toolkit a counsellor or therapist may use, can be helpful when learning to make changes and dealing with frustration
- Speak to your consultant, specialist nurse or GP and share your fatigue diary with them
- Contact BTS to get support from a Support Professional or our Counsellor

## And finally...

Life with fatigue can be very disheartening and frustrating - but it is still your life!  
Try to be as positive as you can and be your own best friend.

**We are here  
to help you**



**Contact us:** 01454 422701  
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