

# Recognizing and Managing Fatigue

Fatigue is a feeling of physical and/or mental tiredness or exhaustion that impacts your ability to perform at your best. You may feel fatigued because of overwork, poor sleep, worry, boredom, or lack of exercise. Any illness may cause fatigue and it usually goes away as the illness clears up. Most of the time, mild fatigue occurs with a health problem that will improve with home treatment and doesn't usually require a visit to a doctor.

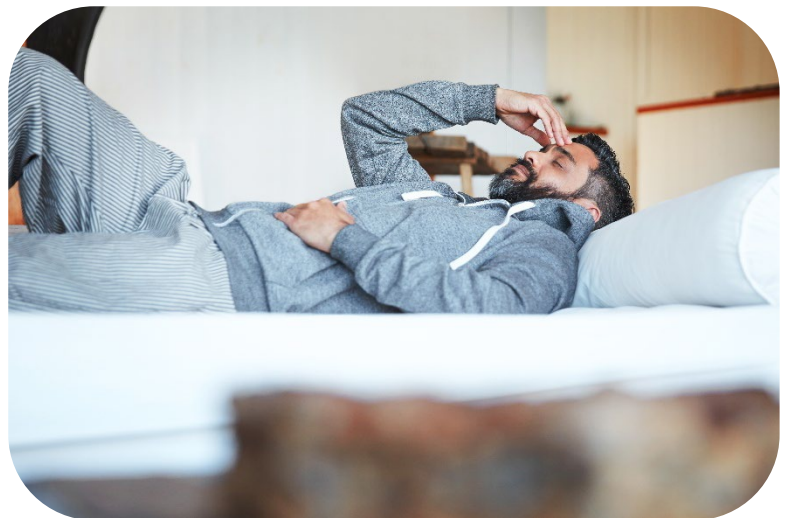
Nearly everyone struggles with being overtired from time to time. Fatigue can be influenced by extended work hours, tough physical or mental activities, and loss of sleep.

Chronic fatigue is a constant state of weariness that develops over time and reduces your energy and mental capacity. Chronic fatigue can impact your emotional and psychological well-being.

## Causes of Fatigue

Fatigue can be linked to your habits and routines, which can include:

- Sleep disturbances (e.g. snoring, night sweats, and loud noises)
- Home environment (e.g. window shades, bed surfaces, room temperatures, etc.)
- Level of support (e.g. peer support, family support, etc.)
- Too little or too much exercise
- Dehydration
- Medication
- Alcohol, caffeine, or drug use



Fatigue can impact your health, safety, and productivity at work and in life. In some cases, fatigue is a symptom of an underlying medical problem that requires medical treatment. Remember to reach out to a medical professional when needed.

Fatigue and getting good quality sleep are an important part of maintaining your health and wellness. But how do you know if you are feeling the impacts of fatigue?

## Symptoms of fatigue

The feelings associated with fatigue can be broken into three categories: physical, mental, and emotional. Being mindful of how you experience fatigue can help you understand how to address it.

### *Physical Signs:*

- Yawning
- Drooping eyes
- Rubbing of eyes
- Head dropping
- Digestive problems

### *Mental Signs:*

- Difficulty concentrating on tasks
- Lapses in attention
- Difficulty remembering tasks being performed
- Unable to communicate important information
- Failure to anticipate events or actions
- Accidentally doing the wrong thing

### *Emotional Signs:*

- More quiet or withdrawn than usual
- Lack of energy
- Lack of motivation to perform tasks

Being proactive and taking care of your health and wellness can help mitigate the risks associated with fatigue. Getting quality sleep – and enough of it – is an important way to manage fatigue.

## Tips to a good night's sleep

Sleep is an important part of maintaining your health and wellness. Not getting enough sleep can lead to feelings of fatigue, low alertness, negative mood, lengthier response times, and diminished attention and memory. Over long periods of time, not getting enough sleep can negatively impact health and has been linked to the development of chronic diseases including obesity, Type 2 Diabetes, cardiovascular disease and depression.

There are many things that can be done to improve your ability to sleep. Build healthy sleep patterns by:



- Routines: establish a pre-bedtime routine that includes quiet relaxing activities. Go to bed and get up at the same time every day
- Quiet: reduce the amount of noise. White noise or earplugs are good options if the room is not quiet enough
- Cool: ensure your room is the right temperature. The body typically sleeps best when the environment is between 18 and 22 degrees Celsius
- Dark: block out as much light as possible. Darker rooms tend to encourage deeper and prolonged sleep
- Nutrition: eat at regular intervals and consume a balanced diet
- Minimize distractions: use your bed primarily for sleeping. Try not to watch television, play on electronics, or consume screen time in excess before bedtime
- Caffeine: minimize caffeine intake prior to sleep. Caffeine acts as a stimulant and can last for up to six hours after consumption
- Stress free: try to reduce stress before sleeping

Make sleep a priority and allow yourself enough time to get the sleep you need!

## What to do if you are experiencing prolonged fatigue?

Fatigue that lasts longer than two weeks usually requires a visit to a doctor. This type may be caused by a more serious health problem, such as:

- A decrease in the amount of the substance that carries oxygen in red blood cells ([anemia](#)).
- Problems with the heart, such as [coronary artery disease](#) or [heart failure](#).
- Metabolic disorders, such as [diabetes](#).
- Problems with the thyroid gland. It regulates the way the body uses energy.
- Kidney disease and liver disease.

Fatigue is a common symptom of mental health problems, such as [anxiety](#) or [depression](#). If you think that your fatigue may be caused by a mental health problem, see your doctor.

## Wellness Articles

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