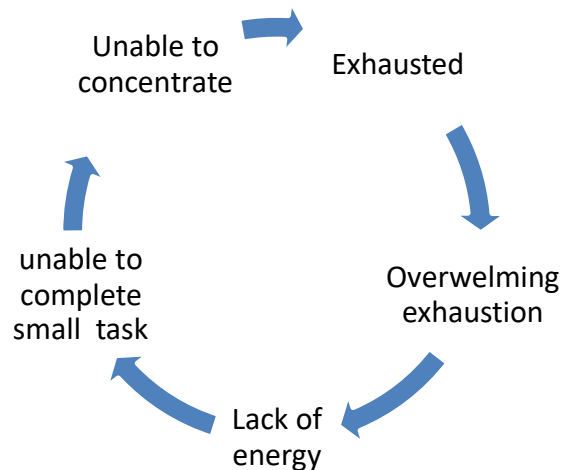


## Fatigue Management

### What is Fatigue?

Fatigue is a feeling of exhaustion that can affect you physically and psychologically. These symptoms can last short or long periods having effects on your normal daily routine such as getting washed and dressed to difficulties continuing to work. Fatigue can also make you feel emotionally tired affecting your mood and motivation.



- Fatigue is a common symptom of many long-term conditions.
- Fatigue is an invisible symptom. It may be helpful to explain your fatigue to others.
- Levels of fatigue can vary from day to day but also can fluctuate throughout a day.
- Fatigue can affect physical, cognitive, social and emotional functioning.

### What are the different types of fatigue?

#### Primary fatigue

This is caused directly by a health condition which could be a short term condition or a long term health condition.

#### Secondary fatigue –

Secondary fatigue is related to your condition and can include:

- Sleep problems

- Low mood, anxiety or stress
- Poor nutrition
- Pain
- Medication side effects
- Your surroundings/environment
- Other medical conditions including infections and/or deconditioning.

If you have a sudden change in symptoms or others health conditions, your GP could investigate these further.

### **How to manage fatigue**

Making small, consistent changes to your lifestyle can help to manage and improve fatigue.

Take steps to improve sleep, nutrition and your environment.

Keeping a record or diary of your activity and fatigue levels can help you to recognise patterns and see where you can make these changes.

The idea is to make tasks easier and make best use of the energy you have.

**Plan your tasks** – Can you spread them out throughout the week?

**Prioritise** – Is the task urgent or can it be left to another day or all together?

**Delegate** – Can somebody else do the task?

**Energy saving** - Are you completing the task in the most efficient way?

**Pacing** – Can you spread out the task throughout the day/week?

Find a balance between activity and relaxation, exercise and rest, work and fun.

### **Rest**

Rest is an important part of fatigue management and can prevent you getting to a point of complete exhaustion.

A few small breaks are best for some people; or you might feel better after just one longer rest at a particular time. It could even just be 5-15 minutes.

When you rest, aim to achieve good quality rest. Housework, chatting to family and friends or scrolling on social media may be relaxing activities but they are not resting.

Having a short sleep, meditating or listening to relaxing music can help you to rest.

Building in regular rest breaks to your routine will help to restore energy and long-term will help you to manage and maybe improve your fatigue.