The Facts About Fatigue

by NEWLIFEOUTLOOK TEAM

Understanding the Fatigue MS Brings

There are a few types of fatigue associated with MS. If your MS symptoms are disrupting your sleep at night, or if your daily activities require a lot of effort due to your reduced mobility, you may be fatigued because of these things.

However, there is also another kind of fatigue that affects MS patients, which is not related to the amount of sleep you get or your level of activity or stress.

Not all treatments for regular fatigue will work for this type of fatigue, which can strike even after a good night's sleep. But there are steps you can take to mitigate it, including keeping cool, resting regularly and dealing with stress.

Read our MS fatigue infographic below for more tips on coping with fatigue.

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THE FACTS ABOUT FATIGUE

Some Conditions with fatigue as a symptom

- Medications
- Pain
- Sleep Disorders
- Substance Abuse
- Anorexia
- Arthritis
- Cancer
- Diabetes
- Fibromyalgia
- Lupus
- Multiple Sclerosis
- Anemia
- Asthma
- Depression
- Parkinson's Disease
- COPD
- Chronic Fatigue Syndrome

With Fatigue You May Feel

- Tired
- Weak
- Exhausted
- Weary
- Worn-Out
- Heavy
- Slow
- Lethargic

What is Fatigue?

Fatigue is:

- Lack of Motivation
- Lack of Energy
- Wearing Out Easily
- Real

Fatigue isn't: [8]

- Lack of Passion
- Laziness
- Just Being Tired
- Fake or Imagined

Fatigue Can Affect:

- Your mood
- Physical function
- Work performance
- Social interaction
- Family care
- Cognitive performance
- School work
- Community activities
- Sense of self
- Your appetite

Measuring Fatigue

The **Fatigue Severity Scale** (FSS) is a self-reported questionnaire used to measure your fatigue. It consists of ...

NINE Questions, each rated on a scale of **1-7**

To score the Fatigue Severity Scale either **add all items together** (this will range from 7-63) or **find the mean** by adding your items together and dividing by 9 (this will range from 1-9)

In either case, the **higher the number** you calculate is, **the more fatigued** you are.

Tips for Reducing Fatigue

1 Quantity & Quality of Sleep

- Have a regular bed time and wake up time
- Use your bed just for sleeping
- Do quiet activities if you're not sleepy
- Room should be dark and quiet

2 Proper Nutrition [9]

- Get daily value of vitamin and minerals
- Find out about proper nutrition at *choosemyplate.gov*
- Contact your doctor or a nutritionist/dietitian so you can get the most out of what you eat

3 Regular Exercise

- Choose an enjoyable exercise
- Do what you can and then try doing a little bit more each day
- Try tai chi and yoga to combine stretching, breathing, and calming exercises

4 Relaxation

- Avoid stress or stressful situations
- Do what you find relaxing: read a book, do yoga, sit outside, listen to music, etc.

5 Balance Work and Personal Life

- Spend your time off work with family, friends, or doing preferred activities
- Limit the amount of work you bring home with you

6 Avoid Drug Use

- Avoid stimulants including: coffee, nicotine, methamphetamine, cocaine
- Avoid sedatives

(i) National Parkinson's Foundation:
http://www.parkinson.org/NationalParkinsonFoundation/Files/6c/1aa21193-ff12-4c5f-9b6b-9b0b1a9d8ec3.pdf

(ii) National Institutes of Health:
http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/003968.htm

(iii) Mayo Clinic:
http://www.mayoclinic.org/symptoms/fatigue/basics/definition/SYM-20050189q3p1

(iv) Hospice and Palliative Nurses Association:
http://www.hpna.org/pdf/teachingsheet_assistinginfamilieswithcancerfatigue.pdf

(v) National Library of Medicine:
http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/

(vi) National Parkinson's Foundation:
http://www.parkinson.org/NationalParkinsonFoundation/Files/6c/1aa21193-ff12-4c5f-9b6b-9b0b1a9d8ec3.pdf

(vii) Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety:
http://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/psychosocial/fatigue.html

(viii) National Cancer Institute:
http://www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/pdq/supportivecare/fatigue/Patient/page4#Keypoint26

(ix) National Library of Medicine:
http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/003968.htm

(x) United States Department of Agriculture:
http://choosemyplate.gov/

(xi) National Library of Medicine:
http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3375571/figure/F1/

Resources:

1. Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety:
http://www.ccohs.ca/

2. National Cancer Institute:
http://www.cancer.gov/

3. National Library of Medicine:
http://www.nlm.nih.gov/

4. National Parkinson's Foundation:
http://www.parkinson.org/

5. United States Department of Agriculture:
http://choosemyplate.gov/

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