



Fatigue

Fatigue is the most common side effect of cancer and its treatment. It can be caused by the cancer, or by stress, diarrhea, dehydration, infection, effects of chemotherapy, daily radiation therapy treatments, or anemia. People who experience fatigue often say that they feel weak and tired, and that they just don't have any energy. They may also be dizzy or sad, or even have difficulty thinking and performing activities of daily living. There are no medical tests to measure fatigue, so it is very important to let your doctor know how you are feeling.

- ◆ Keep a diary of your fatigue. Keep track of what things make you more fatigued and what things make you feel better. Note how often you become fatigued and how long it lasts.
- ◆ Try to rest when you feel the worst. Stay as active as possible when you feel better.
- ◆ Nap during the day and make sure you get quality sleep at night.
- ◆ Ask your friends and family to help you shop for food and prepare meals.
- ◆ Stock your kitchen with easy-to-prepare and easy-to-eat foods. Use time-saving convenience foods whenever possible.
- ◆ Try to eat small, more frequent meals and snacks that consist of appealing or favorite foods and beverages.
- ◆ Choose foods and beverages that are good sources of calories and protein to make the most of each bite and swallow.
- ◆ Be sure to drink enough water. Dehydration can make you feel tired.

What to Discuss with Your Health Care Provider

- ◆ Talk with your doctor or nurse about your fatigue. Ask if there are things that you can do to help you feel better. Your fatigue is often related to your treatment. Knowing about your fatigue can help you plan your activity and rest periods.
- ◆ Nutritional supplements, such as liquid meal replacements, may be helpful during this time. Your doctor, nurse, or dietitian may have samples and suggestions about which supplements would be best for you.
- ◆ Talk to your doctor about taking medications to help relieve your fatigue.

Easy-to-Prepare and Easy-to-Eat Foods

- ◆ Fresh fruits and vegetables
- ◆ Cooked eggs
- ◆ Dairy foods (milk, yogurt, ice cream, and cheese)
- ◆ Beverages (fruit juices, sports drinks, liquid nutritional supplements, teas, bottled water, lemonade, lattes)
- ◆ Frozen, canned, or packaged foods (soups, tuna, vegetables, fruits, beans, entrees, and hot and cold cereals)
- ◆ Potatoes (refrigerated, frozen, or boxed mixes)
- ◆ Snacks (pretzels, popcorn, trail mix, dried fruit, chips, crackers, and cheese sticks)
- ◆ Bakery items (muffins, bagels, rolls, pastries, and cookies)



Recipe Recipe Recipe

Berry-Banana Smoothie*

- 1 cup vanilla, plain, strawberry, or raspberry yogurt
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup Cheerios or other round-oat cereal
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup fresh strawberry halves, raspberries, frozen strawberries
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup milk
- 1 to 2 tablespoons sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ banana, sliced

Place all ingredients in a blender. Cover and blend on high speed for 10 seconds; stop blender to scrape sides. Cover and blend for 20 seconds longer or until smooth. Pour mixture into glasses. Serve immediately.

Makes two 1-cup servings. Each serving contains 255 calories and 9 grams protein.

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