

What To Do

When You Feel Weak or Tired (Fatigue)



"I had no energy. I asked my doctor what I could do to stop feeling so tired and worn out. She told me that walking for even a short time every day could give me more energy. Now that's a surprise. Being active does help me feel better."

Did you know that most people getting radiation therapy feel very tired?

- Fatigue does not mean that the cancer is getting worse.
- Fatigue does not mean that the treatment is not working.
- Feeling tired is normal during this time.

You may feel a little tired or very tired during radiation therapy.

Try some of the tips below:

They have helped others. Talk with your doctor or nurse about other things you can do to have more energy.

Be active if you can.

Most people feel better when they exercise each day. Some people even sleep and eat better when they exercise.

- Walk for 15 to 30 minutes each day.
- Take a short bike ride or ride an exercise bike.
- Choose an exercise or sport that you enjoy.



Managing Radiation Therapy Side Effects: What To Do When You Feel Weak or Tired (Fatigue)

Do fewer things. Ask for help when you need it.

You may have times of high and low energy.

- Do the activities that are most important to you first.
- Ask family and friends for help. They can make meals, drive you to the doctor, or help in other ways.
- Learn your limits. Don't fill your day with too many activities.

Plan a work schedule that is right for you.

Some people feel well enough to work. Others need to cut back.

- Take medical leave if you need to.
- Ask your boss if you can work from home.

Plan time to rest.

Many people need more rest during radiation therapy.

- Sleep at least 8 hours each night.
- Take short naps during the day. Nap for less than 1 hour at a time.
- Read a book or listen to music to relax before going to bed at night.



Talk with your doctor or nurse if you still feel tired after trying these tips.



Questions to ask your doctor or nurse:

1. What can I do to feel less tired?
2. How long will this tired feeling last?
3. How much walking or light exercise should I do?
4. Is there medicine that could help?

Free Services To Learn More

National Cancer Institute Cancer Information Service

Phone: 1-800-422-6237

(1-800-4-CANCER)

TTY: 1-800-332-8615

Online: www.cancer.gov

Chat Online: www.cancer.gov/help



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