



Why am I feeling extremely tired?

Everyone has felt tired at some point but people with cancer often feel very tired and have lack of energy. This is also known as fatigue, which may be caused by the cancer, side-effects of treatment, anaemia, side-effects of other drugs (steroids or painkillers), or anxiety/depression. Fatigue can cause a feeling of having no energy and no strength to do anything – even getting out of bed can be a challenge. Fatigue can affect the way you think and feel. It can make you feel more emotional than usual. It can cause lack of concentration, difficulty sleeping (insomnia) and memory problems. It is important to speak to your cancer doctor or lung cancer nurse specialist as the symptoms of fatigue can often be helped.

Will I be able to carry out everyday activities?

You may find that at times, particularly during periods of treatment, you feel more tired than usual. You may need to adapt your everyday activities to help overcome this.

What kind of changes may I need to make?

When activities are carried out in the easiest, most efficient way, less strength is used and tiredness or pain is prevented. This means that you will have more time and energy to cope with other activities during the day.

What sort of activities may I find more tiring?

Usually you will find that more physically demanding activities, for example, climbing stairs, gardening, shopping or perhaps bathing/showering are more tiring. There is equipment that can help you remain independent and reduce the energy required to carry out activities, for example:

- Use a stool to sit on when gardening.
- Check your bed and chairs are high enough for you to get on/off easily.
- A high toilet seat can be ordered if your toilet is too low.
- A grab-rail beside the bath, shower or toilet will help you steady yourself.

Ask your occupational therapist for advice on where you can get equipment that will help you.



I find it tiring to prepare and eat food, what will help me?

If possible, get someone to help you to prepare your food for the day. It may also be useful to make several portions of meals and freeze them for use on days when you don't feel able to cook. Try to choose soft foods which are easy to chew, for example, egg dishes, soups, puddings, crustless bread with toppings of banana, cream cheese, meat/fish paste. It may also help to mash or liquidise foods.

I am having difficulty sleeping, is there anything that will help me to get a good night's sleep?

If you have difficulty sleeping at night, there are a few simple changes which might help. Try to limit daytime naps so you are tired when it is bedtime. Here are some things to help you get a good night's sleep:

- Avoid caffeine in drinks (coffee, tea, fizzy drinks) before bedtime. Try herbal/camomile tea.
- Drinking alcohol in the evening may prevent you having a restful night's sleep.
- Try to relax before going to bed – have a bath (not too hot), read or listen to music.
- Relaxation techniques may also help you at bedtime.
- Making sure the bedroom is not too hot or cold can help.

“Aromatherapy oils such as lavender applied to your pillow or room diffuser may help”

Janette

Please see our *Living with lung cancer* booklet for more information on relaxation techniques. Visit www.roycastle.org/ayqpack or call our free helpline on **0333 323 7200 (option 2)**.

GIVING HELP AND HOPE

The charity has two aims:

Supporting people living with lung cancer - Working closely with lung cancer nurses, we provide information, run lung cancer support groups and offer telephone and online support. Our patient grants offer some financial help to people affected by lung cancer.

Saving lives - We fund lung cancer research, campaign for better treatment and care for people who have lung cancer, and raise awareness of the importance of early diagnosis. Our lung cancer prevention work helps people to quit smoking and encourages young people not to start smoking.

Call us on 0333 323 7200 (option 2)

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