

Four P's

Positivity. Try to stay positive. Make time to focus on the good things in your life, and what you can look forward to.

Plan your week ahead and get organised.

Prioritise what needs doing the most so you can spend your energy wisely. It's okay to put less important things off.

Pace yourself. Do things one step at a time or focus on one big activity per day to conserve your energy .

What is Fatigue?

A feeling of extreme physical or mental tiredness that does not always improve after rest.

Fatigue is a common symptom of arthritis. Often, making a few small lifestyle changes can help you manage this problem.

Causes of Fatigue...

- Lack of refreshing sleep
- Too much sleep
- Stress / Anxiety /Low Mood
- Being overweight
- Lack of fitness
- Erratic eating habits
- Some medications
- Inflammation
- Anaemia
- Dehydration
- Pain
- Doing too much
- Pregnancy



Fatigue -Self Help

...Helping yourself

What?

Why?

...REST

Try to....

Getting Help

Exercise

This is the key to fighting fatigue. Boost your energy levels and mood; lose weight and gain muscle.

Your Doctor May:

- Check your blood to rule out a medical cause for fatigue.
- Look at whether your medication is making you feel fatigued.
- Adjust your medication to improve control of disease and pain.

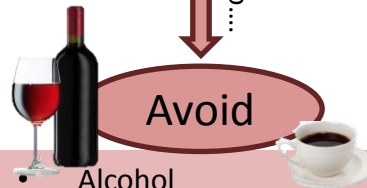
Sleep Management

- **Routine** – go to sleep and wake up at the same time each day.
- **Environment** – Your bedroom should be clear from clutter and distractions. It is just for sleeping.
- **Stop** using electronic devices before bed. The light they emit has been proven to disturb sleep.
- **Time** - Aim for no more than 8 hours of sleep per night.



Avoid

- Alcohol
- Caffeine
- Daytime naps lasting longer than 15 minutes



Relaxing Exercises (6 min)

Find a peaceful place. Try these simple relaxation exercises for a real benefit.

- Hold each position for 2 minutes.
- Inhale deeply, and exhale slowly.
- Close your eyes and relax.

1. Sit cross – legged or in a chair. Sit comfortably. Rest your hands on knees. Breathe in and out for 2 minutes.



2. Hug your knees to your chest. Breathe in and out for 2 minutes.



3. Stretch forward as far as you can, and tuck your head in. Breathe in and out for 2 minutes.



Spoons Theory

Energy is invisible and so it is difficult to quantify or describe to others.

Spoons are physical objects and so can be used as a technique for visualising energy levels.

1. You start each day with a fixed number of spoons.
2. Plan your day. Each task costs you a spoon because you are expending energy.
3. Higher energy tasks will cost you more spoons than low energy tasks.
4. If you wake up and feel great you have 10 spoons. If you didn't sleep very well or you had a busy day yesterday you might feel tired - so you only have 7 spoons.

This may help you visualize your energy level and plan your day.

Try using this way of describing your energy levels to your friends and family so that they can understand how you're feeling.



Adapted from "The Spoon Theory"
Christine Miserandino
www.ButYouDontLookSick.com

Ten Top Tips

1. **Relax.** Try some mindfulness exercises and relaxation techniques.
2. **Do little and often.**
3. **Exercise frequently.** Set yourself exercise goals. Gradually increase them as your energy levels and abilities rise.
4. **Rest** when you need to.
5. **Eat healthily** with regular modest meals. Avoid snacks. Fatty and sugary foods can leave you feeling sluggish.
6. **Drink plenty.** Carry a bottle of water with you and remind yourself to have a few sips every now and then. Avoid sugary drinks and caffeine.
7. **At work,** try taking microbreaks to refresh yourself. If your job involves lots of sitting, get up and move around. Encourage oxygen flow to your brain and muscles.
8. **Find a hobby** – something stress relieving, creative, musical or sporty. Knitting, cycling, swimming and baking are all good ideas for when you need some down time.
9. **Stay in.** If you don't feel up to the evening out you planned, suggest an alternative which is more manageable.
10. **Let others know** when you are feeling fatigued. They may be able to help or to decrease their demands on you.