



NEBRASKA CANCER SPECIALISTS

the Physicians of Oncology Hematology West

Fatigue

Fatigue is a feeling of tiredness that can keep you from doing the things you normally do or want to do. It is the most common side effect of cancer treatments. Factors such as cancer itself, low blood counts, nutritional problems, and sleep problems can contribute to fatigue, although the exact cause is not known.

Signs of fatigue:

- You feel weary or exhausted. It may be physical, emotional, and/or mental exhaustion.
- Your body, especially your arms and legs, may feel heavy.
- You have less desire to do normal activities like eating or shopping.
- You may find it hard to concentrate or think clearly.

What you can do to manage your fatigue:

• Rest and sleep

Rest and sleep are important, but don't overdo it. Too much rest can decrease your energy level. In other words, the more you rest, the more tired you will feel. Avoid stimulants such as alcohol and/or caffeine before going to sleep. Try to go to bed at the same time every night. Create an environment conducive to sleep. If you have trouble sleeping, talk to your doctor or nurse.

• Activity

Stay as active as you can. Regular exercise like walking several times each week may help. Pace yourself and avoid rushing through an activity. Decide which activities are important and perform them when your energy level is high.

• Nutrition

Drink plenty of liquids. Eat as well as you can, and eat nutritious foods. Eat frequent small meals rather than three large meals.

• Energy Conservation

You can do more by spreading your activities throughout the day. Take rest breaks between activities. Learn to delegate. Let others help you with meals, housework, or errands. Do not force yourself to do more than you can manage. Practice good body mechanics.

• Energy Restoration

Do activities that you enjoy and make you feel good. Try listening to music, or visiting with friends and family, or looking at pleasant pictures. Try to do these activities at least three times per week.

Talk to your nurse

- If you have been too tired to get out of bed for the past 24 hours.
- If you feel confused or cannot think clearly.
- If your fatigue becomes worse.

For more information feel free to visit the website chemocare.com