

Patty's PT Tips

Managing Fatigue-Pathway to a Better Life

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80% of people diagnosed with MS experience fatigue as a major symptom

Fatigue can express itself in 3 major ways:

1. Motor fatigue
2. Lassitude
3. Depression

Causes of MS fatigue are part of current ongoing research but it is thought to be the result of lesions that are influenced by biochemical changes which decrease the efficiency of nerve conduction. Inflammatory biochemistry may impact fatigue. Alcohol, sugar, caffeine can have inflammatory effects.

So, fatigue is not a static thing and can be influenced by our behavior. Medications for lassitude type fatigue have varying value for different people. This is worth a discussion with your MD but medication routines must be discussed with your doctor. Lifestyle modifications may have the most impact and often have to be tuned like instruments in a symphony orchestra to get the best results for each of our individual "songs".

Lifestyle changes we can implement with occasional input from the appropriate professional included on your team-MD, PT, OT, Mental health professional, Orthotist, Respiratory therapist, Adaptive medical equipment consultant, construction worker

Try to keep a fatigue diary for 7-30 days to see when you notice the most impact of fatigue

Interventions we have some control over and must decide for ourselves:

1. Prioritizing/Organizing your physical environment
2. Planning-Work or Activities of Daily Living
3. Healthy Eating/Hydration
4. Rest breaks/Mindfulness/Meditation
5. Sleep
6. Temperature-physical environment as well as clothing and use of cooling devices
7. Exercise/postures
8. Gait/Assistive devices/Bracing/Mobility Equipment choices
9. Mental Health-counseling, support groups, clear communication with family/friends
10. Joy/Recreation

<https://www.nationalmssociety.org/Resources-Support/Library-Education-Programs/Educational-Videos/Symptom-Management?page=2>