

## Aids and Adaptations

Conserve your energy through the use of adaptive equipment. Further information available through the occupational therapy team.

## Communication

It is important to communicate and be honest with those around you to help them to understand how you are feeling and what you feel you are capable of at that time.

## Relaxation

Relaxation exercises are a really nice way of taking the time out of your daily routine. It allows you to;

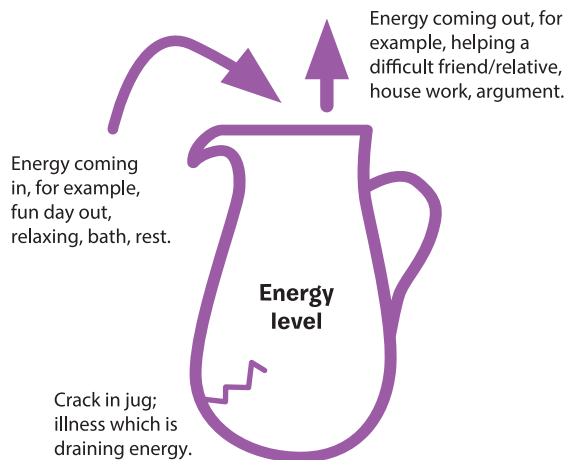
- Focus on your breathing
- Take dedicated time to relax your mind
- Reduces stress and anxiety levels
- Can be easy to do during rest periods
- Complementary therapies- such as massage, reiki, reflexology and aromatherapy.

If you would like any further information please ask to speak to a member of the complementary therapy team.

## The Energy Jug

The energy jug is an analogy used to represent your energy levels throughout the day. The water level in the jug is the amount of energy you have. Your illness is a crack in the jug which is constantly draining your energy levels.

Energy is also used by the activities you do during the day and it can be topped up by resting or doing energising activities. Remember, it is important to do activities which you enjoy as well as things that you need to do.



## Help and Advice

If you would like any further information about sleep strategies contact our occupational therapists at St Gemma's Hospice on 0113 218 5500.

St Gemma's Hospice: 0113 218 5500  
Website: [www.st-gemma.co.uk](http://www.st-gemma.co.uk)  
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# Coping with Fatigue

Management Strategies  
and Techniques



0113 218 5500  
[www.st-gemma.co.uk](http://www.st-gemma.co.uk)

Registered Charity No. 1015941

## What is Fatigue?

Fatigue is a common problem for people experiencing illness. It affects people differently and can be a difficult idea to grasp, especially for those close to you as it can't be seen.

**This is what people have said:**

“An hour after getting up I feel as if I am wading through mud.”

“It makes me feel useless, like even if I have an idea to do something my body can't do it.”



### Fatigue can affect you in different ways:

- Physically - feeling tired all the time
- Emotionally - feeling tearful and frustrated
- Socially – not feeling able to meet up with others can affect relationships
- Cognitively – being unable to concentrate

## What causes fatigue?

The following factors may contribute to fatigue. Always discuss any concerns with your doctor first.

**Your illness**

**Treatment for your illness or medication**

**Poor sleep**

**Anaemia**

**Any other medical problems**

**Sickness and not feeling like eating**

**Worry, stress and low mood**

**Not being physically active at all**

## Strategies that may help

Fatigue and early onset of exhaustion can limit your daily function and activity. Management of your energy levels and capabilities is one of the key components to maximising your physical goals.

The 5 P's can be a useful way to help you to manage:

**Prioritising** - At the start of each day think about what needs to be done. Can anything be delegated to someone else? Can anything wait until tomorrow? Prioritise some things that you enjoy.

**Planning** – Plan your activity for when you feel most energised and factor in rest periods when you feel most fatigued. This could be at a certain time of day or after a certain activity.

**Pacing** – Pace your activities by doing little and often. Break big tasks down into smaller chunks with rest periods in between. This will help you to maintain your energy levels across the day.

**Permission** – Give yourself permission to take time for yourself, to say no to people if needed or to delegate tasks to others. Self-care is important.

**Posture** – Adopting a good posture when sitting or lying down will help your rest periods to be more effective.

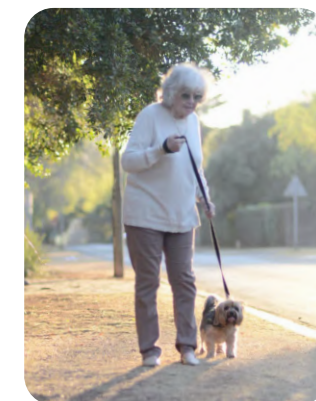
### Exercise

Exercise has clinically proven benefits in energy management and remaining active. However, exercising with fatigue has differences to regular exercise and it must be appropriate and specific for the individual.

Keeping the exercises based on function is vital as it contributes towards the very tasks you wish to perform. Examples of this are regular short walks both indoors and outdoors and / or up and down stairs.

Reflect on your activity levels and look for patterns of fatigue that could have been avoided.

Further information about exercise is available through the physiotherapy team.



### Eating and drinking

When you are feeling tired or fatigued you may not feel like eating as much as usual. Feeling nauseous can also lead to eating less. Eating less means you have reduced intake of energy, this may in turn affect your energy levels resulting in a vicious cycle.

### Sleep

Enhancing the quality of sleep you have at night can have an impact on your fatigue levels during the day. Please see our leaflet with advice on managing your sleep for further information.