



Fatigue management

Fatigue is common while your brain is recovering from the concussion. Fatigue may also be influenced by other factors such as sleep, mood, nutrition, metabolic factors e.g. anaemia.

Fatigue may be:

- **Cognitive** – getting tired from concentrating, multi-tasking, time pressures, and complex thinking
- **Physical** – getting tired from physical activity and exercise
- **Emotional** – getting tired from personal interactions, relationship changes or stressors

After a brief period of rest during the acute phase (24-48 hours), a gradual return to usual activity is recommended based on your tolerances. Some people find that some symptoms may be more noticeable when fatigued e.g. headaches develop, difficulty with memory, or feeling overwhelmed. Fatigue is often well managed through planning, pacing, taking regular breaks, and healthy lifestyle factors.

Strategies for managing fatigue:

- ✓ Sleep well and wake refreshed (reduce naps if affecting your night's sleep)
- ✓ Regular exercise to help you feel positive and energised
- ✓ No alcohol or illicit drugs that can affect your mood, reactions, and hydration
- ✓ Eat a healthy diet. Consider smaller more regular meals
- ✓ Learn stress management techniques, to deal better with stress and pressure.
- ✓ Limit caffeine/energy drinks/sugar as they provide a false expectation of your body's energy

Fatigue can be managed with **forward planning, pacing and regular rest.**



1. Forward planning

- **Set priorities** for what is most important to be achieved and reduce stress e.g. need to do vs want to do
- **Set daily/weekly achievable goals**
- **Plan ahead:** so you have the time to achieve each goal and time to rest
- **Complete one task at a time:** to improve your efficiency
- **Clean, uncluttered environment**
- **Delegate tasks and set boundaries**

2. Pacing

Activity pacing has two parts to it, conserving energy for activities you value and setting graduated activity goals to help you to increase your ability to do activities (tolerance).

- Break large tasks into smaller chunks – focus on completing small amounts often
- Alternate cognitive or thinking activities with physical activities or complex tasks with more routine or simple tasks
- Start with what you can achieve with little effort and gradually build on this

3. Regular rest/routine

- **Schedule rest periods:** take regular short rest breaks throughout the day
- **Set a regular routine:** to reduce the thinking effort required to constantly plan ahead.

Questions to ask myself:

- What happens when I am fatigued?
- What are my triggers?
- How long can I do certain activities before needing a rest?
- What strategies will I put in place?
- What jobs/tasks are my priorities or must do?
- What can I do differently to reduce the demands on me?
- What is stopping me from using these strategies?

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