

Fatigue

Special points of interest:

- > Feeling tired and sick is not healthy
- > Don't think of it as 'normal' there is plenty you can do
- > Lifestyle factors to improve fatigue
- > What are the most important nutrients to overcoming fatigue?

Are you sick and tired of being sick and tired?

Do you jump out of bed every day with a smile and excitement about your day? If you have to force yourself up and drag yourself through the day then you may be fatigued. With our stressful busy lives, most people experience tiredness at some time but usually this resolves with rest and relaxation. For an increasing number of people however, persistent unremitting tiredness becomes a major problem. Many people often consider their low energy levels to be normal.

Fatigue is a common condition in Australia and New Zealand and is often misunderstood or even

dismissed. This may occur if there is no identifiable 'cause' from diagnostic procedures, such as blood tests, but that doesn't mean you shouldn't want to strive to be your best.

Fatigue occurs if the mechanisms which provide the body with the energy to function are not working effectively. The result is everything slows down, both physically and mentally, and functioning normally becomes harder and harder. The resulting low energy and enthusiasm affects all facets of life – relationships, performance at work, chance of driving accidents, desire to eat well and exer-

cise – to name a few. Working with your practitioner Tracey Lee Morley, to perform a 'tune up' and get your energy producing mechanisms working again is one of the best ways to improve both the quality and quantity of your life.

How do you know if you are fatigued?

Some times it is difficult to know whether you just need a holiday or whether you have underlying fatigue, even though you have had time to rest and recover, then it might be time to look at the underlying mechanisms and make sure all is well.

What can you do help?

Whilst you are working with Tracey Lee Morley to correct the underlying mechanisms that may be causing the fatigue, it is equally important to address any lifestyle factors that may be perpetuating

it. If the lifestyle components are not addressed you may end up taking two steps forward and one step back and never feel like you gain complete wellness.

Naturally you can only do as much as you can do, especially when you are fatigued, so even small steps are worthwhile. Work with Tracey Lee to set realistic goals and ensure that you are not over-



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Get adequate, regular and consistent amounts of sleep each night

The human body needs a certain amount of sleep each day to function correctly – to repair and recharge. A sleep cycle of eight hours is recommended, however some people require 9-10 hours, and care with not falling into ‘sleep debt’ is essential. “Sleep debt” is the notion that if we need eight hours and only get seven hours, then we are one hour in ‘debt’ and that hour needs to be ‘topped up’. The ulti-

mate goal is going to bed and waking at the same time each day (yes that means no weekend marathon sleep-ins) as this helps to set the body ‘clock’ and maintain a consistent sleep cycle.

Gaining a regular sleep cycle is sometimes easier said than done s there may be underlying issues that need to be addressed. Sleep apnoea, for example, is a common issue in which

breathing stops for a short period of time causing the body to awaken to recommence breathing. This constant waking will have a huge impact on the quality of sleep. Sleep studies can be performed if this is implicated. Stress, pain, noise (snoring partners!), high caffeine use and depression are all issues that take their toll on the sleep cycle and need to be addressed.



The Wellness Pyramid is a healthy well balanced diet for everyone . Note the most important is exercise and water!

Eat a healthy, well balanced diet and drink plenty of water throughout the day

Depending on the quality and balance of food, your daily diet can either be a medicine or a poison, creating a considerable impact on your energy and vitality. Returning to basics regarding food is one of the best things you can do for your body and often results in increased energy. Tracey

recommend’s the Wellness pyramid (see page 3) as the basis of a healthy lifestyle. Naturally ‘fresh is best’ and avoiding processed foods is always preferable. Organic, free-range choices are best when available. Locating and buying as they frequently provide seasonal produce

at a cheaper cost. To help achieve wellness there are eight simple dietary and lifestyle targets you need to aim for. For recipe ideas, ask at the clinic for your free “Your Guide to Wellness” booklet.

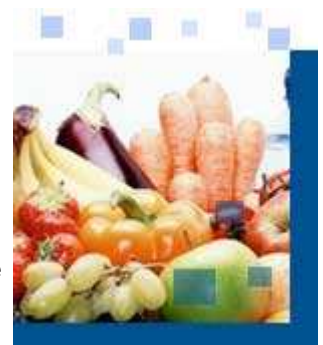
Exercise Regularly

Regular physical activity helps address many of the underlying mechanisms that may cause or perpetuate fatigue, including stress, immune system problems, unstable blood sugars, mood changes, irritability and excess body fat. Exercise can help manage symptoms and improve physical

functioning in people suffering from fatigue have normal muscle so the best option is not to shy away from the exercise but rather ‘use it, don’t lose it.’

If you have been suffering from long term fatigue it is suggested that you work with Tracey Lee to create a

graded exercise plan so that you start gently and gradually be able to make exercise part of your weekly routine. Tracey can also provide you with this simple, easy and free booklet – “Your Guide to Exercise” that can provide motivation and information on exercise options that best suit your life.



Learn better ways to relax

We all have stressful aspects to our lives – work, family, finances and illness. When the stress that we feel from these issues is not resolved quickly, we may find our health and wellbeing really start to suffer. Stress is a part of modern day living, it is therefore important to put in place techniques to manage it in an effort to limit the negative impact stress may have on your body. It is also beneficial to work on ways to reduce your exposure to stressful situations in the first place, which is always easier said than done, but definitely

worth thinking about.

Often issues that seem to be very important, and require your immediate attention, can resolve themselves without your input. Sometimes not getting involved in every issue can reduce your exposure to stressful situations. Ask yourself whether the current issue would resolve itself eventually if you were not available, and if the answer is yes, then you can choose to not play a role.

One of the keys to managing stress is to understand that your inbuilt stress response is designed to support physical activity. Many people find that Yoga and Tai Chi, both traditional forms of exercise which also incorporate relaxation and stress management elements, are highly beneficial to calm the mind and 'switch off' the stress response. They are slow and gentle, and can be performed by just about anyone.

Deep breathing for relaxation

Deep breathing exercises can assist in relieving stress and, when performed daily, provides a cumulative benefit as it becomes easier to relax into the breathing. The exercises are best performed laying flat on the back on a hard surface, usually the floor. Bend the knees and relax the body (particularly the mouth, nose, and face). One hand should be placed on the abdomen to monitor how deep the breath goes. The aim as you breathe is for the abdomen to rise further than the chest. Take a series of long, deep breaths through the nose, attempting to raise the abdomen. Deep breathing can be continued for up to 20 minutes.

Take a Multivitamin, Omega-3 fatty acid and Antioxidant daily

Keep high glycaemic load foods (potato, bread, pasta and rice) to a minimum

Include nuts and seeds and healthy oils in your diet

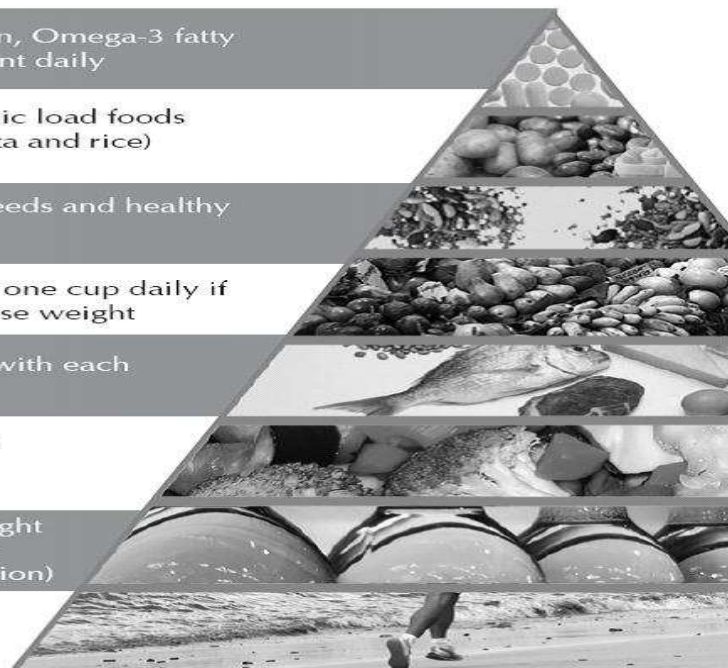
Fruit two pieces or one cup daily if you are trying to lose weight

Protein rich foods with each meal or snack

Fresh vegetables, a minimum of three cups daily

Water minimum eight glasses daily (drink alcohol in moderation)

Regular exercise, minimum 30 min most days



Avoid stimulants and excessive alcohol

All too often it might seem tempting to use stimulants – coffee, energy drinks, high sugar foods and even drugs – to give you a 'kick' when you are tired and unmotivated. The benefit from this artificial 'up' is short lived and, ultimately, leaves the

body even worse off than before as they artificially 'rev up' the metabolism. What goes up must come down and quite often comes crashing down after a false 'up'. If you are currently using stimulants it is suggested that you decrease the amount slowly over a

period of weeks rather than simply stopping 'cold turkey' as this may lead to headaches, irritability and drowsiness. The overuse of alcohol will also frequently lead to fatigue by affecting the sleep cycle.



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Some helpful nutrients which have been scientifically researched and proven to assist the mitochondria to produce energy effectively are:

Magnesium
Carnitine
Coenzyme Q10
Lipoic Aid
Omega 3 oils
Antioxidants

Deficiencies in these nutrients can lead to persistent fatigue. Unless the deficiency is corrected it may prove difficult to overcome the state of low energy and motivation. Your Practitioner Tracey Lee Morley can assist you to decide which of these nutrients you may be deficient in.

More in September 2007 newsletter on the common deficient signs of these nutrients.

How your body makes energy

There are a number of physical and mental mechanisms that cause fatigue and that ultimately must be addressed to provide you with the foundation to be your best. If the mechanisms aren't identified and treated then the body is more susceptible to feeling fatigued and a vicious cycle commences.

The Energy "Powerhouse" – the Mitochondria

The energy 'powerhouses' of every cell in the body are called mitochondria. Each cell has between 200 and 2000 mitochondria and each one needs a favourable environment to function effectively. Mini-

mising the factors that damage the structure of the mitochondria whilst ensuring specific nutrients are available is important for maximum energy production and is often the starting place in the treatment of fatigue.

NEXT ISSUE Fatigue Part 2;

- A closer look at nutrients that assist your body in it's energy production
- What are some of the other underlying causes of fatigue.