

# Common causes of fatigue.

Not sure what's causing your fatigue? Here are some common drains on your energy that may be to blame, together with tips on how to overcome them.



## Being inactive.

Sitting in one position for long periods of time can sap your energy, even if you're watching the TV or using the computer. Your body equates the stillness with going to sleep.

**Solution.** Stretch your body every hour, or get up and walk around. Frequent breaks will keep your body alert.

## Sugary breakfast cereals.

Sugary breakfasts (processed cereals, pastries, muffins and toast with sugary spreads) will give you a quick surge of energy, but your sugar levels will slump just as quickly a couple of hours later causing you to 'crash' as you run out of energy.

**Solution.** To get a steady release of energy all morning long, eat a breakfast that's based on unrefined starch. Choose breakfast cereals that are wholegrain and low in salt and sugar. Try porridge with semi-skimmed milk and a little honey, or a wholemeal cereal such as Weetabix, with fruit sliced over it. Alternatively, try an egg (boiled, poached or scrambled) with whole wheat or granary toast.

## Constant worrying drains energy.

If you're fretting about something all day long, your heart rate and blood pressure rise and your muscles tighten, leading to fatigue and aches.

**Solution.** Set some time aside to work through your worries and think of positive solutions to allow you to put the worries out of your mind, or at least to park them for a while.

## 'Cabin fever'.

Lack of light and fresh air from being indoors all day is a key cause of tiredness.

**Solution.** Get out for a 10 minute walk at least once during the day, or when you're most tired. Even if it's cloudy, you'll be exposed to more natural light than inside and you'll feel more alert.

## Sleep well.

Two thirds of us don't get the amount of sleep we need to stay alert throughout the day.

**Solution.** Get into the routine of going to bed at night and getting up in the morning at the same time each day. Avoid naps during the day, and try and spend some time relaxing to unwind before you go to bed. Improving your sleep will improve your mood, reduce stress levels, improve concentration and boost your energy levels.

## Drink more water.

Even being mildly dehydrated will make you feel tired.

**Solution.** Carry a water bottle with you daily and keep refilling it. Aim to drink the equivalent of 6-8 glasses of water a day.



1 in 5 visits to the GP are related to tiredness and fatigue  
(National Hydration Council survey of 300 GPs)