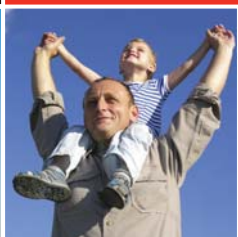
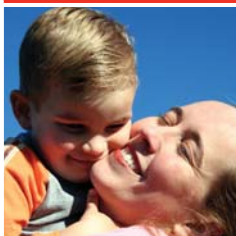


# Your Bank to Energy Savings

***Helping people  
with cancer  
handle fatigue***



**empower  
the patient**

Partnering in Healthcare Decisions

# Welcome



## Welcome to Your Bank to Energy Savings.

This booklet will help you understand fatigue and what you can do about it.

Cancer and its treatment can rob you of your energy. Temporary (“acute”) fatigue is intense but is usually relieved by getting a good night’s sleep. But excessive, constant weariness (“chronic fatigue”) is a different matter. Chronic fatigue can linger and seriously interfere with your activities and the quality of your life.

The good news is that fatigue can often be managed. If you know what to look for and what to do, you can ensure that you have the energy to do the things that are most important to you.

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# Do I have fatigue?



An important step in taking control is to know your level of fatigue.

1. Answer the Patient Fatigue Self-Assessment Questionnaire. It will help you see if fatigue is interfering with your life.
2. Use the Fatigue Scale to see how you are feeling today.
3. Share this information with your nurse, doctor and other members of your healthcare team.

## Patient Fatigue Self-Assessment Questionnaire

*For each question, check the responses that best represent your situation.*

- ☐ Do you have less energy than in the past?
- ☐ Do you tire more quickly than usual?
- ☐ Do you spend a lot of your time resting or lying down?
- ☐ Do you frequently feel tired even when you wake up?

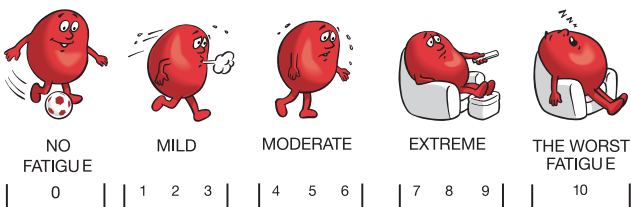
## Does your fatigue frequently interfere with:

- ☐ Doing activities you enjoy?
- ☐ Carrying out duties and responsibilities?
- ☐ Your ability to visit or socialize?
- ☐ Family roles and responsibilities?
- ☐ Do activities take more effort than they used to?
- ☐ Do you find it harder to concentrate?
- ☐ Does fatigue frequently interfere with your emotions and feelings?
- ☐ Are you concerned about your fatigue?

**The more items you checked, the greater the chance that you are experiencing chronic fatigue. Further assessment by your nurse, doctor or another member of your healthcare team can help you manage fatigue. Remember – fatigue can be managed!**

## Fatigue Scale

How do you feel today? Using the Fatigue Scale, keep a diary of how you feel at different points of the day, on different days. You will quickly begin to see when you have the most – and the least – energy.





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## Symptoms of fatigue

- Lack of energy
- Feeling like “I can’t be bothered to do much”
- Problems sleeping
- Finding it hard to get up in the morning
- Feeling anxious or depressed
- Pain in the muscles
- Being short of breath after doing small tasks
- Finding it hard to concentrate
- Being unable to think clearly or make decisions easily
- Loss of interest in doing things you usually enjoy
- Negative feelings about yourself and others

Fatigue  
**impacts**  
on daily activities.



## Everyday and cancer-related fatigue are different.

### NORMAL FATIGUE:

- Intense
- Short duration
- Relieved by a good night's sleep

### CANCER-RELATED FATIGUE:

- Unusual, excessive and constant
- Does not respond to rest
- Persistent over time
- Can interfere with activities of daily living

### Remember:

- Fatigue can be managed.
- Managing your fatigue will help you continue your treatment.
- Knowing when to ask for help is very important.
- You are not alone.

Improve the  
**quality**  
of your life.



## What causes fatigue?

Any of the following symptoms can be caused by cancer and its treatment and can result in fatigue:

- Anemia, diarrhea, dehydration, fever or infection, nausea or vomiting or pain (for help, see **Managing symptoms** on page 10).
- Depression (see **Depression: Another cause of fatigue** on page 12)
- Other effects of treatment such as:
  - > Poor appetite and nutrition
  - > Dehydration (e.g., not drinking enough fluids)
  - > Insomnia, lack of sleep and/or a change in your sleep patterns (e.g., waking frequently during the night)
  - > Worries or anxiety
  - > Lack of physical activity



Once you have completed your treatments, your energy level will probably return. Some studies have found, however, that some cancer survivors experience fatigue for months or even years after treatment. Determining the cause of this type of fatigue is difficult.

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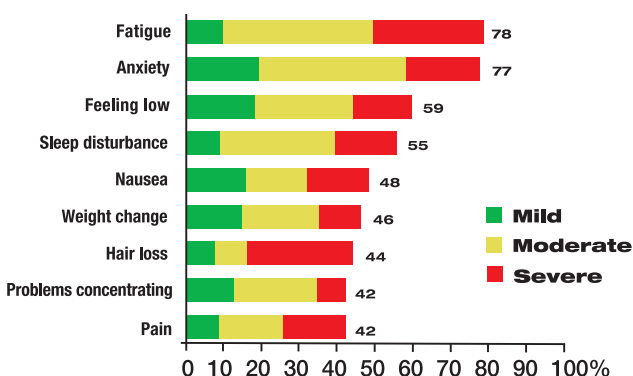
## Managing symptoms

Many symptoms of cancer or your cancer treatment may make your fatigue worse. Here are some common symptoms that your healthcare team can help you to manage.



- Anemia: for many people, cancer and/or cancer treatment may cause a fall in the number of red blood cells. This condition is called anemia, and can make you feel tired. Your doctor may prescribe medication or a blood transfusion.
- Dehydration: Increasing your fluids may help.
- Diarrhea: Changing your diet may help in controlling diarrhea. Medications can be prescribed if the diarrhea persists.
- Fever or infection: Fever and infection can be very serious in people with cancer and should be treated immediately.

- Nausea or vomiting: Check out our tips on how to aid digestion on page 20. If relaxation techniques and changing what you eat and drink are not able to help you, your doctor may prescribe anti-nausea medications.
- Pain: Pain can be managed by a wide variety of drugs.



A Canadian Survey of Cancer Patients' Experiences. Are Their Needs Being Met?  
 Dr. F. Ashbury, Centre for Behavioural Research and Program Evaluation, NCIC, 1995-1996  
 A total of 913 cancer patients who had received treatment within the last 2 years.  
 Participants were screened through telephone interviews to ensure eligibility.

Something can be done to help if you have symptoms that keep you from feeling the best you can. Talk with the members of your healthcare team about what you can do to help take control of your symptoms. Managing your symptoms can help to improve the quality of your life.

The most disruptive  
**symptom**  
 to everyday life.

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## Depression: Another cause of fatigue

Some studies suggest that up to 25% of cancer patients experience depression. As you deal with your disease, periods of feeling “blue” or “down” are not unusual.

Being depressed can rob you of energy. Our Depression Checklist can help you see if this is a problem for you.



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## Depression Checklist

Speak with a healthcare professional if you experience five or more of the following symptoms for more than two weeks.

- ☐ Feeling sad, anxious, irritable, nervous and/or guilty
- ☐ Feelings of worthlessness or hopelessness
- ☐ Changes in your usual sleep patterns (either having trouble sleeping or sleeping more than normal)
- ☐ Changes in your appetite; gaining or losing weight without trying
- ☐ Loss of interest in activities you used to enjoy
- ☐ Restless or slowed behaviour
- ☐ Persistent or recurring headaches, digestive disorders or chronic pain
- ☐ Difficulty concentrating, remembering or making decisions
- ☐ Fatigue, loss of energy
- ☐ Change in work style or productivity
- ☐ Thoughts of suicide or death – if these occur, seek immediate professional help.

If the depression lasts for many weeks without relief or is severe enough to interfere with everyday life, you may need some help. Talk about your feelings with your doctor, nurse or counsellor. Sometimes just talking with someone is enough to help. In other cases, medications can be given to help relieve depression.

## What can I do about fatigue? Your “Bank to Energy Savings”

Think about your energy stores as a bank. Every night – or even during the day – you make deposits into your energy “account” by resting. You will also make “withdrawals” – using the energy you need to do activities and to deal with your cancer. A balance needs to be maintained between the energy you deposit and the energy you spend.

Being treated for cancer takes a lot of energy out of your energy bank. At times, there may not be enough energy left to do the things you want, such as playing with your children or grandchildren, gardening, socializing with your friends or working. Planning what you do, prioritizing your activities and pacing yourself can save energy and help to ensure there is more energy in the bank for the things you want to do.



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## Top 10 energy saving tips

1. Take time for yourself and your own needs.
2. Eat a well-balanced diet and drink plenty of fluids.
3. Be physically active.
4. Learn to manage your stress.
5. When you're active, take short rest breaks.
6. Don't overload your day. Reassess and reprioritize what you do. If you are employed, talk with your employer or supervisor about adjusting your job responsibilities and/or your hours of work.
7. Whether at work or at home, learn to delegate tasks to others. Don't be afraid to ask for help.
8. Look for new ways of doing things so they are less physically and/or mentally taxing.
9. Plan your day to take advantage of when you have the most energy.
10. Share your feelings with family members, friends or caregivers, or join a support group.

Understanding  
**fatigue**  
due to cancer.

# Memory and Concentration



Just as your body can become tired, so can your brain. When you are fatigued, it is normal to have problems remembering and concentrating. You might hear this referred to as “cognitive” or “attentional” fatigue.

## Here are some tips to help you cope

- Plan activities that require clear thinking or concentrating when you are most rested.
- Learn new information in small amounts.
- Asking questions can help you remember something you are told. Write down your questions and, if necessary, ask the same question many times.
- During discussions with your healthcare team, write or tape-record notes, or bring someone with you. Two heads can be better at remembering than one!
- Having trouble remembering details about your disease? Ask for written materials, videos or audio cassettes. Your healthcare team may also know of credible Internet sites that you can visit while at home.



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- To help improve your thinking, take regular “refreshment breaks.” Walk outdoors, garden, birdwatch or do crafts. Choose activities that you love and that give you a sense of “getting away from it all.”
  - Keep a diary, daytimer or calendar and mark down all of your appointments. Consult it every night to see what you have scheduled for the next day, and every morning when you get up.
  - Ask a family member or friend to help you to remember by making reminder lists or notes for you.
  - Having trouble remembering to take your medication? Talk with your pharmacist about daily pill boxes or calendars. Sometimes it is helpful to have a family member or friend become your “medication manager.”
  - Don’t start long or difficult tasks that you may find hard to finish. You could end up feeling frustrated, anxious or angry at yourself if you cannot complete them. Instead, choose shorter, simpler projects that you are more likely to be able to complete. For example, read short stories or magazines instead of long books. Rent a movie instead of going to the theatre (especially if the movie is long or has a complicated plot).

Get help to  
**evaluate**  
your action plan.

Cancer and its treatment can temporarily change how food tastes to you and rob you of your appetite. At times, the last thing you may want to do is to eat. But eating a nutritious, balanced diet is very important. Remember that less food = less energy.

### Tips for improving your appetite

- If your doctor approves, a glass of wine or beer before meals can stimulate your appetite and help you relax. Just be careful to not overdo it. Too much alcohol can make fatigue worse.
- Mild to moderate exercise, such as walking, can help stimulate appetite and improve mood.
- Try going for a short walk just before your meal.
- Make mealtimes pleasant and stress-free. Cook and eat foods that you like.
- Eat more during the times of the day when you are most hungry. If you have more energy and feel more like eating in the morning, eat a good breakfast. Or eat small meals often throughout the day, whenever you start to feel hungry.
- If a lack of appetite is a continuing problem for you, speak to your doctor. Medications are available that may be able to help you.

The body uses  
**energy**  
to repair tissue.

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## Guidelines for healthy eating

- Have meals that are easy to prepare but nutritious. Ask for a referral to a dietitian to help you.
- Drink at least 8 glasses of liquid a day, including water, milk, juice and soup. Fluids are essential to energy production and also help to get rid of waste products that build up as cancer cells die.
- Try to limit your intake of caffeine and alcohol. They can rob you of fluids. Coffee, tea, colas and chocolate may contain caffeine.
- If you are having trouble eating enough, snack between meals. Dried fruits and nuts are an easy way to increase your energy intake.
- Increase the amount of protein in your diet by regularly eating chicken, fish, meat, dairy products, peanut butter or eggs.
- Grains, pasta, fruit and vegetables are good sources of complex carbohydrates. Complex carbohydrates provide energy for a long period of time.



- 
- Healthy shakes can be made with either whole or 2% milk and a variety of fruits. You can also try to drink more fruit juice.
  - To increase the number of calories you eat without a lot of fat, add 2 tablespoons of skim milk powder to shakes, pudding, yogurts, gravies or any liquid-type food.
  - A variety of nutritional supplement drinks and puddings are available. These supplements can be helpful if you are having difficulty eating meals and are beginning to lose weight. Try various flavours and brands until you find some that you like.
  - Check with your doctor, nurse or dietitian before starting to take any supplements, herbal preparations or vitamins.

## How to aid digestion

- To help prevent nausea, drink liquids well before mealtime. Drinks that contain sugar can help to reduce nausea by slowing the digestion process.
- Plan your meals around your treatments. Some people feel better if they eat before their treatment; others do better if they eat several small meals or snacks throughout the day.

Your doctor may  
**prescribe**  
vitamin supplements.

- 
- When you are feeling nauseous, try plain, carbohydrate-rich foods such as crackers, breads and cereals.
  - If the smell of cooking makes you feel nauseous, always keep cold foods in the house.
  - After eating, relax sitting up.
  - Avoid foods that you find difficult to digest, such as those that are deep-fried, highly seasoned or spicy.
  - Don't overeat. Eat smaller portions but more frequently. Eat slowly.
  - Try relaxation exercises after eating.

If you are a woman receiving adjuvant chemotherapy for breast cancer, you may gain weight during treatment. Speak to your dietitian if you have any questions or concerns.



## Exercise

When you are tired, the last thing you may want to do is to exercise. But one of the odd things about chronic fatigue is that the more you rest, the more tired you will feel. Regular, moderate physical activity can increase your energy level and help relieve fatigue. Regular physical activity can also help to elevate your mood.

Important: Before beginning any exercise program, check with your doctor. This is particularly important if you haven't been physically active for a while. Avoid moderate or heavy physical activity on days you have blood tests or receive chemotherapy.

### Tips for regular exercise

- Regular, mild to moderate activity is better for you than infrequent, intense workouts.
- Start slowly and increase your activity level over time. A good way to start is with walking for 5 to 10 minutes two or more times a day. When you can, increase the length of time you walk and/or how frequently you walk.
- Choose activities you enjoy that can fit easily into your lifestyle, such as walking, swimming, cycling, golfing, dancing or exercise classes.
- In bad weather, exercise indoors.

Always

**listen**

to your body.

- 
- Plan to exercise when you have the most energy.
  - Find a regular time to be active and mark it in your calendar, like an appointment. Invite a friend or relative to exercise with you.
  - Wear comfortable clothes and shoes. Protect yourself from the sun and cold.
  - Do not worry if you miss a day or two. Start again when you feel ready. But, as much as possible, try not to miss more than a few days in a row.
  - Listen to your body. Progress slowly. Slow down if something hurts and do not push yourself if you are not feeling well.



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## Exercise warning

**Stop exercising and call your doctor right away if you notice any of the following:**

- An irregular pulse or resting pulse greater than 100 beats per minute
- Extreme fatigue
- Unusual muscle weakness or cramps
- Unusual joint pain
- Chest pain or discomfort
- Sudden onset of nausea
- Dizziness, blurred vision or fainting
- Shortness of breath
- Confusion
- Pale or bluish skin colour
- Fever greater than 38°C (100°F) or shaking with chills
- Numbness or loss of feeling





## Sleep and Rest

Either too much rest or too little can increase your feelings of fatigue.

### Tips for getting a better night's sleep

- Nap during the day if you feel that you need to but keep your naps short (no more than 20 minutes). Save your longest sleep for nighttime.
- Place medication needed during the night at your bedside with a glass of water.
- Keep a sleep routine. For example, try to go to sleep and wake up at the same time each day.
- Avoid using your bed for activities such as reading or watching TV.
- Don't let indigestion keep you awake. Eat lightly in the evening. Do not eat just before you go to bed.
- Avoid alcohol, drinks with caffeine and/or smoking several hours before bedtime.
- Relax before bedtime. Drink a warm beverage or try relaxation techniques such as warm baths or listening to music in the dark.
- Be sure your bed, pillows and sheets are comfortable.
- Try new sleeping positions and/or use pillows for support and comfort.

Start a daily  
**sleeping**  
routine.

- 
- Block outside light with blinds or drapes.
  - Find a room temperature that is right for you.
  - If breathing is a problem for you at night, elevate the head of your bed with pillows or cushions under the mattress.

## What to do if you cannot sleep

- Try to think of something pleasant. Use your relaxation techniques, such as listening to quiet music or imagining yourself in a peaceful place.
- Getting up during the night is not a concern if you can fall back to sleep easily. If you awaken and are still awake after 20 minutes, get up and “putter around” quietly (e.g., read or do a chore) until you begin to feel sleepy. Avoid watching television – the light may wake you up even more.
- Try warm, caffeine-free drinks such as milk.
- Try a different bed or room or try new sleeping positions.
- Speak to your doctor or nurse if your trouble with sleeping persists.
- Put on socks. Cold feet can prevent you from sleeping.

Find what  
**works**  
for you.

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## Rest tips

During the day, periods of rest are often as good as sleeping. Here are some tips to help you get rest periods in your day:

- Limit visitors or plan for when they will visit.
- Plan rest before periods of activity.
- Try relaxation techniques, such as thinking of something pleasant.
- Listen to quiet music, practice deep breathing, read a book, meditate or write in a journal.
- Adjust the room temperature until you are comfortable.
- If necessary, place chairs in the house so you can stop and rest when you are weary (e.g., along a long hallway or in the kitchen or laundry room).
- Limit naps during the day to 20 minutes. Try to avoid napping after 3 p.m., as it may interfere with your sleep at night.



# Activities and Hobbies

Staying physically and mentally active can make a big difference in how you feel. It is important to keep up with activities you enjoy, such as hobbies, visiting with friends or going out for a movie or dinner.

## Tips

- Plan your activities for when you think you will have the most energy.
- Select activities that match your energy level.
- Balance activity and rest (don't get overtired).
- Laugh. Seek out humorous books, people, movies or television shows.



## Self-esteem

Being tired and undergoing changes to your body as a result of your illness can be hard on your sense of self and self-esteem. Here are some tips for holding onto your self-esteem:

- Try to continue your regular grooming routine.
- If there is hair loss, use colourful scarves, new hats and/or a wig.
- Women often feel better if they learn to put on makeup, wigs and scarves effectively. Ask your healthcare team if there is a program in your community for women with cancer.
- Talk with a social worker, chaplain or support group.
- Be proud of things you have done and set new, realistic goals.
- Focus on an interesting activity that takes your mind off being ill.
- If a surgical site or scar is really bothering you, talk to someone in your healthcare team about reconstructive or plastic surgery.

Give yourself the  
**chance**  
to get healthy.

## Social Support

Family members, friends or support groups can be important in helping you deal with cancer. They can also help you to manage fatigue.

- Accept offers of help when needed and learn to delegate tasks. Make a list of activities that someone else could do, such as housekeeping, driving, preparing meals or child care.
- Hire a student to do chores that take too much energy, such as yard work or heavy gardening.
- Make a list of friends, family or community groups willing to help. Write down what they are willing to do. Community groups that may be able to help you include cancer support groups, cancer societies, seniors' groups, your church and parent groups.
- Ask about home care services and “Meals on Wheels” in your community.



## Emotional Stress

It is normal to feel worried, fearful, anxious and helpless when facing cancer. However, these emotions can use up a lot of energy and increase your feeling of fatigue. It is important to learn how to manage your stress.

- Ask questions. The more you know about your symptoms, the more you can participate in controlling them.
- Talk to someone about how you feel.
- Join a support group or talk to other cancer survivors.
- Ask about counselling or stress management programs.
- Learn about deep breathing or relaxation techniques.
- Identify things you can control in your life and take control of them.
- Focus on the “positives” in your life.

Learn how to  
**manage**  
stressful events.

# Saving Your Energy

There are four basic ways you can save the energy you have. Think of them as the 4 Ps – Plan, Prioritize, Pace and Position.

## 1. Plan

- Plan your day the night before, listing your appointments and activities. Include activities that bring you joy. Eliminate activities that are not that important.
- Plan the tasks you do. For example, think of how you can do laundry with the fewest number of trips to the laundry room.
- Plan your day according to when you usually have the most energy. Stop working before you become tired or rest for a short while and resume your task when you are able.

## 2. Prioritize

- Divide tasks into “most important,” “second most important,” and “least important.” Concentrate on doing only the most important tasks.
- Decide which activities you must do yourself and those which you can ask others to do.





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### 3. Pace

- Balance activities with rest or relaxation. Don't try to do everything in one day.
- Never work or play until you are exhausted. Stop frequently for rests and pace yourself as you complete a task. Your goal is to have enough energy to do the things you want – with a little to spare at the end of the day.
- Take advantage of the times when you have more energy to do activities that require more effort.

### 4. Position

- Sit as much as possible when doing household activities, hobbies, or activities at work (e.g., filing, cooking, painting).
- Push rather than carry things. Use trolleys or walkers with baskets to help you carry things and move around more easily.
- Drag or slide objects rather than lifting them.
- If you have surgery, have family and friends help you start walking and moving around as soon as possible afterwards.
- If required, take your pain medication a half hour before walking or other activity.

Develop new  
**strategies**  
for daily routines.

# Saving Energy During Everyday Activities

## 1. Bathing

- Wash your hair when you take a shower, rather than bending over a sink.
- Sit to dry off. Or use a terry robe instead of drying yourself off.
- Use a shower organizer hung over the shower head to avoid leaning and reaching.
- Install a grab rail.
- Use a shower bench or lawn chair so you can sit while showering.
- Use a hand-held shower head while sitting.
- Use moderate temperature water, rather than hot.
- Use a long-handled sponge or brush to reach your feet and back.

## 2. Grooming/personal care

- Sit while dressing or shaving. Rest your elbows on the counter or dressing table so you do not have to lean forward unsupported.
- Use long-handled brushes or combs to avoid holding your arms over your head.
- If your grip is weak, use brushes with built-up or rubberized handles.
- Use a raised toilet seat.

Fit your  
**activities**  
to your lifestyle.



### 3. Dressing

- Sit to dress.
- Choose styles that are easy to put on.
- Wear loose-fitting clothes that allow you to breathe more easily.
- Allow time to get ready so you will not have to rush.
- Lay out clothes before starting to avoid extra steps.
- Bring your foot to your knee to put on socks and shoes, so you do not have to lean over.
- Wear slip-on shoes that are supportive and comfortable.
- Use a long-handled shoe horn and a sock aid.
- Fasten your bra in front and then turn to the back.
- Use long-handled reachers to eliminate bending and help you get garments started over your feet.

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## 4. Getting Around

- Wear comfortable, low-heeled shoes.
- Wear shoes with shock-absorbing soles or insoles.
- Consider using a wheelchair for long trips, such as to the mall.
- Maintain good posture when driving.
- Install hand rails on stairs and in bathrooms.
- Place chairs around the house to allow for rest stops (e.g., on a stair landing or along a long hallway).
- Remove scatter rugs and avoid loose or floppy slippers or shoes.
- Since most falls occur on the bottom step of stairs, make that step highly visible by lighting it or painting it a different colour.
- If possible, use cruise control when driving.
- If you are eligible, obtain a permit so you can use handicapped parking spots.

## 5. Housekeeping

- Establish priorities.
- Spread tasks out over the week.
- Do a little bit every day.
- Delegate heavy work or hire help if you can.
- Use a wheeled cart or apron to carry supplies.
- Do whatever you can sitting.
- Use long-handled dusters, mops and dust pans.
- To clean the tub, use a long-handled sponge mop. Ask the members of your household to clean the tub or shower after they use it.

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## 6. Shopping

- Write out menus for the week and make a list of all of the ingredients you will need.
- Organize the grocery list by store aisle.
- Use the grocery cart for support or use a power scooter if the store has one.
- Request assistance from the store with shopping and getting to the car.
- Shop at less busy times.
- Shop with a friend.
- Delegate shopping or ask about a delivery service from your local store or through phone or Internet-based services.

Find your  
**strength**  
during  
treatment.

## 7. Making the Bed

- Use a comforter.
- Unfold sheets, don't shake them.
- To save steps, make one side of the bed completely and then move to the other side.
- Use casters on the bed to make it easier to move.
- To eliminate this daily chore, straighten the covers while you are still in bed.

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## 8. Preparing Meals

- Before you start cooking, get together all ingredients and cooking equipment.
- Use mixes or pre-packaged foods.
- Use smaller appliances.
- Move items on a rolling cart.
- To rest your back, sit while you work or rest one foot on a stool or edge of a shelf.
- Store frequently used items at chest level to avoid bending and stretching.
- Use a jar opener.
- Use a rubber mat or wet towel under mixing bowls to hold them steady while stirring or mixing.
- Do not lift heavy pans off the stove. Ladle out the food at the stove.
- Use oven mitts to take advantage of the entire hand to lift.
- Use place mats instead of tablecloths. They are easier to place on the table and to clean.
- Use lightweight utensils.
- Prepare double portions and freeze half for later.



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## 9. Cleaning Up the Kitchen

- Use disposable plates or cups.
- Line cooking pans with aluminum foil to avoid scrubbing.
- Let dishes soak rather than scrubbing.
- Use non-stick sprays or pans.
- Use a dishwasher or delegate dishwashing.
- Let dishes air dry.
- Use the same pot for cooking and serving.
- Use wheeled garbage cans.

## 10. Laundry

- Sort clothes on a table.
- Use a laundry cart on wheels.
- If possible, sit to transfer clothes to the dryer.
- Use commercial pre-wash instead of scrubbing.
- Wash bras and socks in a lingerie bag to avoid tangling.
- Drain hand washables and press the water out instead of wringing.
- Adjust the ironing board height and sit to iron.
- Don't try to do everything (laundry, handwashing and ironing) on the same day.
- Use an iron with a spray attachment.
- Use a lightweight iron.
- Hang clothes on the doorknob instead of the top of the door.

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## 11. Child Care

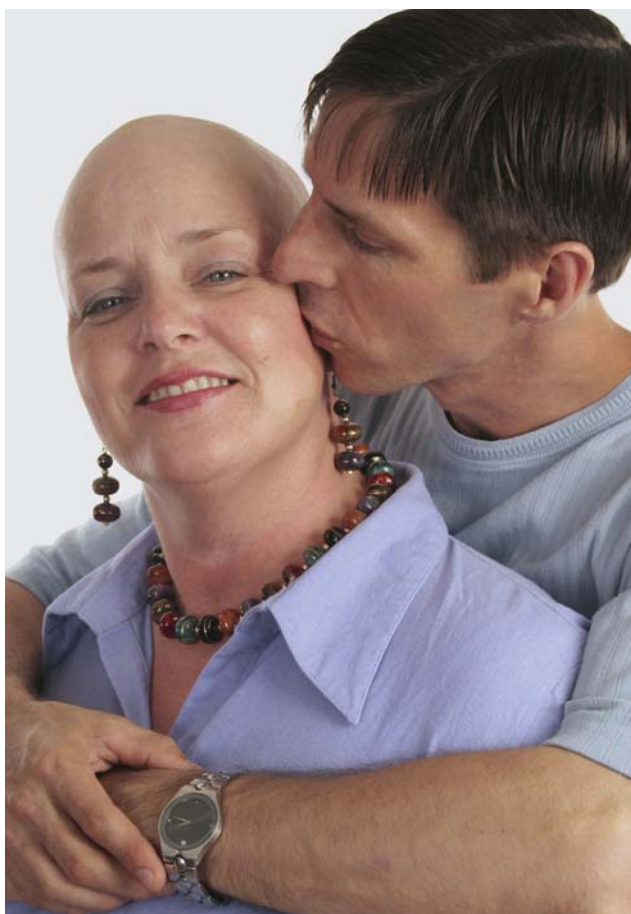
- To allow sitting, plan activities around the table or in the living room.
- For outings with your children, choose to visit places where you can spend time sitting (e.g., a planetarium, as opposed to a museum).
- Teach smaller children to climb onto your lap instead of being lifted.
- Teach children to make a game of some of the household chores.
- If possible, delegate some of the child care.

## 12. On the Job

- Speak with your supervisor and prioritize your workload.
- Learn to delegate.
- Plan your workload around your best times of the day.
- Arrange your workspace to be efficient and comfortable.
- If possible, take periodic rest breaks.
- If possible, sit while working.

Taking  
**control**  
of your journey.





### 13. Intimate Relations

- Plan sexual activity for when you are most rested.
- Consider alternative forms of sexual expression that take less energy than intercourse, such as hugging, kissing and stroking.
- Try sexual positions that do not require supporting the body, such as lying on your side.

# Saving Energy at Home and Outdoors

## Home Setting:

- Use an answering machine to get messages and give updates on your progress.
- Have someone screen your phone calls or use caller ID.
- Resolving outside issues can lessen worry and stress that contribute to fatigue. For example, finalize such legal issues as your will, your living will and power of attorney.
- Request an occupational therapist home visit to make suggestions for saving energy.
- Be aware that certain smells, such as chemicals, drinks or foods, can be bothersome. Try to use pleasing scents to create a calming environment (e.g., lavender or other favourite potpourri).

## Outdoors:

- Dress for the weather. Direct sunlight, hot, humid weather, or cold weather can increase the strain on your body.
- Wear layers of clothing so you can stay at a comfortable temperature.
- When the weather is bad, get your exercise inside.
- “Sun sense” is important. When outside in warm or hot weather, wear sunblock, a hat and appropriate clothing. Also remember to drink plenty of fluids whenever the weather is hot.



## Resources for Patients and Families

### Canadian Sites:

**Canadian Cancer Society:** a national, community-based organization of volunteers, whose mission is the eradication of cancer and the enhancement of the quality of life of people living with cancer: [www.cancer.ca](http://www.cancer.ca)

**RealTime Cancer:** this a web site where young adults dealing with cancer can connect, share and support one another: [www.youngadultcancer.ca](http://www.youngadultcancer.ca)

**Caring Voices:** an online community for breast cancer survivors initiated by Princess Margaret Hospital's Survivorship Program. Share life stories and treatment experiences through online chats and moderated discussions: [www.caringvoices.ca](http://www.caringvoices.ca)

**Caring to the End of Life:** A resource for patients, caregivers and health care professionals facing end of life issues. Created by the staff at the Princess Margaret Hospital, information on the palliative care process: [www.caringtotheend.ca](http://www.caringtotheend.ca)

**Wellwood:** is a community-based outreach program, providing supportive care and peer support to people who have received a diagnosis of cancer, their families and caregivers, and healthcare providers. [www.wellwood.on.ca](http://www.wellwood.on.ca)

**Canadian Breast Cancer Network:** focused on breast cancer in Canada. Conferences, workshops, research news, support groups by area, treatments, prevention and survivor stories: [www.cbcn.ca](http://www.cbcn.ca)

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**Colorectal Cancer Association of Canada:** The (CCAC) is dedicated to improving the quality of life of patients and increasing awareness of the disease: [www.colorectal-cancer.ca](http://www.colorectal-cancer.ca)

**Empower the patient:** a website for Canadians undergoing chemotherapy treatment. Learn how to combat your anemia and fatigue due to chemotherapy: [www.empowerthepatient.com](http://www.empowerthepatient.com)

**Lung Cancer Canada:** a charitable organization with the aim of increasing lung cancer awareness, support and education in Canada: [www.lungcancercanada.ca](http://www.lungcancercanada.ca)

**Lymphoma Foundation Canada:** Information for people with lymphoma, the fifth most common type of cancer in Canada: [www.lymphoma.ca](http://www.lymphoma.ca)

**Myeloma Canada:** a website for Canadians touched by Multiple Myeloma: [www.myelomacanada.ca](http://www.myelomacanada.ca)

**NHL Cyberfamily:** The support group for people dealing with Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma: [www.nhlcyberfamily.org](http://www.nhlcyberfamily.org)

**Ovarian Cancer Canada:** Ovarian Cancer Canada was begun by a small group of women diagnosed with ovarian cancer. Initially, they worked to develop a national support network with informal links via the Internet: [www.ovariancanada.org](http://www.ovariancanada.org)

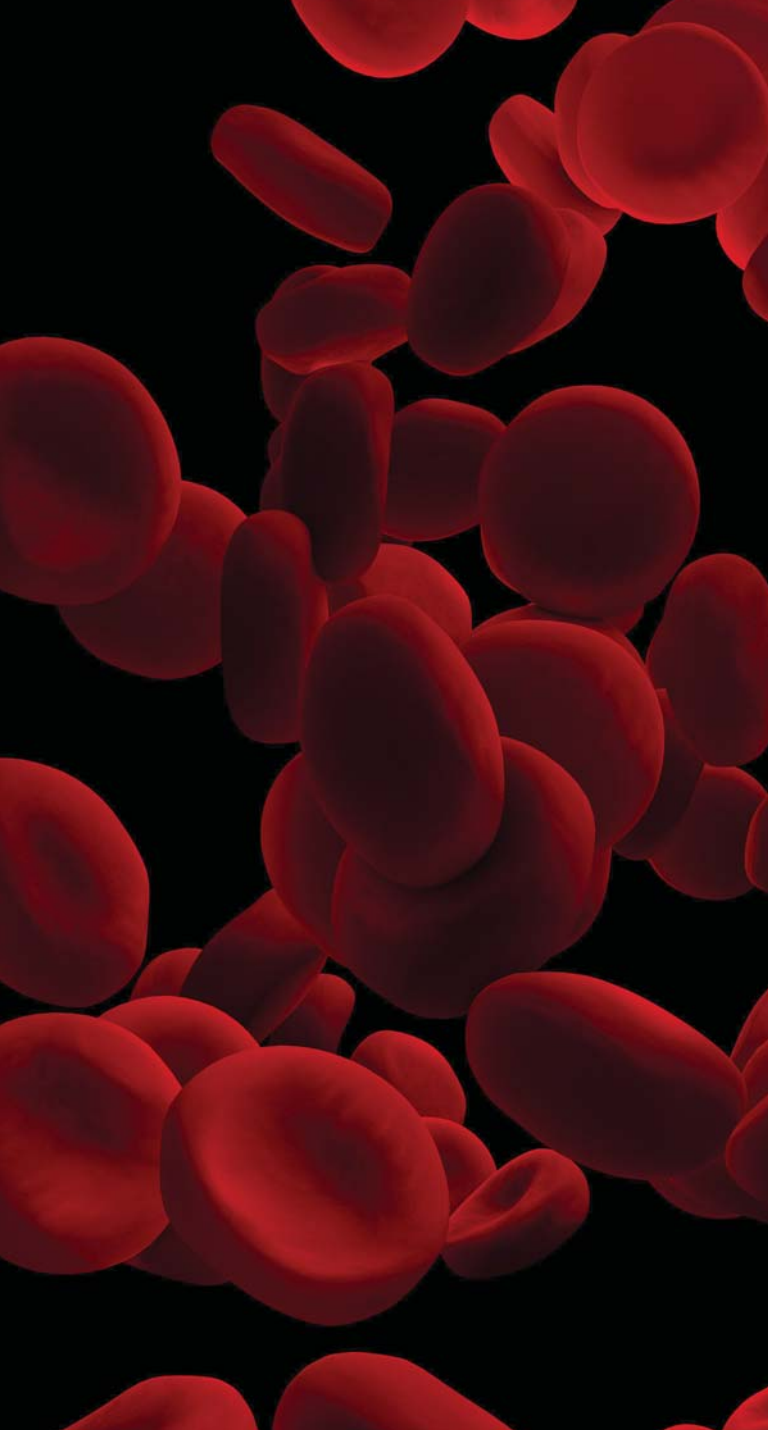
**Prostate Cancer Research Foundation:** the leading national organization devoted solely to research and education on prostate cancer: [www.prostatecancer.ca](http://www.prostatecancer.ca)

**Notes:**



[www.empowerthepatient.com](http://www.empowerthepatient.com)





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