

Fatigue management

A practical short guide from Restore OT — private occupational therapy in Grantham and Lincolnshire.

Fatigue is not ordinary tiredness

Fatigue linked to a health condition, treatment or recovery does not reliably improve with rest and is often out of proportion to what you have done. Managing it well is about pacing your energy across the whole week, not pushing through and paying for it the next day.

The 4 Ps

- Prioritise: decide what genuinely matters each day and let the rest wait or go.
- Plan: spread demanding tasks across the week and put heavier jobs on your better times of day.
- Pace: work in short blocks with planned rest before you feel exhausted, not after.
- Position: sit rather than stand, keep items within easy reach and avoid bending and stretching.

Practical changes that save energy

- Sit to wash, dress, prepare food and iron; a perching stool makes kitchen tasks far cheaper in energy.
- Slide or wheel loads instead of carrying — a trolley, wheeled basket or backpack keeps hands free.
- Batch cook and freeze portions on a better day; use ready-prepared vegetables without guilt.
- Keep everyday items between hip and shoulder height so you are not reaching or bending.
- Use a long-handled reacher, shower seat and electric toothbrush where they help.
- Break big jobs into stages across days rather than finishing them in one go.

Rest that actually restores

- Short, planned rests of 15 to 30 minutes work better than one long collapse.
- Rest before an activity you care about, not only afterwards.
- Protect your sleep routine: consistent times, a dark cool room, and limit long daytime naps.
- Gentle, regular movement improves fatigue over time even though it feels counter-intuitive.

Keeping an activity diary

For one week, note what you did, how you felt during and afterwards, and where the crashes came. Patterns usually appear quickly — a particular time of day, a specific task, or too many demands stacked together. That diary is the most useful thing you can bring to your appointment.

How an OT can help

We look at your week as a whole: your routines, roles, home set-up and goals. You get an individual pacing plan, equipment and positioning advice, and strategies for returning to the activities that matter most to you, at a rate your body can sustain. This guide is general information and does not replace individual assessment. To arrange an appointment call 0115 647 7997 or email edith@restoreot.co.uk.