

5 Ways to Cope with Fatigue after Stroke

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About 40-70% of stroke survivors will suffer from fatigue after stroke. This fatigue can be mental, physical, or a combination of both.

If you're curious about dealing with physical fatigue, see our articles on [understanding tiredness](#) and why you need lots of sleep (9/2/2015). Then when you're done with that, use these tips to help deal with mental fatigue.

1. Deal with the Simple Stuff First

Are you fully hydrated? Do you get enough sleep?

These are two of the most common culprits of post stroke fatigue. If you feel like this is an area where you might err, start paying attention to how much water you drink and the total amount of sleep you get. Dehydration can be an accidental or purposeful cause of mental fatigue. Sometimes stroke survivors will drink less water on purpose when incontinence is an issue so that they have to use the restroom less – and that's really bad. This tactic is hard on your body since you need water to carry out *every single bodily function*. When our body doesn't have what it needs to properly function, it's no surprise that we get really tired. So how much water is enough? According to the Institute of Medicine, men need 13 cups of water a day and women need 9.

2. Are You Overstimulated? Most Don't Realize They Are

Do you find yourself getting really tired just from watching television or being in a crowded restaurant? While these might seem like simple tasks, they are flooded with stimuli that your brain has to process. And this processing takes energy – even if you're not aware of it. To end the overstimulation, start minimizing background noise. Turn off the television and do one thing at a time. Your brain will thank you.

3. Stop Trying so Hard – Seriously

This next tip is easy. Another cause of mental fatigue is the *process of remembering*. When you're at the grocery store racking your brain trying to remember what else you need, you're slowly draining your mental battery. But why waste the energy remembering when you can just write everything down? Start creating lists for everything. It will save you time, money (think of all that gas you use going back to the grocery store!), and mental energy.

4. Make Decision-Making Easy

There's probably one big decision looming over your head every day, and that's *when to do your rehab exercises*. If you're constantly thinking about when, when, when, then it's draining your mental juice. And if you're constantly putting it off, then you're wasting energy trying to remember it each time. Put an end to this torturous process by picking a specific time that you will do your rehab exercises every day. Then stick with it! We recommend doing them in the morning when you're refreshed and energized right after that cup of stroke-preventing coffee!

5. Mental Fatigue as a Side Effect of a Side Effect

There are 2 stroke side effects that can cause mental fatigue: pain and depression. Post stroke pain requires mental energy to cope with. Some quick tips for coping with pain are:

- Heat packs on the affected area
- Physical activity to avoid painful spasms
- Meditation to grow your brain

Along with pain, post stroke depression can also have a draining effect on the body and mind – and we have some really interesting advice on this one.

Most people don't know how closely the gut and the brain are connected, and they also don't know that probiotics can be used to treat post stroke depression. If you're suffering from depression due to an imbalanced gut, try getting more probiotics in your diet.

We hope these tips help relieve your mental fatigue.