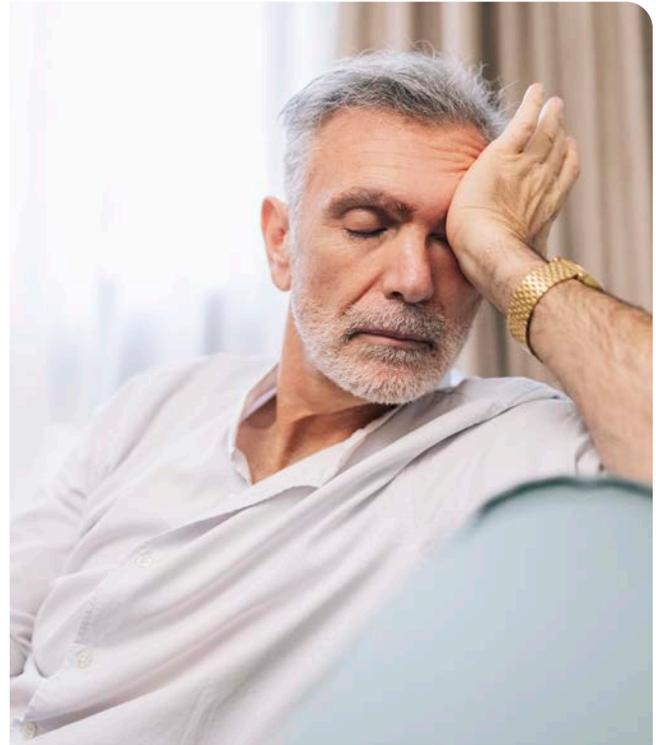




let's talk about

Feeling Tired After Stroke

After a stroke, many survivors develop post-stroke fatigue, which means they may feel more tired or lack energy. They can experience this fatigue at any time after their stroke, regardless of what type of stroke they had. For some, this feeling may continue for years, but they usually find ways to make the most of the energy they have.



Why am I so tired?

Feeling tired after a stroke can be caused by:

- Lifestyle changes - You may have less energy than before because of sleeping poorly, not getting enough exercise, poor nutrition or the side effects of some of your medications.
- Emotional changes - Coping with frustration, anxiety, anger and sadness can be draining. These feelings are common after a stroke. Loss of energy, interest or enthusiasm can occur along with a depressed mood.
- Physical changes - Stroke survivors often must work harder to make up for the loss of normal functions. You may have as much energy as before, but you could be using it differently. Because of the effects of your stroke, things such as dressing, talking or walking take a lot more effort. Changes in thinking and memory take more concentration. You have to stay "on alert" all the time — and this takes energy.

- Depression - Depression is very common after a stroke, but the good news is that it's treatable. Depression can occur right away or months or even years later. Symptoms include significant lack of energy, enthusiasm, motivation, plus problems concentrating or finding enjoyment in anything. Talk to your health care professional about an evaluation for depression if tiredness continues.

Diagnosis

Your health care professional can evaluate any medical reasons for your tiredness. They can also check if your fatigue could be a side effect of your medication.

Tell your health care professional how you're feeling and make sure you have had an up-to-date physical. Be open and honest and explain that the symptoms you are experiencing started after your stroke.

(continued)



How can I increase my energy?

- Follow your health care team's recommendations closely and be sure to ask for help whenever needed.
- Celebrate your successes. Give yourself credit when you accomplish something. Look at your progress, not at what's left to be done.
- Talk to your health care provider about your energy level, try to get plenty of sleep at night.
- Learn to relax. Exerting too much energy may leave you tense, anxious and frustrated. All this takes more energy.
- Do something you enjoy every day. A positive attitude or experience helps boost energy levels.
- Be social. It's very important to get back into the "swing of things" and stay involved with the people you know. Go out into the community and interact with friends, family and other people.
- Physical activity is important. With permission from your health care professional, consider joining a health and wellness program.



HOW CAN I LEARN MORE?

- 1** Call 1-888-4-STROKE (1-888-478-7653) or visit stroke.org to learn more about stroke or find local support groups.
- 2** Sign up for our monthly *Stroke Connection* e-news for stroke survivors and caregivers at StrokeConnection.org.
- 3** Connect with others who have also had an experience with stroke by joining our Support Network at stroke.org/SupportNetwork.

Do you have questions for your doctor or nurse?

Take a few minutes to write down your questions for the next time you see your health care professional.

For example:

What can I do to decrease my tiredness?

Could clinical depression be causing my tiredness?

Are the medications I take causing my fatigue?

MY QUESTIONS:

We have many other fact sheets to help you make healthier choices, manage your condition or care for a loved one. Visit stroke.org/LetsTalkAboutStroke to learn more.