



Exercising with Sickle Cell Anemia

Individuals with disabilities are at a greater risk of experiencing fatigue than the general population. While fatigue may be unpredictable from day-to-day and is experienced differently by each person, it occurs in a general basis and tends to worsen as the day progresses. There are treatments and strategies to reduce your experience of fatigue and how it can impact your life.

Fatigue

Fatigue is more than just feeling tired. It is the exhaustion, tiredness and weariness or lack of energy that significantly interferes with what you want to do. Fatigue can have negative effect on your mood, physical functioning, attention, memory and communication.

What can you do to reduce fatigue with Sickle Cell Anemia?

- Exercise has shown to be one of the most effective ways to fight fatigue
- Staying fit can help you maintain muscle strength, boost your energy, improve your mood and help you sleep better.
- Exercise can be done when you have sickle cell anemia but with guidance
- Work on Breathing exercises through the day to maintain a mind body relaxation. BREATHING EXERCISE- More the better. Will not harm you (Refer Below)
- Include aerobic exercises (activity that gets your heart pumping) and muscle building exercises (resistance training). Important to stretch and be flexible. (Refer Below)
- Exercise in a group or with a partner to be motivated
- **DO NOT PUSH YOURSELF! PAIN WITH EXERCISING IS NOT GOOD**
- Drink water before, during and after exercising.

Take Naps

- Short periods of sleep or rest can manage fatigue. Take 1-3, 20 to 30 minute short naps per day.
- Just resting even if you don't fall asleep can help reduce your fatigue

Pace Yourself

- Scheduling regular rest periods with Sickle Cell may help you manage fatigue
- Be patient with yourself, you may not do everything you would like in a day.
- Determine what is essential to do and reduce the number of activities if you can
- Pace your activities to reduce overdoing it, and stop BEFORE you are tired.
- Manage your stress. Identify prominent life stressors and look for ways to address those at their source. Find ways to relax and take care of yourself
- Modify your diet and add more nutritious foods.
- Eat regularly throughout the day.
- **LEARNING TO MANAGE YOUR FATIGUE WILL HELP YOU HAVE ENOUGH ENERGY TO DO ACTIVITIES YOU WANT TO DO. NOT JUST THE ONES YOU HAVE TO DO.**