

THE EFFECTS OF FATIGUE

Fatigue affects us all. Often it is easy to recognise the signs; sometimes less so. Here is a list of the effects of fatigue to help you to identify fatigue in yourself and others.



Physical effects

Fatigue is the subjective feeling of needing to sleep and manifests as:

- Yawning, eye-rubbing, head-drooping
- Reduced energy
- Microsleeps - spontaneous, uncontrolled periods of sleep lasting 5 to 30 seconds



Psychological effects

- Decreased concentration and / or lapses in attention
- Impaired communication skills
- Reduced logical reasoning and problem solving
- Increased risk-taking
- Decreased ability to learn and retain information



Emotional effects

- Quiet and withdrawn
- Lack of empathy
- Increased irritability and grumpiness

What to do if you feel fatigued

- As soon as you can, take a break.
- Ask for help if you can't take a break. Sometimes just telling someone you are experiencing fatigue can help.
- Use caffeine carefully.
- Plan your recovery - you'll need two nights of restorative sleep to recover from a sleep debt, so prioritise your sleep for the next few days.

References

1. The effects of sleep deprivation on your body. <https://www.healthline.com/health/sleep-deprivation/effects-on-body#1>
2. What to know about sleep deprivation. <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/307334.php>

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