

Script – Print – Getting a Wake-Up Call

If You're Always Tired, It May Be a Sign of Bigger Problems.

Let's face it. We all get tired from time to time. We get tired after a long, hard day at work. We may get wiped out after some intense physical activity. We may be exhausted after a poor night of sleeping, not to mention those who are experiencing pandemic fatigue.

According to the Centers for Disease Control one in three adults fail to get enough sleep. And two out of every five Americans report feeling wiped out most of the week. The recommended amount of sleep for adults is seven to nine hours a night.

But if you're constantly feeling sluggish, there may be something else going on.

"If you're tired after long days of work it makes sense that you're fatigued or tired, that's okay," said Amy Henderson, Family Practice Physician Assistant, OSF HealthCare. "But when you're so tired or so fatigued all the time and it's hindering your day-to-day experiences, it's affecting your work, your life, your happiness, those are times it should be checked out."

That means paying a visit to your physician who can schedule an evaluation and order tests to determine what could be at the root of your fatigue.

"So chronic fatigue, feeling tired all of the time where it's affecting your day-to-day life can be a serious problem," said Amy Henderson, Family Practice Physician Assistant, OSF HealthCare. "It's definitely something you should go see your primary care provider to discuss. There can be a host of diagnoses, or problems or underlining conditions going on, including anemia, vitamin deficiency, underlying sleep apnea, mood disorder, depression, among so many more."

Anemia is a condition in which you lack enough healthy red blood cells to carry adequate oxygen to your body's tissues. Having anemia can make you feel tired and weak.

Vitamin D deficiency may be another reason you feel so sluggish and is often overlooked as a possible cause. Case studies have shown that extremely low blood levels can cause fatigue that has a severe negative effect on quality of life.

The problems associated with **sleep apnea** make normal sleep impossible and can cause severe daytime drowsiness, making fatigue a common occurrence.

While **depression** affects people differently, it can cause decreased energy, changes in sleeping patterns, issues with concentration and feelings of hopelessness.

"If you're feeling tired all the time more times than you're not feeling tired, that could be a sign," said Amy Henderson, Family Practice Physician Assistant, OSF HealthCare. "If you're having a hard time driving home because you are so tired or you feel like you could fall asleep, that's a huge sign. If you've slept so much and you still wake up tired and it's hard to get out of bed that could be a sign that something else is going on to. If you're doing activities that used to not be

hard and now you're getting tired or short of breath or exhausted or winded that's time to get checked out, it could be something serious."

Working with your physician can go a long way in determining the best possible solution for your fatigue. In addition, Henderson offers up a few tips that everyone should work into their daily routine that can help with both physical and mental fatigue.

"If you're feeling tired or exhausted there are some things you can do in your life to try and feel better," said Amy Henderson, Family Practice Physician Assistant, OSF HealthCare. "Things include eating healthy, going to bed at a reasonable time, sleeping an appropriate amount of time, giving yourself time to relax, and take breaks throughout the day. Make sure you get enough exercise; it's nice out now to go and get some sunlight."

Henderson adds that a quick 20-minute power nap is okay to help recharge your batteries, but nothing longer than that or you could have a hard time falling asleep at night.

For more information on sleep issues, visit [OSF HealthCare](#).