Psoriasis and Fatigue

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The Link Between Psoriasis and Fatigue

If you feel tired all the time, don't think it's all in your head; there is a link between psoriasis and fatigue. Do not ignore fatigue - but rather talk to your doctor and consider some tips to regain your energy levels.

Why Do You Feel Fatigue?

Like any other autoimmune condition, psoriasis does cause fatigue. There are a number of factors involved; one of the most important factors is the underlying inflammation. Inflammation can trigger some changes in the body, leading to a release of certain chemicals that promote inflammation - for example: proteins that bind with antibodies and circulate as immune complexes or some chemicals that help the immune cells communicate with each other (i.e. interleukin 1). In addition, a study published in 2010 reveals that those individuals who experience more pain and physical disability (from arthritic psoriasis), as well as stress are more likely to experience fatigue.

Tips to Combat Fatigue

1. **Talk to your doctor and review the treatment plan.** The better your condition is managed, the less inflammation you will have in your body, and therefore less likely to feel constantly exhausted. Review the benefits, possible side effects and alternative medications for psoriasis.
2. **Exercise regularly.** Exercise can help improve your overall health, not just inflammation and stress levels.
3. **Conserve energy.** Plan your day - work smart and efficiently, so you can save energy. If you have more energy in the morning, plan to deal with activities that require more effort - for example shopping or cleaning the home. Re-charge your batteries as needed by taking a short 20-30 minutes nap. If you are working full time, consider talking to your employer and work occasionally from home. A physiotherapist or occupational therapist can also offer some energy conservation techniques as well as various devices, so you can deal with daily activities with less effort.

4. **Regulate your sleep.** Aim to sleep 8 hours a night, go to bed and wake up at the same time, and keep your room dark.
5. **Some foods promote inflammation in your body.** For example red meat, and highly processed foods (due to high content in fat, sugar or artificial additives). Adopt a clean diet based on fish and lean meats, whole grains, and fresh fruits, vegetables, healthy oils (olive oil), nuts and seeds. Eat small meals, and more often, rather than large meals which can make you feel more tired. A healthy diet, along with exercise will also help you shed any extra pounds (being overweight aggravates fatigue).
6. **Drink plenty of water to stay hydrated.** Try to drink few glasses in the morning, just before you fully wake up. Avoid too many coffees, alcohol or smoking, as they can all affect your sleep and make you feel more tired next day.
7. **Manage your stress.** There is a vicious cycle: stress leads to sleeping problems and more fatigue, which

can cause more stress and irritability; yoga is a great choice as it is well known to fight stress, while bringing your energy levels up.