

# Pain and Fatigue

**Pain, fatigue and weakness are very common for people with physical disabilities regardless of diagnosis, location, culture or support available.**

While feeling sore and tired is common as the body ages, people with physical disabilities generally feel both of these more frequently and earlier in life.

Interesting points to note about pain, fatigue and physical disability:

- Many people with cerebral palsy accept pain as “just part of having cerebral palsy” and only seek support when they can’t do what they want to do any more
- Children with cerebral palsy commonly have pain, it is easy to think it is normal once you are an adult
- Some people experience constant tiredness, it does not matter what they do
- Pain and fatigue stops people doing activities
- Not moving increases pain and fatigue
- People with physical disabilities feel pain in almost all parts of the body
- Many people experience chronic pain which means they feel it all the time

- Pains in the muscles and joints can be due to injury, general wear and tear or how you do an activity
- People with moderate impairment tend to be more tired and sore than those with mild or severe impairments, possibly due to increased strain on the body to keep up with peers and be independent
- People who use multiple ways to manage pain – for example, combinations of physical activities on land and in water, pacing, relaxation techniques, counselling, cognitive therapy, using equipment and assistive technology and adjusting and planning activities – are generally more satisfied than those who only take pain medications

## Important points about pain and fatigue

- Pain is not normal and should not be ignored
- Find out why you have pain and seek help



- While medication has a place in managing pain, it is important that sources of pain are identified and treated long-term
- In most cases, pain and fatigue can be managed to ensure it does not completely inhibit lifestyle
- Fatigue and tiredness can be managed and reduced through many different techniques
- Regular monitoring is important to identify problems that may cause pain or fatigue as early as possible, to enable treatment and minimise long-term impacts

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