

FATIGUE & SCHOOL

Fatigue and schooling.

Fatigue can make it hard getting out of bed and to do normal activities & lead to:

- poor school attendance
- poor performance and ability to learn
- being less interested in learning
- low self esteem & changes to mood (i.e. anxiety & or depression)
- difficulty maintaining friendships
- feeling isolated

How can the health team can help with schooling?

Exercise Physiologist - advice on exercise & tailored exercise plan

Physiotherapist - assess, diagnose, treat & improve physical mobility

Medical Practitioner - medical information; medical certificates; action plans

Occupational Therapist - advice on pacing & aids to reduce fatigue

Psychologist/Counsellor - mental health support

How can teachers and schools help?

- Individual learning plan (ILP)
- Adjustment to assessments
- Reduced curriculum (i.e. half days, start later in the day, subjects of interest).
- Blended learning options (combination of online & in classroom learning)
- Modified physical education programs
- Tutoring
- Online support (i. e. google classroom)
- Single point of contact for communication
- Access to school counsellor

Things to help reduce fatigue while at school:

- Listening to the student and giving them a degree of control.
- Pacing activities and regular rest periods.
- Separate space to rest and relax.
- Reduce distance between classes, toilets etc.
- Passes to use lift, be first in line, leave class when needed (i.e. toilet break during class, to avoid corridor congestion)
- Accessible lockers, storage cubicles.
- Reduce school bag contents (leave notes & books in each class, bag on wheels).
- Flexible comfortable seating & fidget tools.
- Learning aids (pencil grips, ergonomic pens, desk stands, adjustable desks).
- Buddy system.
- Modify or replace activities (i.e. sports, group work)

Tips for exams and or assessments:

- rest breaks (i.e. 5 mins rest time for every 30 mins of exam time)
- extra time to complete
- quiet room
- spacing each exam & or assessment
- using a device rather than hand written
- verbal exams or assessments

How can parents/carers family members help their child or young person?

- listening
- communicate with health team and school regularly
- plan activities around fatigue levels
- encourage socialisation with friends outside of school (face to face or online)
- encourage participation in activities they enjoy
- encourage good sleep and eating habits
- reduce length of every day tasks or break them up
- discuss concerns with others (health professionals, support groups)
- focus on strengths & encourage passions
- avoid rushing
- explain to others what is happening to your child

Organisations

- Emerge Australia
- Australian Government Department of Education
- Raising Children
- Support and Telehealth Service (www.emerge.org.au/your-child-or-young-person-with-me-cfs-and-school/)

References:

<https://www.emerge.org.au/your-child-or-young-person-with-me-cfs-and-school>

<https://arthritisaustralia.com.au/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Juvenile-arthritis-A-teachers-guide.pdf/>

<https://www.education.gov.au/disability-standards-education-2005/resources/getting-started>

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