

## **Mental Fatigue**

Fatigue is one of the most common effects of TBI. Studies of people with TBI found that between 37% and 98% of them said they had some kind of fatigue. Fatigue can be one of the most frustrating after-effects of TBI because it can make it hard to do many things. As many as 70% of people with a TBI complained of mental fatigue (for more info on fatigue see [http://www.craighospital.org/TBI/DOC\\_Fatigue\\_Long.asp](http://www.craighospital.org/TBI/DOC_Fatigue_Long.asp)).

Mental fatigue is different to physical fatigue. It's the feeling of just not being able to concentrate any more. After a TBI, people often need to use more mental energy to perform tasks that they used to find easier. This extra use of mental energy can be tiring. Once someone experiences mental fatigue, trying to continue concentrating will only make them more tired. They might then be more likely to make mistakes or start to become irritable. It is better that they stop what they are doing and come back to it when they are feeling fresher.

The best way for someone with a TBI to manage mental fatigue is to try to prevent it happening in the first place by making sure they take regular breaks. These breaks might be having a short nap or rest, but they could also be doing an unrelated activity for a while such as one that involves more physical than mental energy. It can also help to try to do the most challenging tasks when the person feels their freshest, usually in the morning.