

FatigueAnswers 

**Free Report:
“The 7 Mistakes You
Absolutely Must
Avoid When You
Have ME/CFS”**

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The 7 Mistakes You Absolutely Must Avoid When You Have ME/CFS

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"If you try to get well from ME/CFS and make any one of these mistakes, you may fail - even if you do everything else right."

Learning how to address the root of your Fatigue Condition is pivotal to your recovery. It's also essential to know the right way to do it in order to avoid wasted time and energy.

However, you cannot stop there, it's not enough on it's own. It's also important to know what you should NOT do, what mistakes to avoid. The best way to accomplish this is to find out what mistakes others with ME/CFS have made and once you do, be careful to avoid them.

Those who successfully recover from ME/CFS stay well clear of the blind-spots and mistakes in this report. You'll want to be one of them. 7 of the most typical mistakes that people make with ME/CFS are listed below:

MISTAKE #1 - NOT ADDRESSING EXTERNAL STRESS

External stress is stress that comes to us from outside ourselves - such as work, financial or relationship stress. External stress left unchecked can be one of the most damaging things to our health, especially when we have fatigue condition.

External Stress Check List...

- Are you over-committing and thinking you are superhuman? Be honest and kind to yourself, realise that you can't do it all. Ask for help.
- Are you a high achiever, living at a million miles an hour? Slow down, it's unsustainable.
- Are you working long hours? If possible cut work time down and create some breathing space and time for YOU.

- Are you doing things that waste your time and drain your energy? e.g. Spending time with toxic people, doing things that your heart is really not in? Be mindful what you choose to give your energy to and withdraw from energy sucking situations.
- Are you spending hours on your digital device, computer or TV? This type of technology is highly stimulating, excessive use can cause high nervous system stress – cut back on them.
- Are you having regular late nights? If you are not in bed by 10:30pm you are causing disruption to the production of melatonin and liver function. Respect your body's need for a regular sleep cycle. The most refreshing hours to sleep are those before midnight.
- Are you taking stimulants - tea, coffee, alcohol, sugar? All these stimulate and exhaust an already exhausted system. Make steps to remove them from your diet.
- Are you attending support groups or forums that are negative and focus too much on symptoms? These groups can make you worse, so choose wisely.
- Do you have external stressors like a bad relationship, serious financial or work related stress? If you don't take steps to deal with them, these types of external stress will continue to stimulate an internal inflammatory response, so it's crucial these are dealt with.

In summary, removing or at least reducing the above types of external stress is one of the most helpful steps you can take in managing your fatigue.

MISTAKE #2 - NOT ADDRESSING INTERNAL STRESS

Internal stress is stress that comes from the inside, such as mental, emotional or chemical imbalance. Internal stress can be another major blind-spot that can seriously aggravate your condition.

Internal Stress Check List...

- ❑ Are you feeling guilty that you are ill? - Guilt is a useless emotion and can lead to depression. Accepting that you have a condition and that it's not your fault is an essential first step. Don't try and be stoic about it, share your feelings and accept or ask for help when you need it.
- ❑ Are you doing perfectionism? - This can be very corrosive and strip the joy from everything you do, because you are expecting too much from yourself and life. Learn to relax and let go more. Stop when you know you are crossing the perfectionist line.
- ❑ Are you over-thinking, worrying etc? – The adrenaline component of fatigue conditions tends to over-stimulate the mind. So you may find yourself over-analysing or thinking, thinking, thinking like a hamster on a wheel.
- ❑ You may also fall into the worry trap, dwelling on the past, fearing the future - all of which just adds to your stress loading, which is like throwing fuel on the fire.

So it is top priority to learn to relax - choose at least an hour a day and make a commitment not to entertain any worry or concerns. This will give your weary and over-stimulated mind at least a short break and create some breathing space.

Relaxation strategies can help reduce stress and help in reducing symptoms. Some examples are meditation, breathing exercises, gentle yoga or stretching, spending time in nature, long baths, listening to a guided relaxation or peaceful music. (See our website's Self-Help section for useful resources)

Addressing all of the above internal stress can go a long way in reducing your overall stress levels.

MISTAKE #3 - DENYING YOU ARE ILL

Burying your head in the sand, denying that you have a fatigue condition and blindly driving yourself on can be very damaging. Although it may at first be hard to acknowledge, accepting you have a fatigue condition is essential before you can move forward.

Denial Check List...

- Are you feeling you're a failure? - Realise it's not your fault and that you can do something about it as thousands of others have.
- Are you ignoring symptoms? - Symptoms are kind messengers letting you know your system is struggling and out of balance - so don't ignore them or think it they will go away by themselves.
- Are you trying to do everything yourself? - Seek help from family, friends and professionals who know effective ways of addressing the condition. Accepting some help is intelligent – not a weakness.
- Are you thinking it's all in your head? - This is a physical inflammatory condition, not psychosomatic!
- Are you thinking you are just depressed? - Of course you feel low, who wouldn't in your situation? But don't allow yourself or others to treat you as a depressive.
- Are you thinking you are just lazy or unfit? - If you are experiencing on-going debilitating fatigue, realise there is more going on than just your level of fitness.

Acceptance of where you are right now and seeking help are your first steps towards wellness. Start now.

MISTAKE #4 - NOT GETTING A DIAGNOSIS

It is vital to get a clear diagnosis so that other conditions, which may be more easily treated, are ruled out.

Diagnosis Check List...

- Are you currently undiagnosed? - Get a diagnosis as soon as you can, because this will give you some peace of mind that it's not something else or just 'all in your head'. There's also more help available to you when you've been diagnosed.

- Are you getting nowhere with your GP? - If, like thousands of other sufferers you've had a fatigue condition for more than six months and have been unsuccessful in getting a diagnosis, then do some research and switch to a GP who believes in the condition.

Beware: It's a sad fact that many GPs do not understand the condition and it's important that you do not fall into the trap of being treated as a depressive when you actually have a fatigue condition.

- Are you waiting for a Magic Bullet? - Fatigue conditions have been documented since the First World War, where men returned with severe battle fatigue and PTSD. More recently scientists thought they had found a virus to explain the fatigue - then admitted they hadn't, and to date there is still no 'magic pill' you can take.

Don't play the waiting game, take action to help yourself now! Start reducing symptoms by avoiding these mistakes – they can and will make a difference.

- Are you exploring alternative approaches? - In the past, the medical profession has viewed fatigue conditions as psychosomatic and many doctors even today still have this view. Because of this, there has been very little funding and medical research done on the condition, therefore very little can be suggested or offered by your GP.

Specialist Fatigue Therapists like myself have helped many hundreds of people reclaim their lives from even the most severe cases of fatigue, so if you're not getting anywhere with conventional treatment, look at successful alternatives.

MISTAKE #5 - TAKING STIMULANTS

If you are using caffeine drinks such as tea, coffee, coke or power drinks to keep yourself going, you may not realise that they actually add to your fatigue long-term, because they exhaust your adrenals. It's like using an energy credit card with a very high interest rate.

Stimulants Check List...

- Are you creating an energy debt with stimulants? - Stimulants are toxins that trigger a defence response in the body. The initial feeling of increased energy occurs because your immune system has gone into action.

Stimulants artificially speed up your system, but they take away more than they give. For example, even small amounts of daily caffeine can create dependency leading to an energy debt. As the body and mind build up a tolerance to it, you will need more and more of the stimulant to get the same kind of boost.

- Are you creating more symptoms with caffeine? - The negative health effects of caffeine have been extensively studied. Side effects such as headaches, nausea, dizziness, leg cramps, muscle tremors, rapid heartbeat and palpitations are some of the symptoms shown to be produced - even after one caffeine type drink.
- Do you have stomach problems? - People with stomach conditions, such as irritable bowel syndrome and gastro-intestinal reflux, should avoid caffeine as it increases acidic response in the stomach, which may lead to excessive bowel movements or stomach discomfort. Caffeine also increases urine flow, which can lead to dehydration.
- Are you creating unnecessary stress hormones? - Caffeine increases secretion of cortisol, aggravates adrenal exhaustion and causes increased blood pressure. It also dramatically increases restlessness, nervousness, anxiety and stress symptoms. Caffeine, even in small doses, can also create confusion and panic attacks. All of the above over-stimulation then leads to more fatigue.
- What about tea? - Tea also has caffeine, but much less than coffee, so a cup of tea in the morning to get going is ok, but after that drink decaffeinated or herb teas such as Redbush. Caffeine takes several hours to leave the body, so a late afternoon cup of tea may delay or totally disrupt your sleep.

Tips for reducing stimulants...

- ✓ If you drink more than 4 caffeinated drinks a day (including power drinks, Coke etc), cut down slowly, reducing to 3 a day for a week. Then keep

removing one a day every week until you are drinking minimum or are ideally caffeine free.

- ✓ When making tea, brew it for less time - this cuts down on its caffeine content
- ✓ Drink plenty of water - minimum 1.5 litres a day. (More on this topic in the next section)

Following these guidelines will help avoid withdrawal symptoms such as headache, fatigue, decreased alertness etc.

So in summary, avoiding this mistake by giving up stimulants will help you feel more calm and relaxed, help you sleep deeper and keep your energy level more stabilised.

MISTAKE #6 - BECOMING CHRONICALLY DEHYDRATED

Most of the several hundred people I have seen at my clinic had become chronically dehydrated without even knowing it, because the thirst reflex seems to get switched off during a fatigue condition.

Dehydration Check List...

- Are you chronically dehydrated? - Just one day of dehydration is enough to set the whole system into imbalance, causing the body to go into survival mode - adding more stress to an already stressed system.
- Are your internal organs complaining? - Your internal organs, brain and immune system cannot function properly unless well hydrated. Put an alarm reminder on your phone to drink a glass of water every hour throughout the day.
- Are you drinking the right amount of fresh clean water? - The guidelines for an adult are around 2 litres of pure water spread throughout the day.
- Are dehydrating drinks making you worse? - Coffee is dehydrating as well as an adrenaline stimulant, so this and other caffeine drinks such as coke and

strong tea must be kept to a minimum - if not avoided completely. Alcohol is also another dehydrator and causes imbalances in the body.

In summary, rehydrating to support your brain and internal organs to detoxify is essential and will go a long way in symptom reduction.

MISTAKE #7 - PROBLEM ORIENTATED INSTEAD OF SOLUTION ORIENTATED

We need to do a mind-flip on the way we approach 'problems'. It's quite a cliché to say that there are no problems, only solutions - but that's only half the truth.

Most of us have a poor strategy for dealing with 'problems'. We either ignore them, deny them, try to get rid of them or try to solve them by immersing ourselves in them - but do these approaches really work?

Let's see...

Say we run a bath of scalding hot water and have only 20 minutes to have our bath because we're on our way out for an appointment. Let's use our normal approach to a 'problem' and see what happens:

- **Ignore it** - if we do that we'll get scalded!
- **Deny it** - we'll also get scalded!
- **Get rid of it** - what? pull the plug? bye bye bath!
- **Immerse yourself in it** - ouch!
- **So what can we do?...**

You can ask yourself - "**What's absent here?**" - Because what appears to be a 'problem' is often just the absence of something that balances it - in this case it's cold water. If we bring in what's absent, we don't have to ignore, deny, get rid of or immerse ourselves in the 'problem' - we don't need to focus on or even touch it!

Some other examples:

Problem – Hate:

What's absent? - *Love*

Problem - Confusion

What's absent? - *Clarity*

Problem - Stress

What's absent? - *Relaxation*

Problem - Low-self-esteem

What's absent? – *Confidence*

Problem – Flat Tire

What's absent? – *Vehicle Rescue!*

If you focus on what you need to bring in to any situation to balance it, you'll be focused on the 'solution' instead of the 'problem' - a problem is often just the absence of something. When you bring in what's absent, it often naturally dissolves the problem.

So when it comes to your health – *be proactive, be solution orientated.*



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About R. Amir Norris B.Sc.

Amir Norris is a Consultant Fatigue Therapist, creator of the Energy Excellence Course for ME/CFS and Founder of FatigueAnswers.com. Since 2001, Amir has helped around 1000 adults and children with fatigue disorders, ranging from those affected by M.E., Chronic Fatigue, Post Viral Fatigue, Fibromyalgia and Adrenal Fatigue.