

Health Enews

How to Cope with Zoom Fatigue

Zoom fatigue is new set of symptoms that have become common among people. The unofficial diagnosis refers to the physical and mental toll experienced as a result of constant virtual meetings. In fact, Stanford University researchers have created a Zoom Exhaustion and Fatigue (ZEF) scale to study this phenomenon. The study found that the frequency and duration of Zoom meetings are associated with a higher level of fatigue.

Causes of Zoom Fatigue

- Zoom meetings or video chats can be more tiring because we have to work harder to interpret non-verbal communication. We are accustomed to reading social cues and reading body language like hand and body movements—when we can't do this, it uses up more energy causing us to feel exhausted or stressed after a long Zoom meeting.
- Seeing ourselves on screen— Seeing ourselves on screen can create a feeling of being on stage and creating a compulsion to perform—which requires more energy than a simple interaction.
- Worry about internet/technical issues— Is internet working properly? Are there sound delays and awkward silences, people talking over each other?
- Are kids and pets quiet in the background? Who hasn't had Amazon drop off a package and your dogs go crazy during a Zoom meeting?

Signs and Symptoms of Zoom Fatigue

- Feeling tired between calls
- Feeling more tired at the end of the workday than usual
- Overeating, feeling sweaty, or fidgeting during your calls
- Eye strain or eye irritation that is not pre-existing
- Regular headaches
- Constant feeling of exhaustion
- Anxiety of having to turn on your camera



Solutions for Zoom Fatigue

While combating zoom fatigue is different for everyone, think about what you are both willing and able to change in your virtual meeting life. Some tips that may help include:

- Try to leave 10-15 minutes between calls to give yourself a video break.

- Make sure your Zoom meetings have an end time—and stick to it.
- Change settings to “hide self” so that you are seen by others, but not yourself.
- Get some remote headphones or earbuds. When you can, turn your video off, and get up and walk around.
- Suggest an audio call for one or two people each day. You might be surprised how many people welcome this!
- Use email or chat messages for information transfer—to cut down (or shorten) meetings when you can. This helps reserve your video calls for meetings that require work done together.
- Encourage mini-breaks on longer Zoom calls. Turn off the video for a moment, move around a little, and look at something else to relax your eyes. Visual breaks can make it easier to refocus and stay alert.
- Avoid multitasking in Zoom meetings. Multitasking during Zoom meetings is unfair to your fellow attendees, can be exhausting, and decreases productivity by 40%. If all the attendees are multitasking during a Zoom meeting, it can decrease meeting efficiency and team productivity.



<https://www.nbcnews.com/know-your-value/feature/do-you-have-zoom-fatigue-7-ways-cope-ncna1264326>

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