

Occupational therapy

Helping people to live life their way

Occupational therapists are health and social care professionals who help people of all ages – babies, children, adults and older people – to carry out activities (or occupations) they need, want, or are expected to do, but are prevented from doing so as a result of physical or mental illness, disability, or as a result of changes in their lives as they get older.

Occupational therapists can suggest alternative ways of doing activities, providing advice on learning new approaches, helping people to get the most from life. For example, an occupational therapist can help people with the following activities:

Self-care	Getting dressed or preparing and eating meals.
Productivity	Going to or remaining in work, volunteering, studying, or caring for others.
Leisure	Playing sports, shopping with friends, or doing hobbies.



How to find an occupational therapist

Ask your GP, nurse, social worker or other health or social care professional to refer you to an occupational therapist.

You can self-refer to a social services occupational therapist by contacting your local council* to arrange an appointment.

To arrange a private consultation with an independent occupational therapist, who will charge you a fee, please visit www.cotss-ip.org.uk to find a local independent occupational therapist.

*Social Care and Health Department of your local council in Scotland
*Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety in Northern Ireland

College of Occupational Therapists Limited
The UK professional body for occupational therapy staff

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The College of Occupational Therapists Limited is a registered charity in England and Wales (No. 275119) and in Scotland (No. SC039573)



Occupational therapy and **CANCER RELATED FATIGUE**

For leisure, learning, living or working
Occupational therapy
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What is occupational therapy?

Occupational therapy enables people to participate in daily life to improve their health and wellbeing. Daily life is made up of many activities (or occupations).

Occupations may include self-care (getting ready to go out, or eating a meal), being productive (going to work, continuing with your domestic responsibilities or volunteering), and leisure (socialising with friends or doing hobbies).

An occupational therapist can help you cope with cancer-related fatigue in the following ways:

Improving your sleep pattern

An occupational therapist can investigate bedtime routines to see how this affects fatigue levels and teach relaxation techniques to help you enjoy good quality sleep.

Carrying on working

An occupational therapist can assist you at work by providing ways to simplify tasks, making them easier to do so you can conserve your energy levels. They can also recommend different techniques to help with your memory recall, if needed.

Managing your daily routine

An occupational therapist will devise ways to help you to pace, plan and factor in regular breaks to make the most of those times when your energy levels are high.

Continuing exercise

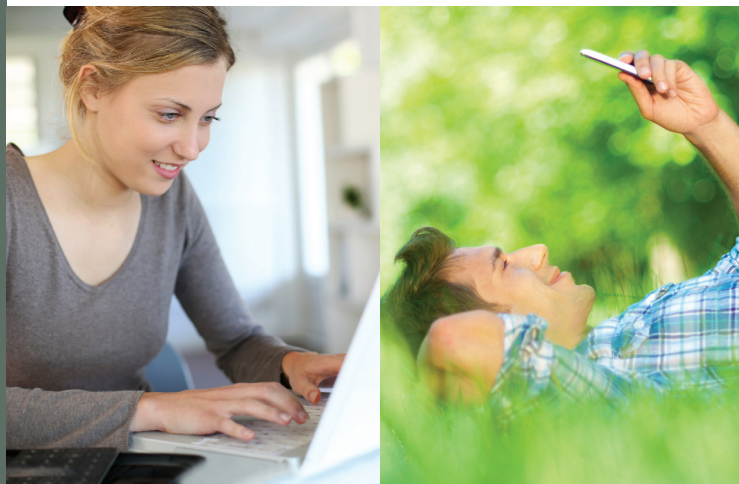
Exercise has been recognised as an effective approach to help with cancer-related fatigue. An occupational therapist will help you to incorporate exercise into your daily activities to help you counter your fatigue.

Challenging negatives thoughts and anxieties

An occupational therapist will show you how everyday activities that you enjoy can break your negative thought patterns. Talking therapies can also be explained as a way to address your stress and anxiety.

Helping you cope with other cancer symptoms

If you are experiencing breathlessness, anxiety or physical problems such as swollen legs or difficulties with eating, an occupational therapist can help you to overcome these symptoms. For example, if you are feeling unsteady on your feet or lacking confidence whilst in the bath, an occupational therapist may suggest equipment to give you the support you need whilst at home.



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