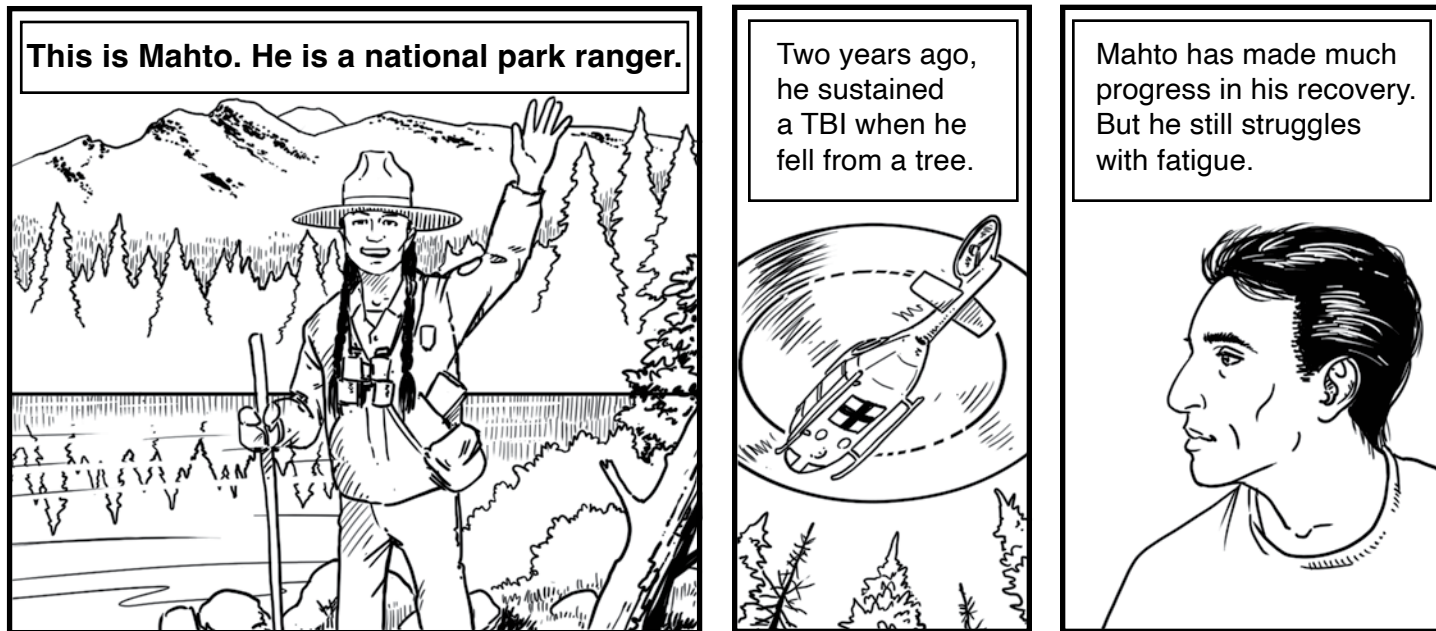


Fatigue and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)



Fatigue is a feeling of exhaustion, tiredness, weariness, or lack of energy.



Fatigue can have a negative effect on your mood. It can affect physical function. It can also affect your attention, concentration, memory, and communication. It can interfere with work and leisure activities. It can make activities such as driving dangerous.



Fatigue and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)

Fatigue is one of the most common problems that people have after a TBI. Up to 70% of survivors of TBI have mental fatigue.

I JUST CAN'T
CONCENTRATE
TODAY.



Mental and physical fatigue is normal for anyone after hard work or a long day. In people with TBI, fatigue often occurs more quickly and frequently than it does in the general population.

Z



The cause of fatigue after TBI is not clear. It may be due to the extra effort and attention it takes to do even simple activities such as walking or talking clearly. Brain function may be less efficient than before the TBI.

I NEED YOU TO CHECK THE TRAIL
CONDITIONS ON THE NORTH LOOP. WE HAD
SOME HEAVY RAIN LAST NIGHT, SO WATCH
FOR EROSION OR FALLEN BRANCHES.

I'M HAVING TROUBLE CONCENTRATING
AND DIDN'T CATCH ALL OF THAT.
CAN YOU REPEAT WHAT YOU SAID?

HERE, I WROTE
IT DOWN TO HELP
YOU REMEMBER.



Fatigue and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)

Types of Fatigue

After his TBI, Mahto had different kinds of fatigue.

Physical Fatigue

This may be due to do the extra effort it takes to do physical tasks after TBI. Physical fatigue is usually worse in the evening and improves with rest. As strength and activity levels return, fatigue often decreases.



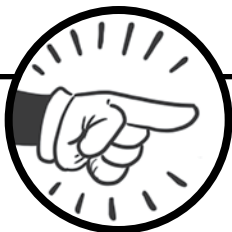
Psychological Fatigue

This type of fatigue is due to stress, depression, and anxiety. It is often worse in the morning and doesn't improve with sleep.



Mental Fatigue

This happens when thinking takes extra effort after a brain injury. Everyday tasks require more focus, making you tired.



Important Note: Tasks that require physical effort can also lead to mental fatigue, while tasks requiring mental focus may result in physical exhaustion.

Fatigue and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)

What can you do to decrease fatigue?

Recently, Mahto has started going to a TBI talking circle. He has learned important tips on how to manage fatigue after TBI.

I'M REALLY STRUGGLING WITH FATIGUE. DOES ANYONE HAVE ANY ADVICE?

TRY PAYING ATTENTION TO WHAT TRIGGERS YOUR FATIGUE.

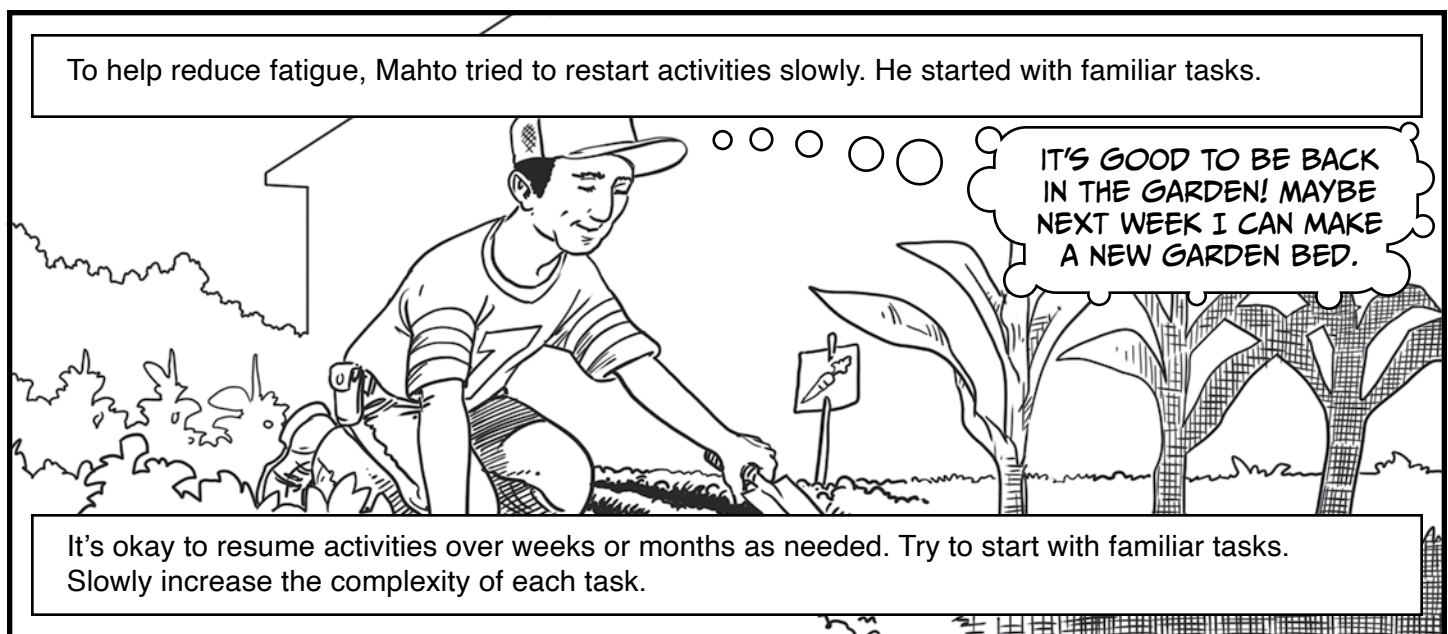
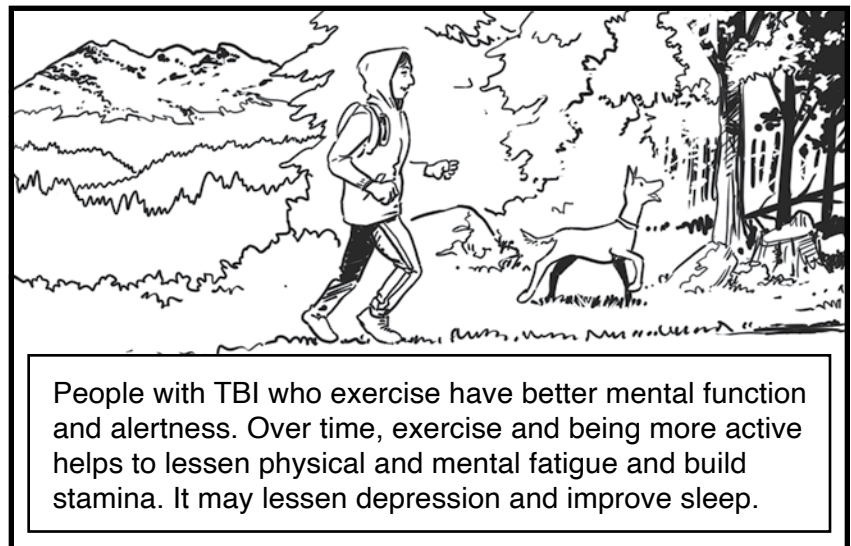
I'M GETTING TIRED. I SHOULD GIVE MY MIND A BREAK.

HAVING A REGULAR SLEEP SCHEDULE HELPED ME.

Learn to spot early signs of fatigue, such as feeling cranky or distracted. Stop an activity before you get tired.

Going to bed and getting up at the same time every day will help your body and mind to be more efficient. If needed, take regular breaks or 30-minute naps. If you have insomnia, tell your doctor.

Fatigue and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)



Fatigue and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)

At work, Mahto tried to improve his time management skills. He used tools like a planner to help manage mental fatigue.



Rank essential tasks by doing the ones that are mentally or physically hard early in the day. To prevent burnout, do not schedule too many tasks for the same day.

Lastly, Mahto talked to his doctor about any medical issues, medications, or possible depression that may be causing fatigue. A blood test can help identify potential causes.



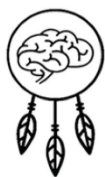
By following these tips and strategies, Mahto was able to reduce his fatigue.



Source: The content of this infocomic was adapted from the factsheet entitled Fatigue and Traumatic Brain Injury, which was originally developed in 2009 and updated in 2024 by Kathleen R. Bell, MD, in collaboration with the Model Systems Knowledge Translation Center. Portions of this document were adapted from materials developed by the Rocky Mountain Regional Brain Injury System, Carolinas Traumatic Brain Injury Rehabilitation and Research System, and the Mayo Clinic Traumatic Brain Injury Model System (<https://msktc.org>).

Disclaimer: This information is not meant to replace the advice of a medical professional. You should consult your health care provider regarding specific medical concerns or treatment. The contents of the infographic were developed under a grant from the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR grant number 90DPKT0008). NIDILRR is a Center within the Administration for Community Living (ACL), Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The contents of this infographic do not necessarily represent the policy of NIDILRR, ACL, or HHS, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.

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**Traumatic Brain Injury
Resource Bundle**
for American Indians

