How Parasites Make You Tired & What To Do About It

If you have read my e-book “What Your Doctor Didn’t Tell You About Parasites”, you’ll have seen that there are many different types of intestinal invaders. They can cause, or contribute to, all manner of different symptoms, ranging from IBS and digestive complaints to skin disease to depression to arthritis.

One of the chief complaints of people who have parasites is that they feel tired all the time and I know that when I had H. pylori and Blastocystis I felt exhausted, despite being a very active, fit and athletic person.

Over the last three years I’ve seen 25-30 different parasites, bacteria and fungal organisms in my clients’ lab results and many of these clients had a chief complaint of feeling tired or exhausted.

These parasites include:

- Blastocystis hominis
- Cryptosporidium
- Giardia lamblia
- Dientamoeba fragilis
- Entamoeba histolytica
- Necator americanus (hookworm)
- Trichuris trichiura (whipworm)
- Strongyloides (threadworm)
- Enterobius vermicularis (pinworm)

The bacteria we see include:

- Salmonella
- Vibrio
- Yersinia
- Klebsiella
- Staphylococcus aureus
- Citrobacter
- Achromobacter
- Morganella
- Aeromonas

On top of these bugs, it’s common to see overgrowth of yeast and fungal organisms, particularly Candida.

Unfortunately parasites do not receive the attention they deserve in Western Medicine. I’m not entirely sure why this is. According to many experts who have helped me develop this work over the years, parasites are not considered in Western Medicine because they are generally seen as an “exotic” or “tropical” problem.
Whilst it may be true that people often acquire parasites in exotic, far away countries, international travel has now led to them being a truly global problem and outbreaks of *Cryptosporidium*, *Giardia* and other bugs have been reported in the municipal water supplies of many US, Australian and UK settlements, the largest being the *Cryptosporidium* outbreak in Milwaukee in 1993, which killed over 100 people.

One reason why doctors do not test for parasites is that these invaders do not always necessarily cause digestive symptoms. They can happily inhabit your digestive system without letting you know they are there – i.e. no diarrhoea, no vomiting, bloating, wind or pain.

Instead, you feel tired, lethargic and possibly even depressed or anxious. But why is this?

**Parasites Can Prevent Digestion & Absorption of Nutrients**

Research clearly shows that having bacterial overgrowth, yeast and fungal overgrowth and parasite infections can compromise the absorption of all classes of nutrients:

- Amino acids from protein
- Fatty acids from fats and oils
- Carbohydrates
- Vitamins
- Minerals
- Trace nutrients

Two classic examples are vitamin B12 and iron. *H pylori* infection, for example, has been shown to cause B12 deficiency and iron levels, both of which can cause fatigue.

*Giardia* coats the lining of the intestine, making it impossible for nutrients to be properly absorbed. *Giardia* also prevents the proper digestion and absorption of fats and fat soluble vitamins (A, D, E, K).

*Cryptosporidium* has been shown to prevent proper growth and development of infected children, largely due to its impact on nutrient digestion and absorption.

Unfortunately, scientific and medical literature only tends to focus on iron and B12. But there are many other key nutrients, of course. It is reasonable to assume that if digestive infections can lead to B12 and iron deficiencies, they can certainly lead to deficiencies in other key nutrients!

The net result of nutritional deficiencies is fatigue because many of the nutrients that become depleted are directly or indirectly involved in the production of energy within our bodies!

**Digestive Infections Are Like Common Colds!**

Think about the last time you had a cold or “flu”-like symptoms. Chances are you probably felt tired. There’s a good reason for this. When your body is invaded by a virus or bacteria, the immune system is switched on at a high level. The role of the immune system is, of course, to protect us from unwanted invaders such as bacteria, viruses and parasites.

Mounting an immune response demands a lot of energy, which is why our innate response to an infection leaves us feeling fatigued, sometimes to the point of being bed-ridden for a few days.
Chronic parasitic infections are no different. The intensity of our immune response against them may not be as high as when we have flu, but our immune systems tend to switched on 24/7 when they are present. Some people have these digestive infections for months, years, or even decades! As a result, their immune response is never switched off.

One of the results is a gradual depletion in energy levels and the development of chronic fatigue.

**Digestive Infections Cause Inflammation**

A characteristic of most digestive infections is that they stimulate an inflammatory response within the digestive tract. This inflammatory response is one of the reasons we feel pain and bloating sensations and is also a primary reason for diarrhea and constipation symptoms.

Studies have shown that when patients are “artificially inflamed” using a substance called interferon, they develop many common symptoms. These symptoms are summarised in the table, below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symptoms</th>
<th>Prevalence in IFN-α therapy, %</th>
<th>Prevalence in MDD, %</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fatigue/asthenia</td>
<td>39-90</td>
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<td>Headache</td>
<td>27-67</td>
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<td>Psychomotor slowing</td>
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Inflammation – no matter where in the body it is – is a major cause of symptoms and disease. For example, it is now widely accepted that heart disease is the result of ongoing inflammation in the blood vessels.

Bear in mind that digestive infections such as *H pylori*, *Cryptosporidium*, *Candida* and other bacteria, fungi and parasites can cause inflammation on a 24/7 basis because they irritate the gut lining. This chronic inflammation can lead to any of the symptoms listed in the table, above.

So if you have any of these symptoms, suspect that inflammation, possibly from digestive infections, is part of the problem:

- Fatigue
- Headaches
- IBS
- Sleep problems
- Mood problems
- Muscle & joint pain
- Poor memory and concentration

**Inflammation Is Stressful**

Harbouring parasites is stressful, especially when they are causing inflammation. In addition to everything that I have discussed so far, inflammatory stress can lead to a condition called “Adrenal Fatigue”, which itself is one of the leading causes of fatigue in modern society.

Your adrenal glands sit on top of your kidneys like little hats. They are responsible for producing many hormones, but in particular they’re the glands that produce hormones to deal with stress. The main stress hormone that we tend to focus on is cortisol.

- Worry, fear, guilt, jealousy, sadness, anger (these are known as emotional stressors and are often stimulated by financial, security and relationship issues).
- Dietary stress, including processed foods, gluten, sugar, alcohol.
- Toxic stress including pollution, drugs, cosmetics, detergents, industry.
- Stress from hidden digestive infections.

The accumulation of these stressors can lead to excessive demand for cortisol. If the stress demands are piled up for too long, the adrenal glands’ ability to produce cortisol diminished. As a result, cortisol levels can drop too low.

This is important because among many other functions, cortisol is an energising hormone. So if cortisol levels are low, it is inevitable that symptoms such as fatigue will develop.

In my experience, digestive infections can be an enormous stress on the body and they can be very draining on the adrenal glands. This is one reason why so many people who have parasites, bacterial infections and yeast/fungal overgrowth suffer with symptoms related to energy levels.

**Summary & What To Do!**

I’ve briefly explained the mechanisms by which parasites, bacterial and fungal problems can make you tired:

1. They can lead to nutritional deficiencies which inhibit your body’s ability to make energy.
2. They lead to an immune response, which requires a lot of energy.
3. They cause inflammation, which on its own can lead to chronic fatigue.
4. They can contribute to adrenal fatigue.

Hidden digestive infections do not always cause digestive symptoms. In fact, approximately 50% of people who have digestive infections suffer only mild digestive symptoms, or even none at all.
If you are experiencing any of the symptoms that listed in the table, below, I highly recommend that you seek a qualified practitioner who can help you run comprehensive digestive testing to locate any unwanted invaders that may be lurking in your stomach and intestines.

### Table 1. Overlapping of symptoms of acute sickness behaviour associated with IFN-α therapy and the somatic symptoms in MDD

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* [46], unless otherwise specified; b [99], unless otherwise specified; c [100]; d [101]; e [102]; f [103]; g [104].

Do not be surprised if your doctor refuses to test. As I’ve discussed elsewhere at [www.H-Pylori-Symptoms.com](http://www.H-Pylori-Symptoms.com), doctors will rarely consider digestive infections as being problematic unless you have serious symptoms such as vomiting or severe diarrhoea. This is unfortunate, but please do not be disheartened because there are some excellent private labs whose mission it is to help you!

If you’d like further, detailed information on these tests and how to access them, I highly recommend that you visit the special page we set up at the H Pylori website:


Once you know exactly which digestive infections you have, a laser-targeted protocol can be designed for you so that you eliminate the bugs efficiently and without wasting money on inappropriate medications or natural cleanses.

**Resources To Help You Succeed**