

MS Teams fatigue – how to avoid virtual burnout

While working from home, we are often spending a large amount of our time online in virtual meetings.

Using virtual platforms can be a great way to quickly and easily connect with your colleagues during formal and information catch-ups. It also provides you with an easy way to phone colleagues without needing to use your own phone.

However, we do recognise that using virtual platforms can be exhausting for a number of reasons:

- the ease with which we can book meetings often means no break between them
- we no longer need to factor in travel time between meeting rooms and subsequently have lost important time to pause, think and recharge
- the additional visual input and nonverbal cues of having multiple people on the screen moving and looking back at you
- the distraction of seeing your own image on the screen
- the lack of your own physical movement as you stay sitting in front of the screen for long periods of time.

There are a number of things you can try to help prevent this exhaustion setting in.

- Assess if your meeting really **needs** to be over a virtual platform: could a telephone call achieve the same results?
- **Plan breaks** in between your meetings and try where possible to limit the number of meetings in one day.
- Consider **reducing hour long meetings to 50 minutes** and taking 10 minutes between as a break or to do something else.
- Consider **minimising your screen** so that you only see the speaker of the meeting and not all of the participants.
- Try **changing the viewing options** so that you don't see your own camera view. Try alternating activities throughout the day, spending some time answering emails or completing other tasks between meetings.
- **Take a break** – consider building in breaks to longer meetings: it's easier to focus if you have had a movement break, a snack and refreshed your drink.

Do you have any other ideas on how to avoid virtual burnout? If so, please email them to:

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