
Managing Anxiety/Uneasy Feelings

What is anxiety?

- A feeling or deep sense that things are not right

What are the symptoms of anxiety?

- Fear
- Worrying
- Sleeplessness, disturbing dreams, or nightmares
- Confusion
- Rapid breathing or heartbeat
- Tension
- Shaking
- Inability to relax or get comfortable
- Sweating
- Problems paying attention or concentrating

What to report to the hospice/palliative care team?

- Feelings that may be causing anxiety (For example, fear of dying or worrying about money)
- Concerns about illness
- Problems with relationships with family or friends
- Spiritual concerns
- Signs and symptoms that anxiety is changing or getting worse

What can be done?

The team will try to find the cause for the anxiety and discuss treatment with you and your primary care provider.

Things you can do:

- Take Action
- Do things that have helped anxiety in the past
- Write down your thoughts and feelings
- Treat physical problems such as pain that can cause anxiety
- Do relaxing activities like deep breathing or yoga, play soothing music
- Keep things calm
- Limit visitors
- Massage arm, back, hand or foot
- Count backwards from 100 to 0
- Avoid caffeine and alcoholic beverages
- Exercise
- Provide reassurance and support
- Reach out to family, friends and other members of your team
- Take one minute at a time
- Use ordered medications as prescribed

Other HPNA Teaching Sheets on are available at www.HPNA.org.

Reference

Core Curriculum for the Generalist Hospice and Palliative Nurse. 3rd ed. Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company; 2010.

Tips to Manage Anxiety and Stress. *Anxiety Disorders Association of America*. Available at www.adaa.org. Accessed: June 27, 2011.

Approved by the HPNA Education Committee June 2008.
Reviewed by the HPNA Education Services Committee June 2011.