

MANAGING ANXIETY/UNEASY FEELINGS

What is Anxiety?

A feeling or deep sense that things are not right

What are the symptoms of anxiety?

1. Fear
2. Worrying
3. Sleeplessness, disturbing dreams, or nightmares
4. Confusion
5. Rapid breathing or heartbeat
6. Tension
7. Shaking
8. Inability to relax or get comfortable
9. Sweating
10. Problems paying attention or concentrating

What to report to the Hospice and Palliative Care Team?

1. Feelings that may be causing the anxiety (for example, fear of dying or worrying about money)
2. Concerns about the illness
3. Problems with relationships with family or friends
4. Spiritual concerns
5. Signs and symptoms that the anxiety is changing or getting worse

What can be done?

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

Things you can do:

1. Take action
2. Do things that have helped the anxiety in the past
3. Write down your thoughts and feelings
4. Treat physical problems such as pain that can cause anxiety
5. Do relaxing activities like deep breathing or yoga, play soothing music
6. Keep things calm
7. Limit visitors
8. Massage arm, back, hand or foot
9. Count backward from 100 to 0
10. Avoid caffeine and alcoholic beverages
11. Exercise
12. Provide reassurance and support
13. Reach out to family, friends, and other members of your team

14. Take one minute at a time
15. Use ordered medications as prescribed

Other HPNA Teaching Sheets 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.