



## Eliminating Barriers to Pain and Fatigue Management Key Teaching Points

### FATIGUE MANAGEMENT

- 1. How can fatigue be better recognized and treated?**
  - Expect to be asked how severe your fatigue is at each visit on a “0-10” or “none, mild, moderate or severe” basis. Remember if your physician/nurse doesn’t bring it up, you bring it up.
  - Fatigue is treated according to its severity, its underlying causes, and your disease and treatment status.
  
- 2. How is “no fatigue” (“0”) to “mild fatigue” (“1-3”) treated?**
  - Fatigue education and counseling are important aspects of your fatigue treatment.
  - You will learn that fatigue is common, that there is a pattern during and after your treatment and, how to record your fatigue and activity levels in a diary.
  - You will learn about ways to treat fatigue such as how to:
    - Conserve and save energy (e.g. taking 4-6 rest periods a day; prioritizing your activities)
    - Use distraction
    - Maintain or increase your current level of physical activity
    - Use concentration or attention-restoring activities
    - Identify resources and strategies to manage common problems associated with fatigue such as problems related to nutrition, sleep, stress, pain, lack of adequate fluid intake, infections, and other medications and illnesses
  
- 3. How is “moderate fatigue” (“4-6”) to “severe fatigue” (“7-10”) treated?**
  - In addition to the fatigue education and counseling described above, your physician/nurse will:
    - Ask you more about your fatigue (when did it first start?, how long has it lasted?, what makes it worse or better?, and how is it affecting your daily activities?)
    - Review your current cancer treatment, medical history, and body systems, to identify any illness or problem that might be contributing to your fatigue.
    - Assess especially for the 7 factors commonly associated with fatigue such as anemia, sleep and nutritional problems, emotional distress, pain, changes in activity level, and other illnesses or medications, to determine if further workup, referral, or treatments are needed.
    - Determine if other factors or symptoms are present that require further workup, referrals, or treatments.
  
- 4. What can I do to reduce my fatigue, and when should I call or talk to my physician/nurse?**
  - Answers to both these questions are discussed in detail on page 12 of your booklet: “Cancer-Related Fatigue and Anemia: Treatment Guidelines for Patients.”
  
- 5. Do you have any special questions about fatigue management?**