



PAIN AND SYMPTOM MANAGEMENT IN HOSPICE CARE

VOLUNTEER TRAINING 2022



Few things a doctor does are more important than relieving pain. . . pain is soul destroying. No patient should have to endure intense pain unnecessarily. The quality of mercy is essential to the practice of medicine; here, of all places, it should not be strained.”

— Marcia Angell

PAIN AND SYMPTOM MANAGEMENT

Objectives:

1. Identify Signs And Symptoms Of Pain
2. Be Able To Identify Types Of Treatment For Pain
3. Understand Other Common End Of Life Issues
4. Know what you can do to help when you notice signs and symptoms.

PAIN CONTROL IS A CENTRAL GOAL FOR HOSPICE CARE

Federal guidelines require all hospice's to make every reasonable effort to assure that the patient's pain is controlled.

Always ask
about pain.
Believe the
Patient!

Remember
pain is
whatever-
whenever-and
wherever- the
person says it
is.

It is
everyone's
duty to
ensure our
patients are
comfortable

Signs And Symptom Of Pain: What To Watch For

Pain- Always ask about pain. Believe the Patient! -Remember pain is whatever-whenever-and wherever- the person says it is.

What to watch For:

- Notice facial expressions (grimacing-frowning-wrinkled brow)
- Moaning-groaning
- Crying out
- Rubbing or protecting a certain spot
- Moving slowly- pacing or rocking back and forth

Other Behaviors That Can Indicate Pain

Anxiety

- Feelings may cause anxiety-fear of dying-worrying about family
- Tension or shakiness- problems concentrating- sleeplessness

Restlessness

- A condition that usually occurs –especially in last 48 hrs.
- Fidgeting-pulling at sheets or clothing-moving extremities
- Inability to get comfortable- moving around-tossing and turning
- Trying to get out of bed for no known reason

Types of Medication for Pain Control

Mild: Over the Counter Medications

Tylenol

Ibuprofen

Aspirin

Moderate

Codeine

Hydrocodone

Oxycodone

Dihydrocodeine

Tramadol

Severe

Morphine

Hydromorphone

Methadone

Levorphanol

Fentanyl

Myths And Reality Of Narcotics

Myths

- Narcotics are addicting.
- Narcotics slow down respiratory.
- Will hasten death.
- It just knocks one out or feels foggy and lose control.

Reality

- Rare for terminally ill when used for symptom management.
- Rare if adjusted slowly for relief
Desired effect for air hunger.
- Research doesn't support – needed for pain management.
- When taken regularly-tolerance quickly develops-should go away within days.

Other Types of Treatments for Pain

Massage and Music Therapy

- Patient and families request both Music and Massage Therapy. These requests are then addressed during IDT meetings.
- These services are provided by a licensed specialist

Other Relaxation Techniques

- Provide an atmosphere that is calm
- Dim the lights
- Play soft music

COMMON END OF LIFE SYMPTOMS

Food and Fluid

- “Are we starving them?”
- “They don’t want to eat or drink, should I force them to eat?”

The desire to eat or drink usually decreases- this is a natural response of the body as the body system slows down.

It is normal for the patient to lose interest in food and drink as the illness progresses and it may become difficult to swallow.

How to respond to Food and Fluid Issues

- Always offer drinks or food-Encourage (never force or with hold)
- Ask patient if there is a favorite food or drink that sounds good to them
- Mouth swabs available for dry mouth is a comfort measure
- Help reassure family members and encourage them to talk with nurse



Pain [pein]

WORKING TOGETHER WITH PATIENT,
PATIENT FAMILIES, VOLUNTEERS AND
HOSPICE STAFF HELPS MAKE SURE
OUR PATIENTS PAIN IS CONTROLLED
TO ALLOW THEM TO ADD LIFE TO
DAYS.

WHAT CAN I DO AS A VOLUNTEER?

Report any of these Symptoms to the Hospice Nurse.

Be supportive to patients and families if they find these symptoms distressing.

Patients may find holding or stroking their hand comforting

LET'S REVIEW SOME CONCEPTS

Pain

Everyone experiences their own level of pain. Believe them when they tell you.

Myths:

Narcotics speed up death. Narcotics research doesn't support this. Narcotics allows the patient to be able to relax.

It is everyone's duty to ensure our patients are comfortable.

Pain can be controlled through the following methods

- Medication
- Message Therapy
- Music Therapy
- Other relaxation Techniques

Pain Looks different for everyone.

Restlessness

Anxiety

Physical signs: moaning, facial expressions

Notify hospice when you notice a patient is experiencing uncontrolled pain.

REFERENCES

Hospice Patients alliance. Pain control: Methods and Standards of Care.
<https://www.hospicepatients.org/hospic29.html>

Advances in Pain and symptom Management by Russell Portenoy MD
Presentation on 3/7/2016



THANKS!

Remember to complete your evaluation!

If you have any questions, please contact
Cindy Grawe, Volunteer Coordinator.

Phone: 217-223-8400 ext. 4731 or email

Cindy.Grawe@blessinghealth.org