

What are Cancer Symptoms?

Cancer can cause all types of symptoms. Physical symptoms include pain, nausea, and fatigue. Emotional symptoms include anxiety, depression, and stress. Cancer symptoms can lead to lower quality of life. These symptoms may be from the cancer treatment or the cancer itself. You may experience none, some, or all of these symptoms.



HOW CAN I FEEL BETTER?

GET GOOD HEALTH CARE!

Try changing your diet to start. A plant-based diet (75-80% plants) is usually a good goal. If you are having nausea and loss of appetite, try eating small frequent meals. A nutritionist can help you develop an eating plan that is right for you. Your dietary needs and tastes may vary depending on where you are at in your treatment course. You may also look online at AICR.ORG for more information about cancer-fighting nutrition.

Exercise regularly. Exercise can help you feel better physically. It can also improve your mood and is often the best medicine for fatigue. Any movement is good—walking, cycling, gardening or even dancing are all a good place to start; if you are new to exercise or have lost some of your energy, be sure to start gently, and increase exercise slowly and steadily.



Try yoga: Yoga can help with anxiety, depression, sleep, and fatigue. There are different types of yoga. Take a look at the handout on yoga to see which might be right for you.

Listen to music: Music can lower anxiety, fatigue, and pain. Some studies have shown that music therapy can even lower your blood pressure! Listen to music or create music with your own voice or instruments.

Be sure to focus on improving your sleep naturally, even if you've had insomnia for years. Poor sleep can worsen fatigue, mood, and pain. Guided imagery, calming herbal teas, limiting screens at night, and more time outdoors can all help improve sleep.

TREATMENTS

Ask about acupuncture or acupressure: Acupuncture is the insertion of small needles into specific points in the body. Acupressure is the use of

pressure on some of those same spots. Acupuncture and acupressure can help relieve chemotherapy-induced nausea and vomiting.



Try massage: Massage can help with pain. Sometimes it is done with aromatherapy, which is the use of essential oils. Massage with or without aromatherapy can help with anxiety and mood.

Learn progressive muscle relaxation (PMR) and deep breathing exercises (DBE): PMR and DBE can help you relax. You can learn to practice PMR and DBE in classes, online, and from CDs.

There are a variety of natural or integrative options that can help with cancer-related symptoms including herbal preparations or supplements. It is very important to discuss these with your health care team to be sure that they are safe and right for you.

WHO SHOULD I TALK TO ABOUT THIS?

Health care professionals: Ask your doctors and nurses about including lifestyle changes in your treatment plan. Sometimes talking to a therapist can also be a good idea.

Family members: Ask your family and friends to help you eat well and exercise.

For more information, scan the QR code below, or visit nciph.org/cancer_symptoms



