

How to Communicate Your Loved One's Symptoms Regarding Overall Well Being, Pain and More

Overall Well-being

- Is the patient eating well? Any sudden changes in diet or fussiness about eating?
Any sudden cravings?
- Is his weight stable? If not, what is happening?
- Is he sleeping well? Unable to fall asleep? Wakes up and is unable to go back to sleep?
Has nightmares? Sleeps restlessly?
- Is he getting some kind of exercise? Suddenly doing more or less than typical?
- Is there any sign of abuse or neglect that you've noticed? If so, what is it?

General Condition

- Does the patient seem to have "slowed down" noticeably since the last visit?
If so, in what way?
- Does he have any unusual bleeding? Where? How much?
- Does he seem to be breathing easily? If not, what is the quality of the breathing?
Rapid Shallow Gaspng Rattling Other _____
- Does he cough when he eats or drinks?
- Is his digestive system working well? If not, what seems to be the matter?
Excessive gas Heartburn Diarrhea Constipation Other _____
- Are his limbs moving as they usually do? Is he struggling to handle things?
- Have any rashes or welts appeared recently? Where? What do they look like?
- Has a mole changed shape or become dark? Has a new one appeared somewhere?
If so, where?
- In general, does the treatment plan seem to be working? If not, what seems to be wrong?
- Is a particular problem the reason for this office visit? If so, what are the major symptoms or concerns?

Pain

- Is the patient complaining about pain? What does he say it feels like?
Sharp Stabbing Dull Pounding Achy Tingling Other _____
- Where is it located?
All over Headache Abdomen Limbs Other location _____

- On a scale of 1-10, with 1 being no pain and 10 being the worst pain imaginable, how does the patient rate his pain?
- How long has the pain lasted?
- Does it move around or stay in one place?
- Does it come and go, or is it there all the time?
- Does the pain seem to occur in relation to something else (e.g., eating, standing up suddenly, while reaching for something overhead)?
- Is there anything that makes the pain better or worse?
- Does pain medication help? If so, how much?

Medications

- Is the patient taking his medications on time? At the prescribed dose? If not, what seems to be going wrong?
- Is he complaining about or suffering from any side effects? If so, what are they (drowsiness, hyperactivity, etc.)?
- Does anything seem to have suddenly changed in his response to medication? If so, what is it?
- Did he stop taking a medication for any reason? If so, why and what happened as a result?

Emotional & Mental Well-being

- Does the patient seem to be as mentally sharp and alert, or has there been a noticeable decrease in mental function? What are the symptoms?
 - How is his memory, both long-term and short-term? Has it changed recently? If so, in what way?
 - Can he still do and enjoy activities as in the past? Has something suddenly become boring or unpleasant?
 - Does he feel responsible for being ill and/or angry about his condition?
 - Does he fear the truth and put off doctor visits based on what he thinks the doctor may say about his problem?
 - Is he able to laugh and enjoy life?
 - Does he seem to be more emotionally overwrought than usual? In what way?
- Anxious Depressed Fearful Sad Hyped-up Excitable Other _____

Spiritual Well-being

- Are there any restrictions on treatment that need to be considered due to the patient's spiritual beliefs or practices? If so, what are they?
- Has the patient continued his usual spiritual practices (e.g., going to church, meditation, saying the rosary, prayer, using a home altar)? If not, what has changed?
- Has he started expressing doubts about faith or spiritual practices?
- Does he seem more reflective and quiet than usual? If so, does this seem to be okay?
- Is he starting to talk about wanting to “go home” in the sense of dying?

Other Conditions

Each illness has its own set of unique symptoms. Ask your doctor if there are particular symptoms that should be monitored.