

## The 5 steps of symptom management



### Start with the Heart

What matters most to them? Validate their emotions



### Eyes and Ears

What do you see?  
What do you hear?



### Brain Think!

When does it seem to be worse or better?



### Hands

What could you do to help them feel better?  
Follow the care plan & their preferences



### Mouth

Tell what you've found with your heart, eyes and ears, brain and hands to the nurse



What do you see?  
What do you hear?



Hallucinations, agitation, confusion and/or drowsy & withdrawn



What could make it better?  
Follow care plan & preferences

### Delirium

- Calm voice and gentle reassurance
- Visible clock, calendar, familiar items
- Hearing aids and eyeglasses
- Encourage meaningful activity
- Calm room



What do you see?  
What do you hear?



Coughing



What could make it better?  
Follow care plan & preferences

### Cough

- Assist with positioning
- Support during and after coughing due to fatigue
- Open window, use a fan



Drowsy, weakness

### Fatigue

- Assist with activity
- Focus on what they CAN do
- Balance activity and rest
- Suggest less demanding activities (music? puzzles?)



Coughing, choking, Food coming back up into mouth

### Difficulty Swallowing

- Place in upright position to eat or drink
- Mouth care before & after meals
- Soft, moist foods
- Slow, small bites when eating



Frowning, moaning, calling out

### Pain

- Warm blanket or cold compress
- Soothing touch
- Reposition
- Encourage to report pain. Try alternative words when asking: sore?uncomfortable?



Breaths sound wet, cannot clear throat

### Noisy breathing

- Frequent mouth care
- Humidify room
- Raise HOB
- Sips of fluid, only if alert
- If not alert, position side-lying



Bloated abdomen, straining to pass BM

### Constipation

- Encourage fluids
- Support activity, as able
- Toilet after meals, if possible
- Give privacy & time during toileting
- If bed-bound, place on left-side with warm cloth on back



Difficulty breathing, rapid & shallow breaths

### Shortness of breath

- Use a fan or open window
- Raise HOB in supported upright position
- Ask YES or NO questions
- Plan for and pace activity



Lack of appetite, weak, pale, clutching stomach

### Nausea & Vomiting

- Keep air & room fresh
- Avoid strong smells
- Small sips of water or ice chips
- Frequent mouth care



Hiccoughs

### Hiccoughs

- If possible, try big breath in, hold, then long steady exhale
- Sips of ice water
- Breathe into paper bag
- Small meals



Dry mouth, fatigue, dizziness, loss of appetite, weight loss

### Reduced eating or drinking

- Offer other ways to take in fluid (eg: ice chips)
- Frequent mouth care
- Flexibility in when, what, and how much client eats
- Prioritize comfort & rest



Scratching, dry skin

### Itchy

- Use cream or moisturizer
- Luke warm baths or wash with warm cloth, pat to dry
- Avoid fragrant soaps, creams
- Light and breathable clothing



Report to nurses and family. Use:



The person/family said \_\_\_\_\_ is the most important to them



I saw and heard \_\_\_\_\_



I noticed it seems to be worse or better when \_\_\_\_\_



I tried \_\_\_\_\_ and it did/did not seem to help