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## Managing Anxiety/Uneasy Feelings

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### What is anxiety?

- A feeling or deep sense that things are not right

### What are the symptoms of anxiety?

- Fear
- Worrying
- Sleeplessness, disturbing dreams, or nightmares
- Confusion
- Rapid breathing or heartbeat
- Tension
- Shaking
- Inability to relax or get comfortable
- Sweating
- Problems paying attention or concentrating

### What to report to the hospice/palliative care team?

- Feelings that may be causing anxiety (For example, fear of dying or worrying about money)
- Concerns about illness
- Problems with relationships with family or friends
- Spiritual concerns
- Signs and symptoms that anxiety is changing or getting worse

## What can be done?

The team will try to find the cause for the anxiety and discuss treatment with you and your primary care provider.

Things you can do:

- Take Action
- Do things that have helped anxiety in the past
- Write down your thoughts and feelings
- Treat physical problems such as pain that can cause anxiety
- Do relaxing activities like deep breathing or yoga, play soothing music
- Keep things calm
- Limit visitors
- Massage arm, back, hand or foot
- Count backwards from 100 to 0
- Avoid caffeine and alcoholic beverages
- Exercise
- Provide reassurance and support
- Reach out to family, friends and other members of your team
- Take one minute at a time
- Use ordered medications as prescribed

Other HPNA Teaching Sheets on are available at [www.HPNA.org](http://www.HPNA.org).

### Reference

*Core Curriculum for the Generalist Hospice and Palliative Nurse*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company; 2010.

Tips to Manage Anxiety and Stress. *Anxiety Disorders Association of America*. Available at [www.adaa.org](http://www.adaa.org). Accessed: June 27, 2011.

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