

***Caring. Compassion. Communication.***

Greetings,

We welcome you and your family to UNC Outpatient Oncology Palliative Care. We look forward to partnering with you and your oncology team to:

- Treat and manage your symptoms related to cancer and cancer treatment
- Help ensure that your cancer care matches your values and goals
- Offer assistance in advance care planning
- Offer support and resources to you and your family

Our team is made up of doctors, a pharmacist, nurse practitioner, nurse, and administrative specialist. We work closely with hospital social workers, dietitians, chaplains, and support staff to address your needs.

**You can reach a member of our team  
Monday - Friday between 8:30 am – 4:30 p.m. at 984-974-0000.**

We look forward to working with you soon.

**UNC Outpatient Oncology Palliative Care**

Sean Gaffney, MD, Physician, Clinic Director

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**Nurse Line: 919-619-1551**

# Palliative Care

## What You Should Know

To learn more about palliative care, go to [getpalliativecare.org](http://getpalliativecare.org)

**Palliative Care (pronounced pal-lee-uh-tiv)** is specialized medical care for people with serious illness. This type of care is focused on providing relief from the symptoms and stress of a serious illness. The goal is to improve quality of life for both the patient and the family.

Palliative care is provided by a specially-trained team of doctors, nurses and other specialists who work together with a patient's other doctors to provide an extra layer of support. It is appropriate at any age and at any stage in a serious illness, and it can be provided along with curative treatment.

### 1 WHERE DO I RECEIVE PALLIATIVE CARE?

Palliative care can be provided in a variety of settings including the hospital, outpatient clinic and at home.

### 2 DOES MY INSURANCE PAY FOR PALLIATIVE CARE?

Most insurance plans, including Medicare and Medicaid, cover palliative care. If costs concern you, a social worker from the palliative care team can help you.

### 3 HOW DO I KNOW IF PALLIATIVE CARE IS RIGHT FOR ME?

Palliative care may be right for you if you suffer from pain, stress or other symptoms due to a serious illness. Serious illnesses may include cancer, heart disease, lung disease, kidney disease, Alzheimer's, HIV/AIDS, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), multiple sclerosis, Parkinson's and more. Palliative care can be provided at any stage of illness and along with treatment meant to cure you.

### 4 WHAT CAN I EXPECT FROM PALLIATIVE CARE?

You can expect relief from symptoms such as pain, shortness of breath, fatigue, constipation, nausea, loss of appetite and difficulty sleeping. Palliative care helps you carry on with your daily life. It improves your ability to go through medical treatments. It helps you better understand your condition and your choices for medical care. In short, you can expect the best possible quality of life.

### 5 WHO PROVIDES PALLIATIVE CARE?

Palliative care is provided by a team including palliative care doctors, nurses and other specialists.

### 6 HOW DOES PALLIATIVE CARE WORK WITH MY OWN DOCTOR?

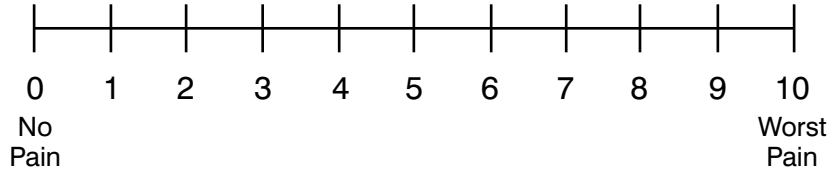
The palliative care team works in partnership with your own doctor to provide an extra layer of support for you and your family. The team provides expert symptom management, extra time for communication about your goals and treatment options and help navigating the health system.

### 7 HOW DO I GET PALLIATIVE CARE?

You have to ask for it! Just tell your doctors and nurses that you would like to see the palliative care team.

# Pain Management Log

Please use this pain assessment scale to fill out your pain control log.



Date	Time	How severe is the pain?	Medicine or non-drug pain control method	How severe is the pain after one hour?	Activity at time of pain

Reference: Management of Cancer Pain, Clinical Guideline Number 9. AHCPR Publication No. 94-0592; March 1994. Agency for Healthcare Research & Quality, Rockville, MD.

## Safe Storage & Disposal of Pain Medications

### Why do doctors prescribe pain medication(s)?

People diagnosed with cancer often experience pain, either from the cancer itself or as a side effect of treatment. As a result, managing and treating pain is an important part of a person's overall cancer treatment plan. Treatment may involve the use of pain relief medications called analgesics. For some people with moderate to severe pain, the doctor may prescribe opioids, also known as narcotics.



### Why is it important to know how to store my pain medication(s)?

Although opioids are very effective at managing and relieving cancer pain, they are dangerous if a family member or pet accidentally swallows them. Fentanyl skin patches (see below) can stick to the hands and feet of kids and pets. In addition, people who use drugs may seek them out. Therefore, it is important to take additional steps to safely and securely store your prescription pain medication.

### What steps should I take to safely store my pain medication(s)?

It is important to store your pain medication in a bottle that has a child-resistant lid. You should also keep all of your opioid medication in a location where a pet, child, teenager, or stranger would not easily see it or get to it. Do not store your pain medication in many different places around the house or leave it sitting out. Finally, only share details about your prescription(s) with your caregiver or others who need to know.

### How should I get rid of any old or unused medication?

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recommends that some opioid medications be flushed down the toilet. However, some communities have rules and restrictions against this. Another option is to take any unused or expired drugs to a prescription medication take-back program collection site. If you can't take your medication to a collection site or flush it, you may need to put it in the trash. To do this safely, take all of the medication out of its container and put it in a sealable plastic bag or coffee can. Then mix the medication with an undesirable substance such as cat litter or used coffee grounds. Finally, seal the container and be sure to put it in the trash, not the recycling.

### How should I dispose of used pain-relief skin patches?

If you have been prescribed a fentanyl skin patch, make sure used patches are kept away from others. According to the FDA, too much fentanyl can cause severe breathing problems and even death in babies, children, pets, and adults, especially those who have not been prescribed the drug. After using a patch, fold it in half so the sticky parts are sealed together and flush it down the toilet or use another of the disposal methods listed above.



## Questions to ask the doctor

Regular communication is important in making informed decisions about your health care. Consider asking the following questions of your health care team:

- Would you explain the options for managing my pain with medication?
- Why is it important for me to safely store and dispose of my pain medication?
- Where is the best place for me to keep my medication?
- Should I lock up my pain medication? If so, where would you recommend?
- What should I do if a pet or family member accidentally swallows or comes in contact with my medication?
- What should I do if some or all of my medication goes missing?
- What should I do with any medication that may be left over if my prescription changes or if I don't need to take it any more?
- Is it safe for me to flush any old or unused pain medication down the toilet?
- Are there any drug take-back programs in my area? Or should I return left over medication to a member of my health care team?
- Whom should I call if I have any questions or problems?

Additional information about how to safely store and dispose of cancer medications can be found at [www.cancer.net/safestorage](http://www.cancer.net/safestorage).

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The ideas and opinions expressed here do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) or The Conquer Cancer Foundation. The information in this fact sheet is not intended as medical or legal advice, or as a substitute for consultation with a physician or other licensed health care provider. Patients with health care-related questions should call or see their physician or other health care provider promptly and should not disregard professional medical advice, or delay seeking it, because of information encountered here. The mention of any product, service, or treatment in this fact sheet should not be construed as an ASCO endorsement. ASCO is not responsible for any injury or damage to persons or property arising out of or related to any use of ASCO's patient education materials, or to any errors or omissions.

To order more printed copies, please call 888-273-3508 or visit [www.cancer.net/estore](http://www.cancer.net/estore).



### AMERICAN SOCIETY OF CLINICAL ONCOLOGY

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[www.asco.org](http://www.asco.org) | [www.cancer.net](http://www.cancer.net) | [www.conquercancerfoundation.org](http://www.conquercancerfoundation.org)

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## TERMS TO KNOW

### Analgesic:

A medication that relieves pain

### Breakthrough pain:

Pain that occurs between regularly scheduled doses of pain medication

### Drug disposal:

Getting rid of or destroying unused medication

### Neuropathic pain:

Burning, shooting, or numbing pain from nerve damage

### Opioid:

A medication that requires a prescription and provides strong pain relief

### Pain threshold:

The point at which pain is noticeable

### Pain tolerance level:

The peak amount of pain that a person can endure

### Prescription medication:

A medication that is only available from a pharmacy with written instructions from a doctor, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant

### Rescue medicine:

A medication used to control breakthrough pain

### Take-back program:

National or local initiatives to collect unused prescription medications so they can be disposed of in a safe, legal, and environmentally-friendly way

MADE AVAILABLE THROUGH



# SAFE AND EASY MEDICATION DISPOSAL

available at the blue MedSafe® boxes at UNC Hospitals

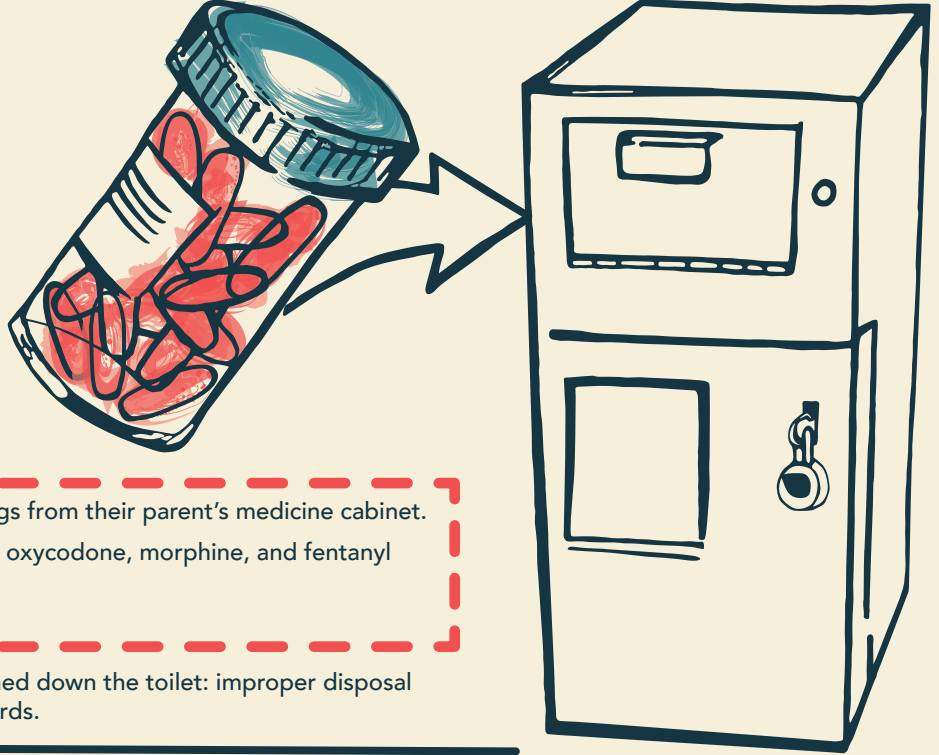
Do you have medication that's expired or you no longer use?

Dispose of it safely and anonymously at one of three blue MedSafe® boxes located around UNC Hospitals. The medication will be safely and legally destroyed.

Besides cluttering up your medicine cabinet, unused or expired medications can be dangerous – especially opioids, which are being abused more and more.

- 73% of teens say it is easy to access prescription drugs from their parent's medicine cabinet.
- 70-80% of people who abuse opioid medications like oxycodone, morphine, and fentanyl obtain them from a family member or friend.
- One child is poisoned by opioids every 45 minutes.

Medications should not be simply thrown away or flushed down the toilet: improper disposal of medication can lead to environmental or safety hazards.



## LOCATIONS

Just look for the blue MedSafe® boxes at one of three locations:



### UNC HILLSBOROUGH OUTPATIENT PHARMACY

Lobby Level, Hillsborough Hospital  
430 Waterstone Drive  
Hillsborough, NC 27278  
Hours:  
Monday-Friday 9 a.m.- 5 p.m.



### UNC CENTRAL OUTPATIENT PHARMACY

Lobby Level, NC Cancer Hospital  
101 Manning Drive  
Chapel Hill, NC 27514  
Hours:  
Monday-Friday 7 a.m.- 8 p.m.



### UNC EMPLOYEE PHARMACY

Lobby Level, NC Memorial Hospital  
101 Manning Drive  
Chapel Hill, NC 27514  
Hours:  
Monday-Friday 8 a.m.- 5 p.m.

## TIPS FOR DISPOSAL

### ✓ ACCEPTABLE

- Pills, tablets, capsules
- Ointments, creams, lotions
- Powders
- Liquid medicines - no more than 4 oz.

### ✗ NOT ACCEPTABLE

- Aerosol spray cans
- Needles, syringes, or sharps containers
- Trash
- Batteries and Hazardous materials

Leave medication in original container when possible, or place in plastic baggie before disposal.  
MedSafe® boxes are available to the public during normal business hours. Do not leave medication outside of the box.

HAVE QUESTIONS? ASK A PHARMACIST AT ANY LOCATION.

# Diaphragmatic Breathing

Patient Education: Side Effect and Symptom Management Series



**Diaphragmatic** (di uh frag MAT ik) **breathing** is a type of relaxation breathing that uses the diaphragm. The diaphragm is the muscle that is below the ribs and above the stomach. In this type of breathing, the diaphragm causes the stomach, instead of the chest, to rise and fall. When the lungs fill with air, the diaphragm pushes down, and the stomach will rise (move forward). When the lungs empty the air, the diaphragm moves back up, and the stomach will fall (move back in). The result is slow, even and deep breathing.

## Benefits of Diaphragmatic Breathing

- Decrease pain
- Decrease muscle tension
- Help with heart rate
- Decrease stress
- Decrease anxiety
- Slow down breathing

## How to Breathe with the Diaphragm

1. Get into a comfortable position. You may stand, sit or lay down on your back.

2. Place one hand on your chest and one hand on your stomach.

The hand on your chest should stay still. The hand on your stomach will allow you to feel your stomach rise and fall as you breathe.

3. Breathe in through your nose if you can for 3-5 seconds, or as long as you are comfortable. Allow your stomach to rise as the air enters your lungs.

4. Breathe out through your mouth if you can for 3-5 seconds, or as long as you are comfortable. Allow your stomach to fall as the air leaves your lungs.

5. Repeat each step until your body feels relaxed.

Hand position for Diaphragmatic Breathing



## Helpful Hints

- Focus on exhaling for more relaxation.
- Never hold your breath or gasp for air.
- Use a clock with a second hand to time your breathing.
- If you feel dizzy or light-headed, return to your normal breathing.

① **Call your UNC Recreational Therapy and Child Life team member if you have any questions.**  
**919-966-4131**

**Guided Imagery** is a skill that you can use to help relax your mind and your body. In Guided Imagery, you use your imagination and your five senses (sight, smell, touch, taste and hearing) to take your mind to a place that you would rather be.

## Benefits of Guided Imagery

- Decrease stress
- Give a sense of control
- Decrease anxiety
- Improve your sleep
- Help concentration
- Help decrease pain

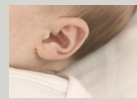
## How to Relax with Guided Imagery

1. Get into a comfortable position. You may sit or lie down. You may also want to close your eyes.
2. Think of a place that you would rather be (such as the beach, mountains, or with family).
3. Think about what you would see, smell, feel, taste and hear if you were in that place. The more that you can make yourself see, smell, feel, taste and hear the place where you want to be, the easier it is to relax.
4. Keep using your senses to think about this place until you feel very relaxed.

To take your mind to another place in Guided Imagery, think about a place and ask yourself:



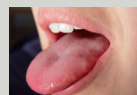
*What do you **See** when you are there? Look at objects, people and colors. Is it bright? Dark?*



*What can you **Hear** when you are there? Think about the background.*



*What can you **Feel** with your hands and feet? Is your body hot or cold?*



*Can you **Taste** anything? Is it salty, bitter, sour or sweet? Even the air around you can have a taste.*



*What do you **Smell**? Does it smell good? Is it strong or faint?*

## Helpful Hints

- Use long deep breaths to help you relax.
- The more you practice, the easier it will become.
- There is no time limit with Guided Imagery. Do it for as little or as long as you need.
- Stop Guided Imagery if you start to have uncomfortable feelings and/or thoughts. Guided Imagery should not make you feel sad.
- You can get CDs that use words to help with Guided Imagery. Sound Machines or music can also help.

Call your UNC Recreational Therapy and Child Life team member if you have any questions.

919-966-4131

**Journaling** is a safe way to express your feelings through writing. Journaling can be done anywhere at anytime. It is often personal and does not have to be shared with anyone else.

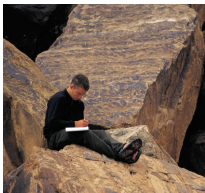
## Benefits of Journaling

- Relieves Stress
- Gives a Sense of Control and Achievement
- Makes You Feel Calm
- Makes You Aware of your Feelings
- Lowers Anxiety
- Increases Insight
- Lets You Revisit Thoughts

## Examples of Journaling Questions

Journaling can be done for fun or as a coping skill. When you journal for fun, focus on simple thoughts and wishes. When you journal as a coping skill, focus on more complex topics and feelings.

**Use questions like the examples below if you are journaling for fun:**



- If you won the lottery, what would you do?
- What country would you like to visit? What would you do there?
- What is your favorite: season, color, place, or food? Why? Describe each one.
- Where are you the happiest? Describe that place.

**Use questions like the examples below if you are using journaling as a coping skill:**



- What kind of day are you having? Why?
- What keeps you up at night worrying? Are your worries realistic? Is there anything that you can do about them?
- What would you change about yourself or your life? Is there a way to change it?
- Where do you see yourself in 5 years?

## Helpful Hints

- There is no right or wrong way to journal.
- Give yourself time to reflect before starting.
- There is no time limit when you journal.
- You can journal with pen and paper or computer.

📞 **Call your UNC Recreational Therapy and Child Life team member if you have any questions.**

**984-974-1000**



# Progressive Muscle Relaxation

Patient Education: Side Effect and Symptom Management Series



**Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR)** is a technique that relaxes the muscles in your body. It helps reduce tension or stress that you may hold in your muscles. When you let go of the tension, your muscles will relax. PMR is done by tensing and relaxing a muscle group off and on until the muscle stays relaxed. As you practice, you will learn to feel the difference between tense muscles and relaxed muscles.

## Benefits of PMR

- Lower your stress
- Lower your heart rate
- Help you control your anxiety
- Reduce muscle tension
- Lessen your pain
- Help you feel more rested

## How to Relax with PMR

1. Get into a comfortable position. You may stand, sit or lay down on your back.
2. Tighten all of the muscles in your face to make them tense. Hold the tension for 5-10 seconds.
3. Relax the muscles in your face for 15-20 seconds. Focus on the tension leaving your body.
4. Repeat tensing and relaxing the same muscles 2 –3 times before moving on to the next muscle group.
5. Repeat steps 2, 3, and 4 with different muscle groups.  
In this order, focus on the shoulders, upper arms, forearms, hands, chest, back, trunk, thighs, lower legs and then feet.



Making the forearm muscles tense



Relaxing the forearm muscles

## Helpful Hints

- PMR should not feel bad. Stop PMR if it is painful or not comfortable.
- Use long deep breaths to help relax the muscles.
- Keep your muscles relaxed longer than you keep them tense.
- Feeling warm and tingly is normal.

📞 **Call your UNC Recreational Therapy and Child Life team member if you have any questions.**

**919-966-4131**

HDF 3617; 5.6; 11/2012

# COMPREHENSIVE CANCER SUPPORT PROGRAM (CCSP)



The Comprehensive Cancer Support Program (CCSP) provides a wide range of educational and clinical services for cancer patients and their families. We are here to help you and your family.

**Where:** N.C. Cancer Hospital, Ground Floor Tony Williams Lobby  
**Phone:** (984) 974-8100  
**Website:** [unclineberger.org/ccsp](http://unclineberger.org/ccsp)

## THE MARY ANNE LONG PATIENT AND FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER (PFRC)

The PFRC is the home base for your support, education, referrals and resource connections including an education center, relaxation room, and boutique for head coverings.  
Phone: 984-974-8100 Website: [unclineberger.org/pfrc](http://unclineberger.org/pfrc)

## ADOLESCENT & YOUNG ADULT PROGRAM (AYA)

The AYA Program offers support, resources, events and connections with other young people coping with cancer.  
Website: [uncaya.org](http://uncaya.org) Email: [ayacancer@med.unc.edu](mailto:ayacancer@med.unc.edu)

## COUNSELING & PSYCHIATRY

Services are offered by our psychiatrists, psychologists, and counselors and include compassionate support and symptom management for the challenges that often come with a cancer diagnosis. Open to patients and caregivers.

To schedule an appointment: 919-966-3494

## FINANCIAL & LEGAL ASSISTANCE

The UNC Pro Bono Legal Clinic helps prepare future health care planning documents. Patient Assistance Coordinator, along with your nurse navigator & social worker, can help you find resources that may lessen the financial burden of a cancer diagnosis.

Phone: 984-974-8112 Legal/ 984-215-3758 Financial

## DIETITIANS

Outpatient Oncology Dietitians provide nutrition counseling and work with patients undergoing surgery, chemotherapy, and radiation.

## CAREGIVERS

Caregiver Conversations is a supportive program just for caregivers caring for a patient with a cancer diagnosis. Meetings are held every Tuesdays at 2PM in the PFRC

Caregivers play a huge role in the patient's recovery. We are here to help you every step of the way. Visit our caregiver website: [caregivers.web.unc.edu/](http://caregivers.web.unc.edu/)

## SURVIVORSHIP

Survivorship care focuses on your needs from the time of diagnosis through the balance of your life. We offer an education program that focuses on emotional care, nutrition, physical exercise, and medical management after cancer treatments. Survivorship care plans are offered by your medical team.

REGISTER: [unclineberger.org/ccsp/cancer-transitions/](http://unclineberger.org/ccsp/cancer-transitions/)

## HEALTH COACHING/PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

These services are available to help you include physical activity and relaxation into your lives, including yoga, massage therapy, Get Real and Heel (a 16-week free exercise program), Health score, and individual consultations.

Phone: 919-445-4255 Email: [carly\\_bailey@med.unc.edu](mailto:carly_bailey@med.unc.edu)

## INTEGRATIVE ONCOLOGY CONSULTS

Consults offer personal health strategies by combining complementary therapies that are safe and effective with conventional medical approaches.

To schedule an appointment: 919-966-3494

\* Thanks to the generosity of our community of supporters most CCSP services are provided free of charge.

September 2022  
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