

Guidelines for Referral to Therapy for Oncology Patients

DISEASE SITE & SIDE EFFECT

Brain tumor/metastasis

- Hemiparesis
- Balance deficits
- Coordination problems
- Difficulty eating/swallowing/speaking
- Cognitive deficits

Breast Cancer

- Limited ROM
- Arm swelling
- Pain (chest wall/shoulder)

Bone cancer/metastasis

- Pain
- Back pain (Hx vertebral fracture)

Colorectal cancer/ GYN cancer

Post-surgical challenges:

- Pain
- Fatigue/weakness
- Lower extremity swelling/edema
- Muscular tightness (hip)

Head & neck cancer

- Cervical ROM deficits
- Shoulder pain
- Postural challenges
- Head and neck swelling
- Difficulty eating/swallowing/speaking
- Cognitive deficits

Hematology

- Fatigue/weakness

Lung cancer

- Fatigue/weakness
- Bone pain

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SYMPTOM & SIDE EFFECT

Cancer-related Fatigue

- Increased inactivity/difficulty with gentle activity
- Difficulty with ADLs
- Complaints of fatigue disproportional to activity

Lymphedema

- Pain
- Extremity swelling/pitting edema (tightness of jewelry)
- Sense of extremity "heaviness"
- Limited ROM

Pain

- Major joint pain (hip, knee, shoulder, etc.)
- Postural deficits
- Core weakness

Peripheral Neuropathy

- Tingling
- Numbness
- Pain
- Balance deficits

Steroid-induced Myopathy

- Progressive proximal muscle weakness of the upper and lower limbs
- Progressive inability to rise from chairs, climb stairs, and perform overhead activities

TREATMENT & SIDE EFFECT

Chemotherapy

- Fatigue
- Weakness
- Peripheral Neuropathy

Radiation

- Fatigue/Weakness
- Radiation scar tissue

Surgery

- Pain
- Decreased ROM
- Ambulatory deficits
- Lymphedema

Steroids

- Weakness

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FOCUS BY THERAPY

Physical Therapy

- Ambulatory dysfunction
- Risk of fall/Recent fall
- Balance deficits
- Weakness/fatigue that affects daily activities
- Peripheral neuropathy
- Difficulty with transfers
- Positioning
- Postural deficits
- Safety Concerns
- Hemiparesis
- SOB with activity
- Musculoskeletal pain

Occupational Therapy

- ADL/IADL deficits from weakness/fatigue
- Peripheral neuropathy – affecting dressing, grooming, feeding, writing, computer use, taking medications
- Adaptive equipment needs for bathing toileting
- Home modification
- UE weakness
- Coordination deficits

Speech Therapy

- Swallowing deficits
- Difficulty eating
- Aspiration risk
- Speech difficulties: expressive aphasia, receptive aphasia, voice restoration
- Cognitive deficits
- Adaptive equipment needs for speech
- Head and Neck Cancers and Brain Tumors/metastasis

CANCER PREHABILITATION

Goal/Focus:

- To prevent or lessen the severity of anticipated treatment-related problems that often lead to later disability.

When to refer to Cancer Care Specialty Services:

- Immediately after diagnosis. Our patients undergo physical and psychological assessments to establish their baseline level of function and identify any current impairment. Our treatment team will provide targeted interventions to reduce the risk and severity of future impairments.

LYMPHEDEMA: COMPLETE DECONGESTIVE THERAPY

Goal/Focus:

- Reduce and mobilize lymph fluid
- Improve function
- Prevent infection

Five Modalities:

- Manual Lymph Drainage
- Compression Therapy
- Exercise
- Skin Care
- Self-Care Education