Managing Symptoms at Home

Neuropathy and Myalgia

Nerve and Muscle Side Effects– Symptoms & Solutions

Whidbey General Hospital

What are neuropathy and myalgia?
Some chemotherapies can cause problems with your nerves, resulting in a condition called neuropathy (new-RAH-puh-thee). You may feel tingling, burning, weakness, numbness, or pain in your hands or feet. Some chemotherapies can also cause problems with your muscles, such as weakness, tiredness, or pain (also known as myalgia [my-AL-juh]) . Most of the time, patients recover from these problems; however, there is a chance that full recovery can take up to a year. Tell your doctor or nurse if you have any problems with your nerves or muscles.

Some nerve- and muscle-related symptoms include:

- Tingling, burning, weakness, or numbness in the hands or feet.
- Weak, tired, sore, or achy muscles.
- Pain or difficulty walking.
- Clumsiness or loss of balance.
- Difficulty picking things up or buttoning clothes.
- Shaking or trembling.
- Jaw pain.
- Loss of hearing.
- Stomach pain or constipation.

How can I cope with nerve and muscle problems?

- If you have numbness in your fingers, be very careful when grasping sharp, hot or dangerous objects
- If you have problems with strength or balance, move carefully, use handrails on stairs, and place bath mats in the tub or shower
- Wear shoes with rubber soles whenever possible
- If movement is difficult or painful, prioritize your activities, request assistance from others, rearrange your environment so that what you need is within arm's reach, etc.

Ask your doctor if there are medications or treatments that are appropriate for your symptoms. Also ask if alternative treatments are appropriate, such as:

- Massage or applying heat or cold to the affected area
- Physical therapy or learning to position your body differently
- Distraction or relaxation training, hypnosis, or acupuncture

The information contained herein is not comprehensive and is intended only as a guide.

Call your doctor if your nerve or muscle problems worsen.

Medications and instructions from physician and nurse:

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