
HNA Prompt Sheet: Memory and Concentration

Impaired cognition, such as problems with memory and concentration, may be experienced in people with cancer due to a range of factors and can affect each of them differently. It can result from the cancer itself, as a consequence of treatment, or worsened by anxiety and fatigue.

Have you considered?

- Is onset acute or chronic?
- History of cognitive impairment e.g. dementia, recurring sepsis
- Whether prescribed medications are contributing
- Whether anxiety is contributing
- Whether fatigue is contributing
- Whether insomnia/difficulty sleeping is contributing
- Providing leaflets with information and suggested strategies to help support:
 - memory/concentration
 - fatigue management
 - relaxation
 - sleep hygiene
- The role of physical activity
- Is adequate social support available or does additional need to be arranged?
- Other factors – does a formal cognitive screen need to be completed?

Services which may be able to help

- Occupational therapy
- Physiotherapy
- Social services
- Psychological support services
- Exercise programmes via the GP, e.g. exercise on referral
- Complementary therapies
- Macmillan information and local cancer support centres, e.g. Maggie's Centres, The Mulberry Centre, The Haven
- Pharmacy
- GP/geriatrician

Patient Information

Macmillan Cancer Support:

<http://www.macmillan.org.uk/information-and-support/treating/chemotherapy/side-effects-of-chemotherapy/chemo-brain.html>

Cancer Research UK: <http://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/cancers-in-general/cancer-questions/chemo-brain>