

Peripheral Neuropathy



Réseau de
cancérologie
Rossy

Rossy
Cancer
Network

Symptom Management Tip Sheet



Let's talk about peripheral neuropathy...

- Peripheral Neuropathy can feel like numbness, tingling, burning, “pins and needles”, tremors, off-balance, and/or pain in hands, feet, legs or arms.
- Peripheral Neuropathy can be a side effect of cancer treatment.
- If you have a sudden loss of feeling or strength please **call your healthcare team immediately**.

** If you are undergoing IMMUNOTHERAPY and have these symptoms please contact your healthcare team as soon as possible. Delays can increase side effects and toxicity.*



What you can do

- Look at your hands and feet daily for sores/blisters you may not feel.
- To avoid burns, lower the temperature of your hot water heater. Use a thermometer to ensure shower/tub water is less than 120°F/49°C.
- Avoid exposing fingers and toes to very cold temperatures.
- Wear gloves when cooking, using the oven or doing dishes.
- If you feel your peripheral neuropathy is getting worse please tell your healthcare team.
- Consider acupuncture, massage, or yoga (but check with your healthcare team first)
- Talk to an occupational therapist about using loafer-style shoes, velcro shoelaces, adaptive equipment (e.g. larger handles on forks/knives) or wrist braces to ease symptoms.
- For Occupational Therapy or Physiotherapy, please ask your healthcare team for a referral.



For Feet & Legs

- Make sure you have shoes that fit properly.
- Make sure walkways at home are clear of clutter. Remove small rugs and other tripping hazards.
- Make sure your shower or bath floor is not slippery.
- When walking on uneven ground, look at the ground to help keep yourself balanced.
- Dangle your legs before standing up to avoid dizziness.
- If you have trouble walking, talk to a physiotherapist about using a walker, cane, or splint to help with balance and walking, to develop a physical training plan, or try “TENS” therapy.

Based on: Remote Symptom Practice Guides for Adults on Cancer Treatments © 2020 D Stacey for the Pan-Canadian Oncology Symptom Triage and Remote Support (COSTaRS) Team. University of Ottawa School of Nursing and the Ottawa Hospital Research Institute, Ottawa, Canada.

Other resources

General information at

mcgill.ca/rcr-rcn/patient

This information should not be considered as medical advice. It is not to be used in place of a visit with a doctor, nurse or other healthcare professional. If you have questions about your individual medical situation, please consult with your healthcare professional.

Who can help



Nurse Navigator (IPO)

If you have one, please speak with your IPO

If you are getting treatment at:

▪ Oncology Clinic, call:

Symptom Management Hotline
514-340-8222 ext. 25529
Mon – Fri. 8h00-16h00

▪ Radiation Oncology Clinic, call:

514-340-8222 ext. 24124