

REFERENCES:

Factsheet 9 on Palliative Care. *Terminal Restlessness*, Cambridge & Hungdon Palliative Care Group (2007)
Hospice Taranaki. *Terminal Restlessness Protocol*. (July 2011)
Watson, M., Lucas, C., Hoy, A & Back, I. *Oxford Handbook of Palliative Care*. (2005) Oxford, England
Developed by: National LCP Office, New Zealand (Working Group in alphabetical order) L Angus, J Boxall, C Fowles, F Gillies, B Marshall and A Roguski
Created: October 2012
Review date: October 2014

Pamphlet adapted from the
National LCP End of Life Care Fact Sheets

Mercy Hospice Auckland
Te Korowai Atawhai
61 College Hill
Ponsonby 1011
P O Box 47693, Ponsonby 1144
Ph: 361 5966
Fax: 361 5977
Email: admin@mercyhospice.org.nz
Web: mercyhospice.org.nz

MHA
Sept13



Mercy Hospice
Auckland
Te Korowai Atawhai

Information Pamphlet **Restlessness & Agitation**



The information provided in this pamphlet concentrates on assistance that family members can provide other than medication.

Introduction

Restlessness and agitation is a distressing problem. As with all other symptoms, the cause of restlessness needs to be identified and if at all possible reversed

Assessment

Physical discomfort

Unrelieved Pain
Distended bladder - full bladder
Full bowel
Uncomfortable bed
Nicotine/alcohol or medication withdrawal
Pruritis - only itch
Unfamiliar environment

Psychological discomfort

Feelings of hopelessness
Helplessness
Anger
Guilt
Fear
Spiritual discomfort
Unfinished business
Hallucinations

Do any of the following apply?

Patient does not know what to do with his/herself "Something not quite right"

Involuntary movement

Twitching
Jerking

Purposeful Movement

Fidgeting
Pacing
Fumbling
"Plucking"

Management

Treat and/or remove possible causes:

1. Change position.
2. Check bladder/bowels.
3. Ensure patient safety - have someone sit by patient reading, singing, massage or what the patient would have wanted.
4. Low stimulus environment.
5. Familiar voices, pictures, belongings.
6. Gentle massage/aromatherapy.
7. Spiritual guidance or support.
8. Lower bed to the ground or put a mattress next to the bed.
9. Assist with smoking or nicotine patch/application.
10. Too hot/cold body temperature and environment.
11. Religious guidance (if it is the patient/family/whanau wishes only).