



## Anxiety Management

1. Exercise is an excellent way to reduce anxiety. Even upper body exercises or chair exercises can help reduce stress when undertaken regularly. These can also be used as needed to help quell growing worry.
2. Maintain proper sleep hygiene. Poor sleep can lead to the development or exacerbation of anxiety. Most sleep related problems do not improve with the use of sleep medications. Having a plan on how to modify sleep non-pharmacologically is important (see accompanying sheet).
3. Avoid caffeine intake. Caffeine can promote anxiety being a stimulating agent. Make sure the diet has little, or no, caffeine.
4. Promote the use of muscle relaxation techniques (see accompanying sheet).
5. Employ cognitive tasks to both redirect and calm the patient. Many people enjoy puzzles, word games and trivia as a means of relaxation. Make sure the difficulty level of the task is appropriate for the cognitive level of the patient so at the task itself will not cause anxiety. Relaxation aids such as calming music may greatly reduce anxiety.
6. Patients may benefit from the use of either audio or video will be preferred, as the headphones block out all competing auditory stimuli.
7. Repetitive tasks or activities can calm patients. Rocking chairs were invented with that in mind. Knitting, folding clothing, sweeping, putting beads on a string can all reduce nervousness. Repetitive verbal activities also have proven to reduce anxiety. Saying the rosary or reciting prayers, chanting or simple phrase repetition may lessen worries and concerns.
8. Relaxation exercises are commonly used by anxious residents (see relaxation sheet).

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