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**Cancer Related Fatigue (CRF)** According to the National Institute of Health, a consensus is emerging among patients, caregivers, and oncologists that cancer related fatigue is the most important untreated symptom in cancer today. The National Cancer Institute reports that fatigue is present in 14%- 96% of people with cancer, particularly in individuals undergoing treatment. One of their research studies showed patients and oncologists agreed on the presence of fatigue in 75% of patients. However, they disagreed on its importance. While 61% of patients reported that fatigue affected their lives more than pain, only 37% of oncologists thought this was true. A follow-up study confirmed the central importance of fatigue on patients quality of life. It ranked first (60%), followed by nausea (22%), depression (10%), and pain (6%). Cancer treatments commonly associated with CRF include chemotherapy, radiation therapy, bone marrow transplant, and biological therapies. A report from the Cleveland Clinic Health Information Center states that the exact reason for CRF is unknown, and that CRF might be related to the disease process or its treatments. While some medical treatments might help improve fatigue caused by hypothyroidism or anemia, other causes must be managed on an individual basis. Tips offered to combat fatigue included assessment, energy conservation, nutrition, exercise, and stress management. The American Cancer Society and National Comprehensive Cancer Network treatment guidelines for CRF also include aerobic exercise as a non-medication strategy. However, they note special precautions for anyone with bone metastasis, a low white cell count, or low platelet count, or a fever. Other non-medication strategies listed were restoring activities, nutritional counseling, sleep improvement, and reducing stress. A National Institutes of Health study conducted by the Osher Center for Integrative Medicine at the University of California Medical School concluded that massage therapy may provide an important adjunct in ameliorating fatigue and enhancing cancer patient's well being. The Cancer Control Journal of the Moffitt Cancer Center reported in 2005 that, "Conventional care for patients with cancer can safely incorporate massage therapy, although cancer patients may be at higher risk of rare adverse advents. The strongest evidence for benefits of massage is for stress and anxiety reduction, although research for pain control and management of other symptoms common to patients with cancer, including pain is promising. The oncologist should feel comfortable discussing massage therapy with patients and be able to refer patients to a qualified massage therapist as appropriate." We want all physicians to know that our practice treats cancer related fatigue (CRF) with both physical and massage therapies. Our Medicare and managed care insurance contracts cover both physical therapy and therapeutic massage. Referrals often originate from practitioners other than oncologists, but we always check with the patient's oncologist before beginning treatment. Patients will tell our therapists they often mention fatigue to their primary and specialty physicians, but not to their oncologist because that is where they are more concerned about learning whether their cancer is progressing or receding. The oncologist is justifiability focused on treating the cancer. Therefore, we encourage cancer patients to also initiate referrals for CRF with their primary or specialty physicians as a means of improving the quality of everyday life while undergoing treatment.

**Please consider asking your doctor for a referral to our practice if you are bothered by pain, suffer from an injury, or are planning a surgery. You can print a referral form (Rx form) from the home page of this website.**