

Pancreatic Cancer- EOL Care

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Introduction

- A Palliative Diagnosis
- Prognostication in Advanced Cancer
- Most Common signs related to prognostication
- EOL/LDOL Symptom management
- Patient and family experiences
- Summary

A Palliative Diagnosis

- Preparing for the end
 - Discussion and information – we don't have all the answers and that's OK
 - Person specific – consent
 - Involving families and carers
 - Making plans – what's right for the individual/family
 - Communicating plans – again what's right for the individual
 - Discussion and capturing wishes
 - Advance Care Plan (1)(2)(3)
 - Advance Decision to Refuse Treatment/Living Will (4)
 - Have a discussion – “One chance to get it right” (5)
 - Communicate and share information – electronic solutions emerging e.g. Summary Care Record (6)

Prognostication in Advanced Cancer

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- Months/Weeks

- Increased sleepiness/fatigue
- Increasing symptoms (pain, N+V)
- Anorexia/weight loss
- Dehydration
- Less communicative/interactive
- Reduced mobility

- Weeks/Days

- Reduced bladder/bowel function
- Appears more gaunt/pale
- Withdrawal from family, friends and life
- Spending most of time in bed
- Difficulty taking oral medications
- Loss of appetite
- Confusion/disorientation

Prognostication in Advanced cancer

- Days/Hours
 - Semiconscious/Unconscious
 - Restless/agitated/plucking
 - Changes in breathing rate and sounds

Most common EOL signs in Pancreatic Cancer

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- Pain
- Weight loss
- Loss of appetite
- Nausea
- Abdominal bloating
- Changes in colour of stool and urine
- Jaundice
- Reduced function and increased care needs
- Sleepiness
- Anxiety
- Confusion
- Restlessness
- Withdrawing and or speaking less

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Months/Weeks (End of Life)

Weeks/Days (Last Days of Life)

Symptom management at EOL/LDOL

- Pain
 - Common symptom in pancreatic cancer
 - WHO pain ladder approach – often responds to opioids.
 - Adjuvant NSAID – can be very effective
 - As disease progresses symptom control can be difficult to achieve
 - **Refer to specialist teams such as palliative care and/or chronic pain for support.**
 - Opioid resistant pain – consider Coeliac Nerve Plexus block – local variations in access to procedure. Quality of life
 - Buscopan – S/C Hyoscine Butylbromide 20mg qds (SCSD up to 120mg in 24 hours)
 - Just-in-Case drugs – for S/C injection
 - eGFR > 30 Morphine 2.5 – 5.0mg, Midazolam 2.5 – 5.0mg, Levomepromazine 6.25mg, Glycopyrronium 200mcg
 - eGFR < 30 Alfentanil 125 – 250mcg, Midazolam 1.25 – 2.5mg, Haloperidol 0.5mg, Glycopyrronium 200mcg

Symptom management at EOL/LDOL

- Nausea - Complicated anatomy
 - “Squashed stomach” – Metoclopramide 10 – 20mg IV tds (not S/C as large volume 10mg/2ml)- consider s/c syringe driver. Contraindicated if colic.
 - Duodenal obstruction –consider NG tube management. Metoclopramide (no colic) and/or Dexamethasone
 - Biochemical – Haloperidol 0.5mg, Levomepromazine 6.25mg
 - Last days – Loss of oral route. Levomepromazine 6.25mg via s/c syringe driver (reduced dose or Haloperidol 1.5 – 3.0mg via syringe driver/24 hours)
 - Reduced doses for renal or alternative – contact specialist team for advice
- Biliary obstruction – Quality of life focus
 - Assess for biliary stent or drains – is obstruction reversible QoL focus
 - Pancreatin treatment continues if able to swallow
 - Biochemical induced nausea related to biliary obstruction

Symptom management at EOL

- Anxiety/Restlessness
 - Reassurance – support relative/carer in understanding normal phenomena.
 - Being treated as an individual - listened too and reassured.
 - Environment – calm, quiet, familiar objects
 - Benzodiazepines. Oral/buccal Lorazepam 0.5 – 1.0mg, S/C Midazolam 2.5 – 5.0mg (reduced dose in renal impairment)
 - Haloperidol for delirium. S/C Haloperidol 0.5 – 1.0mg
- Diabetes
 - Insulin dependent patients entering EOL/Last Days Of Life – continue insulin at reduced dose. Local hospital guidance. Diabetes UK guidelines. (8)
- Syringe Driver
 - difficult symptom control. Loss of oral route.

References and useful links

Advance Care Planning

1. <https://compassionindying.org.uk/library/advance-decision-pack/>
2. <https://advancecareplan.org.uk/>
3. <https://www.mariecurie.org.uk/help/support/publications/all/planning-ahead>

Advance Decision to Refuse Treatment

4. <https://compassionindying.org.uk/making-decisions-and-planning-your-care/planning-ahead/advance-decision-living-will/>

One chance to get it right

5. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/323188/One_chance_to_get_it_right.pdf

Summary Care Record

6. <https://digital.nhs.uk/services/summary-care-records-scr>

End of Life Signs

7. <https://www.crossroadshospice.com/hospice-resources/end-of-life-signs/pancreatic-cancer/>

Diabetes at End of Life

8. EOL Diabetes guidance - https://www.diabetes.org.uk/resources-s3/2018-03/EoL_Guidance_2018_Final.pdf

Any Questions?