

Appendix 1. Side Effect Modules

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Body Image, Weight, Hair

It is common to notice changes in your body and appearance after treatment. While some people might see desired changes, others may be bothered by unwanted changes and these might interfere with quality of life or ability to enjoy certain activities. Your view of yourself is important; however, it may be helpful to remember that you are your own worst critic.

Coping with concerns about body image, weight, or hair:

1. Self-compassion and kindness.

Often, when we look in the mirror, we notice flaws, and we pick out things that we don't like about ourselves. The next time you look in the mirror, can you notice things that you do like about yourself? Instead of criticizing the things you don't like about yourself after treatment, try thinking: this is the body that got me through cancer and treatment, and it is strong and resilient. List the things you like about your body and the things you would not want to change.

2. Cognitive reframing and adaptive thinking.

We can get caught up in a cycle of negative appraisal of our self-image and this leads to feeling sad, down, and ashamed. As a result, we may withdraw from social activities, be less likely to engage in healthy behaviors, which perpetuates the negative self-talk and hyper focus on our negative self-image.

When you notice yourself having negative thoughts about your body, ask yourself: what would you say to a friend who is being self-critical? Or, what would a friend say to me? Can you apply the same compassion to yourself?

3. Healthy lifestyle.

Take small steps to work your way towards a healthy lifestyle. Routine, moderate exercise, sleep, and a nutritious diet will help you look and feel better. Set a small goal for physical activity this week. Prepare some healthy meals in advance. Set achievable goals using the **SMART technique**:

- **Specific:** Start walking twice a week on Tuesdays and Thursdays
- **Measurable:** 15 minutes each, keep a log
- **Attainable:** Walking around the neighborhood
- **Realistic:** If the weather is cold, walk indoors. Walk in the morning.
- **Time-bound:** Duration of 2 weeks and then increase to 20 minute walks

Resources and tips for exercise and weight loss:

- ❖ MGH Cancer Center has a **new Lifestyle Medicine clinic**, providing nutritional guidance and physical activity consultation. Your study therapist can provide you with a referral to this service. In addition, you can refer to their website for **free exercise videos** for cancer patients: <https://www.massgeneral.org/cancer/supportservices/exercise-videos-for-cancer-patients.aspx>
- ❖ LIVESTRONG at the YMCA is a **no-cost, 12-week exercise program** with instructors trained in cancer survivorship and post-rehabilitation. You receive a free membership to the YMCA during the program.
- ❖ Weight Watchers developed a program specifically for breast cancer survivors. Whether or not this program is available near you, you can **participate in Weight Watchers** and talk with your certified group leader about post-breast cancer specific concerns.
- ❖ Find a buddy. Accountability is a great motivator for making healthy changes. **Find a partner and set goals together.**

4. Avoid comparisons (with yourself *and* with others).

Avoid the temptation to compare your body now to how it was before your surgery or treatment. This “before and after” comparison most likely won’t help you to find acceptance or take steps to improve your self-image. Try to let go of self-judgment and think of what you like about yourself today. Focus on what is real and true for you today, rather than what used to be true.

The American Cancer Society’s Look Good Feel Better program focuses on helping women to look and feel better in their own skin. See if there is a program near you:
www.lookgoodfeelbetter.org.

5. Freshen up.

Sometimes, going to a makeup specialist, a stylist, or getting a manicure and pedicure can help to freshen up your look and make you feel better about your appearance.

- ❖ The American Cancer Society has a program called “Look Good Feel Better” that helps women feel better in their own skin after changes from cancer. They can help with makeup or hair styles. Check out their website www.lookgoodfeelbetter.org for a program near you.
- ❖ Talk with your hair stylist about haircuts, products, or styles that are better for thinner hair.
- ❖ Tape-in hair extensions are a relatively newer technique that specifically works well for thinner hair. These extensions give a fuller look by blending in with your natural hair without causing damage. This can be done at a hair salon.

Memory Difficulties and Concentration

Having difficulties with memory, attention, and processing speed are not uncommon for people who have had cancer and can result from many factors. There is more evidence on “cancer-related cognitive impairment” (you might know this as chemobrain) due to cancer and chemotherapy.

In addition, stress, sleep deprivation, and mood can all affect our ability to focus, remember, and shift between tasks. There is also some evidence that a reduction in estrogen while taking hormonal therapy may influence cognitive functioning including memory and attention. Estrogen receptors are located throughout the brain, including regions such as the hippocampus (plays a large role in memory). Estrogen plays a protective role in the brain, preventing cognitive decline as we age and ensuring normal brain function.

- ❖ More research is needed to better understand these relationships, and if you are noticing changes in your cognitive functioning, it is important to remember that there are likely many factors at play.

Here are some ways to help optimize your brain health:

1. Relaxation.

Stress is the number one cause of difficulties with concentration, memory, etc. Stressful issues distract you from other tasks, leading to poor concentration and forgetfulness. Stress hormones increase during chronic stress and interfere with memory formation. Being in a relaxed state can help to think clearly and organize your day.

- ❖ Try diaphragmatic breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, or a short breathing exercise. Take a few moments to close your eyes and focus on your breath. The more you practice this, the better you will become at calming your body and releasing tension. Promoting relaxation over the long term can improve overall brain function.

2. Sleep.

Optimizing sleep can improve memory, attention, and how quickly we process new information. Good quality sleep plays a particularly important role in forming new memories. When we are not rested, we are more likely to forget or feel like our brain is working slower, which can affect quality of life. Refer to the sleep module for techniques to improve sleep.

3. Physical Activity.

Research shows that physical activity is beneficial for brain health and cognition. This is important as we age and for those who are having changes in the ways that their brain works. The idea of exercising or being physically active might feel overwhelming, but you don't need to train for a marathon or spend an hour on a treadmill.

- ❖ Try setting small, achievable goals for yourself, and modify the exercise so that it is more manageable.
- ❖ Plan times to go for a walk, or other physical activity that you *enjoy* doing. Research suggests that aerobic exercise is the most important "ingredient" for improving brain health. Activities could include Zumba, hiking, biking, swimming, or walking. Start slow and work your way up.

4. Brain rehabilitation ("brain teasers").

Brain functioning problems are frustrating, but common. Because they happen to so many people, there are many excellent books, websites, and podcasts available that give specific examples of ways to improve memory and attention. In addition, there are many "brain exercise" programs on the internet that state they can improve your cognition.

We don't have good information behind these claims, but it is clear that using and stimulating your brain each day is important for your brain. You could try an evidence-based program called CogSMART, www.cogsmart.com, a cognitive training program accessed via the web or from your mobile device, with or without a therapist.

5. Adaptive thinking and reframing.

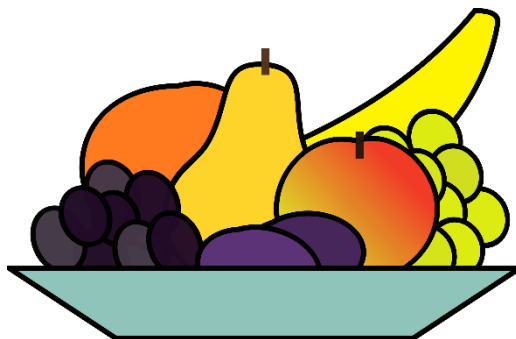
Use these techniques to change how you think about brain functioning difficulties that arise during your day.

- ❖ Forgetfulness or difficulty concentrating is frustrating and can be embarrassing. This can lead you to avoid work, withdraw from reading that you used to enjoy, or worry obsessively about forgetting something important. Of course, these negative automatic thoughts only further distract you.
- ❖ Try to replace them with more realistic, helpful thoughts.
 - For example, could you read a magazine instead of a novel?
 - If you forget something, is it the end of the world or just an inconvenience?

6. Nutrition.

Nutrients can affect brain processes, mental and physical endurance, and emotions.

- ❖ Consider a referral to a nutritional counselor (ask your doctor or study therapist) to work with you to make sure you are optimizing your intake of protein-rich foods, fluids, calories, and other nutrients to optimize brain health.



Fatigue/Loss of Energy

Many factors can cause fatigue and it is often difficult to determine the exact source of the fatigue. Fatigue related to cancer and treatment, known as “cancer-related fatigue,” is often more debilitating than the normal experience of fatigue. Distress, such as depression, anxiety, or stress, can also be a source of fatigue. Regardless of how severe your fatigue is, it can greatly interfere with your quality of life and ability to function well.

Increasing control and coping with fatigue:

1. Physical activity.

Many studies have shown that patients who are more physically active are less tired, less depressed, and have better sleep and quality of life. The idea of exercising or being physically active might feel overwhelming. Try setting small, achievable goals for yourself, and modify the exercise so that it is more manageable. Plan times to go for a walk, or other physical activity that you *enjoy* doing. This doesn't mean you need to spend an hour on a treadmill. Activity can include yoga, Zumba, hiking, biking, swimming, or walking. Start slow and work your way up. See the weight loss section on p. 79 for exercise programs and tips.

2. Relaxation.

Even though it might seem counterintuitive, enhancing our ability to relax reduces stress in the body which may be contributing to fatigue. Relaxation can help you manage and cope with stress so that it is less likely to deplete you of energy. Try diaphragmatic breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, or a short breathing exercise. Take a few moments to close your eyes and focus on your breath. The more you practice this, the better you will get at calming your body and releasing tension. Try relaxation during the day when you are not feeling overly fatigued.

3. Adaptive thinking and cognitive reframing.

How we think about fatigue affects how we feel, whether we can use effective methods for coping with fatigue, and whether we continue to engage in the world around us.

- ❖ For example, a person who feels fatigued may stay in bed all day, thinking that the only way to feel better is to rest and that she has absolutely no energy to do anything she had planned (thoughts). She feels lonely, sad, and depressed (feelings), exhausted and tearful (physical sensations), and she consequently spends all day in bed or on the couch watching TV, not engaging with friends or doing other activities that she usually enjoys (behaviors).

This leads to more depression and loneliness, as well as thoughts that she will never be able to get out of the house and she will spend the rest of her life in bed (more thoughts and depressed feelings).

The cycle continues and soon she doesn't even attempt to schedule any activities or reach out to friends. To break the cycle, try using helpful, accurate alternative thoughts to replace unhelpful thoughts about fatigue.

4. Enjoyable activities.

- ❖ What is something I used to enjoy doing, and how can I do that differently?
- ❖ Can you continue to engage in an enjoyable activity, but perhaps for less time, or with assistance so that you are less likely to tire yourself out?

Explore these questions with the following exercise.

Pleasurable Activities for Fatigue Management

Things I used to love to do:

Ways I could still do these activities, but I might have to do them a little bit differently (*be creative*):

Here are some ideas:

Stay organized/re-organize
 Write (poetry, journal, diary, doodle)
 Delegate responsibilities
 Listen to music
 Dance
 Physical exercise
 Massage therapy
 Get information
 Acupuncture
 Yoga
 Go out for a meal
 Talk to friends
 Bike ride
 Seek advice
 Take a walk
 Self-care and grooming (e.g., pedicure)
 Clean
 Aromatherapy

Meditation
 Bake or cook
 Take a drive
 Pray
 Color or paint
 Shop
 Restore antiques, furniture, etc
 Play a board game
 Play a musical instrument
 Learn to do something new
 Make a charitable donation
 Volunteer your time
 Walk barefoot
 Do a favor for someone
 Go to a play, musical, or concert
 Go camping or on a nature walk
 Compliment someone

Sing
 Solve a puzzle, crossword, etc
 Visit old friends
 Take a bath
 Be intimate with someone
 Bird-watch
 Write a letter or card
 Eat a snack
 Cry
 Cook a meal
 Explore (hike, walk around town)
 Go to a museum
 Laugh
 Watch a favorite TV show or movie
 Read a book
 Sing
 Resolve the conflict
 Go to a party

5. Nutrition.

Consider a referral to a nutritional counselor (ask your doctor) to work with you to make sure you are optimizing your intake of protein rich foods, fluids, calories, and other nutrients to increase energy and prevent fatigue onset.

6. Communication with medical team.

Talk to your doctor about your fatigue. There are medications that may be helpful, and it is worth investigating. Refer to session 4 on communicating with your medical team.

7. Sleep.

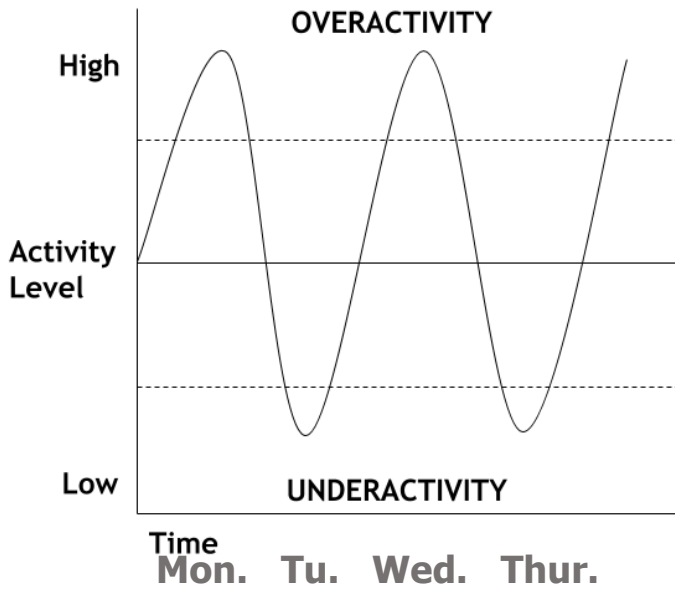
Refer to the section on improving sleep. Improving your sleep can be helpful to ensure that you feel rested during the day and you are not trying to make up for lost sleep with naps, which can affect the quality of your nighttime sleep.

Continue below to learn how to use
activity pacing and seeking social support
for the management of fatigue

Activity Pacing for Fatigue Management

When you are fatigued, you may have good days and bad days. On the good days, you tend to want to get everything accomplished (clean the whole house) and do everything (play with your kids all day), because you feel good! While this is understandable, the risk is that you do too much, and the next day (or days) you spend the day in bed because you overdid it and you are completely wiped out and exhausted. Does this sound familiar?

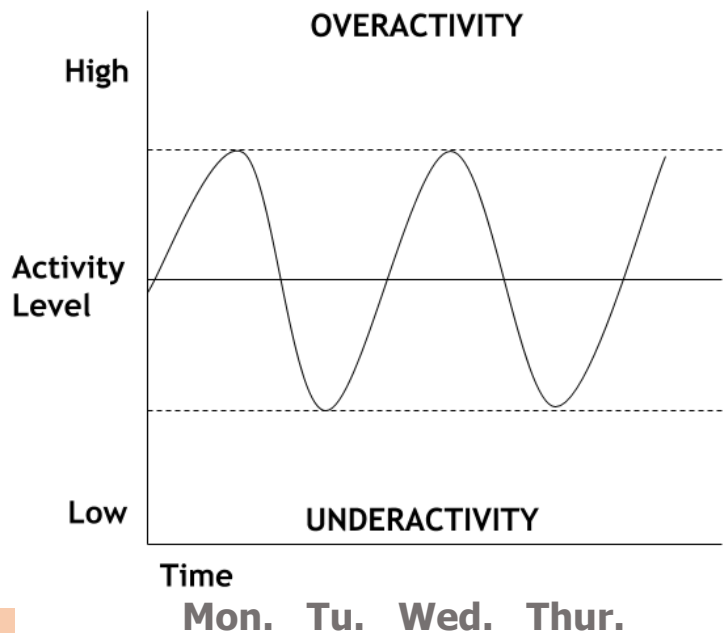
If we were to graph your activity level from previous description:



← Unhelpful old pattern

Another consequence is that the periods of low activity are also associated with low mood, sadness, depression, or irritability.

- ❖ To avoid periods of inactivity and low mood, set a realistic goal and pace yourself, especially on your good days.
- ❖ The goal is to conserve some energy, reduce symptoms, and keep activity levels steady, like the graph below, rather than have one day of productivity or fun, followed by many days of inactivity, fatigue, and low mood.
- ❖ Set a time-based goal for how much you will get done (30 minutes on this task), and stick to it, even if you still feel energized and think you can keep going. In this way, you are setting a "time-contingent" goal instead of a "fatigue-contingent" goal. Your body will thank you the next day, when you might feel good enough to finish the task or engage in another enjoyable activity!



Helpful new pattern →

Social Support for Fatigue Management

One of the most common mistakes people make is that they think they can do it all by themselves and don't need help. If you can avoid falling into that trap, you will be better off. Your friends and family want to help you, but sometimes they may not realize you need help, or don't know how to help. Offering concrete suggestions will give you some relief and will also allow your friends or family members to feel useful.

The type of support we receive falls into three categories:

Practical	Emotional/Psychological	Informational
Transportation Accompanying to medical visits Household chores Errands Meal Preparation/ Cooking Child-care Financial assistance	Love Encouragement Fun Sharing Talking Warmth Intimacy Validation Hope	Sharing of personal experience Guidance and advice Knowledge and education Decision-making

Many people can be a source of support:

- ❖ Friends
- ❖ Relatives
- ❖ Neighbors
- ❖ Acquaintances
- ❖ Teachers/Mentors
- ❖ Pets
- ❖ Colleagues

Who are your main sources of support? Is there anyone else you can identify who might be a source of support that you hadn't originally thought of?

What happens when the type of support we need does not match the type of support we are being offered:

Example: Your friend calls often to check on you and encourages you to tell her how you are feeling and coping after you finished radiation and started your hormonal therapy. You are overwhelmed with getting back to work, making dinner for your family, and getting the house straightened up.

While your friend is offering _____ support, in this moment you need _____ support.

How to ask for or optimize the support you need:

- ❖ Assess the situation
- ❖ Identify the type of support you need
- ❖ Identify who might be best equipped to provide you with that type of support
- ❖ Notice any barriers associated with asking for and receiving support
 - Am I willing to ask for help?
 - Am I willing to receive help?
 - Do I think that asking for help makes me seem weak?
 - Do I believe that I should be able to do it all by myself?
 - Do I think that I am burdening others by asking for their help?
- ❖ Challenge yourself as to whether your beliefs about asking for and receiving support are accurate. For instance, is receiving support really a sign of weakness? If someone asked you for support, would you label him/her as weak? What would you tell a friend to do?
- ❖ Ask for support: In response to Example 1, you could say “I appreciate your concern for me and it is reassuring to know that you are here to listen. I know you are trying to help, and right now, I feel very overwhelmed with several things that I need to get done and my fatigue is getting in the way of doing them. Would you have any time to help me this week?”

Hot Flashes

Hot flashes occur when estrogen levels change, and they can happen more often when there is a quick decline in estrogen, as is the case with hormonal therapy. The level of estrogen in our body affects our body temperature control mechanisms – imagine your internal thermostat now has a narrower range of temperature changes that it can tolerate.

So, your body responds to a small temperature change by trying to cool down (e.g., sweating), whereas a small change in our environment temperature would not previously caused this response. This window of tolerable temperature change also narrows when we are under stress, which is why relaxation can be a helpful tool to manage and control your hot flashes.

Increasing control and coping with hot flashes:

1. Relaxation. Relaxation and diaphragmatic breathing to calm body's physical reaction and help you to relax.

2. Adaptive thinking and cognitive reframing. Practice adaptive thinking and cognitive reframing about your hot flashes and how they may interfere with your functioning (see Session 2).

3. Modify clothing. Wear light layers so that it is easy to remove layers. Try loose fitting clothing made of light fabrics. Try cotton sheets to stay cool at night, rather than a heavy blanket.

4. Eliminate food triggers. Avoid triggers such as coffee, hot drinks, spicy foods, alcohol. Talk to a nutritionist about the connection between food and hot flashes.

5. Awareness of environmental triggers. Try to avoid other triggers such as rushing, running late, rapid temperature changes, and stress.

6. Identify predictors. Keep a diary to note what happened before the hot flash, so that you might be able to identify some patterns or antecedents and make changes to gain control over the hot flash.

7. Medication. Talk to your primary care doctor or oncologist about medication to help with hot flashes.

8. Physical activity. Exercise is helpful for hot flashes. Plan times to go for a walk, or other physical activity that you enjoy doing. This doesn't mean you need to spend an hour on a treadmill. Activity can include yoga, Zumba, hiking, biking, swimming, or walking. Start slow and work your way up.

9. Sleep. Take steps to improve your sleep habits (see page 105 for the module on sleep)

10. Acceptance. Acceptance is the understanding that you cannot change something that you might like to change, and that you recognize that something may be here to stay that you don't necessarily approve of.

- ❖ By accepting the situation, we don't have to like it, or approve of it. However, reaching a point of acceptance allows us to move past the resistance, and start finding ways to work within the situation.
- ❖ In addition, when we can accept something, we begin to focus our energy on the things we can address, rather than the things we cannot change (see Session 5).

Mood Swings, Sadness, or Nervousness

Declining availability of estrogen in the body can lead to emotional changes. It is common to experience irritability, sadness, anger, impulsivity, frustration, or depression that may feel extreme or change rapidly from moment to moment.

First, remember that while some emotion might be a rational response to a situation, your experience of that emotion may be heightened due to the chemical changes in your body. There are many ways to manage rapidly shifting moods and extreme emotions.

Coping with mood changes

1. Hit the pause button.

When our emotions are feeling extreme, we may react impulsively and regret this later.

Think about the subtle difference in *reacting* and *responding*.

- ❖ When we *react*, we do so impulsively without much thought or regard for what we want the outcome of the situation to be, and we may act in a way this is different than what our goals are for that interaction.
- ❖ Alternatively, when we *respond*, we take a more balanced approach to solve a conflict or act in a way that is congruent with the outcome that we want to achieve.

To do this, it is helpful to take a moment away or a few deep breaths before addressing the situation, so that you respond, rather than react. For example, try physically removing yourself from the situation, ask for a few minutes to think before responding, stop yourself before making an angry phone call.

This time can also be helpful to think through what you are truly upset about. When you have come around and decided to respond, try using an assertiveness skill such as the 3Fs:

- ❖ **Statement of Fact:** When I see that you are running late and haven't called.
- ❖ **Statement of Feeling:** I feel nervous and worried.
- ❖ **Statement of Fair Request:** I would like if you would call or text next time you are running late so that I know everything is okay and when to expect you home.

2. Relaxation.

Stress is a trigger for mood swings, making it more likely you will experience rapid fluctuations in mood and extreme emotions.

- ❖ Relaxation can help you manage and cope with stress so that it is less likely to cause a mood episode.
 - Try diaphragmatic breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, or a short breathing exercise.
 - Take a few moments to close your eyes and focus on your breath.

The more you practice this, the better you will become at calming your body and releasing tension. Try relaxation during the day to get better at it so that you can apply this skill during a stressful moment. You can also use relaxation as a way to calm your body before responding to something that upset you, so that you can respond thoughtfully, rather than react impulsively.

3. Cognitive reframing and adaptive thinking.

You may find yourself in a thinking trap that you cannot control your emotions (thoughts). This can lead to more frustration and irritability as you think over and over again about something that you found upsetting (emotions). Pretty soon, your blood pressure and heart rate has increased, and you feel warm and uncomfortable (physical sensations).

As a result, you might “explode” or yell at someone or storm out of the room. Or, perhaps you might “stuff” the feelings, give someone the cold shoulder/silent treatment or say something passive aggressive (behaviors). This leads to more thoughts about feeling out of control and perhaps sadness or embarrassment about how you treated a friend or loved one, and the cycle continues.

To break the cycle, try using more flexible language to describe how you feel (frustrated rather than pissed off, or annoyed rather than enraged). Try to identify what you are truly upset about and if that matches your reaction in this moment. Look back at #1, and try hitting the pause button before you respond to calm your body and take a more measured approach. Use the 3Fs skills to explain to someone why you are upset and propose a solution. Take note of other factors that might be affecting your mood (see #4).

4. Identify external triggers.

We are much more affected by external factors than we think we are. Our mood is easily affected by whether and what we have eaten that day, the amount of sleep we had the night before, if we are feeling pressured to get a lot accomplished, and if we are in pain or fatigued. If so, you might choose to hold off on responding to a situation or take a moment to practice a relaxation exercise. It can also be helpful to ask yourself where the other person is coming from- are they tired or hungry; what factors might be affecting their mood today and subsequently their interaction with you?

Try to identify external triggers that may be affecting your mood:

- ❖ Ask yourself, did I have my morning coffee?
 - ❖ Am I tired from a sleepless night?
-

5. Self-care.

Address the external triggers you notice in your environment by setting aside time for self-care. Routine, moderate exercise, sleep, and a nutritious diet will help alleviate extreme mood fluctuations and leave you feeling more in control of your mood. Set a small goal for physical activity this week. Prepare some healthy meals in advance. Take steps towards ensuring a good, restful night of sleep.



6. Physical activity.

Exercise is very helpful for mood swings and extreme emotions. Plan times to go for a walk, or other physical activity that you enjoy doing. This doesn't mean you need to spend an hour on a treadmill. Activity can include yoga, Zumba, hiking, biking, swimming, or walking. Start slow and work your way up.

7. Enjoyable activities.

Be creative. What is something I used to enjoy doing, and how can I do that differently? Can you continue to engage in an enjoyable activity, but perhaps for less time, or with assistance so that you can continue to experience joy as you participate in that activity? Some activities that may also be helpful in managing mood are massage therapy, listening to or playing music, yoga or meditation, taking a walk, watching a funny movie, tv show, or YouTube video. Turn to the next page for more on enjoyable activities.

8. Medication.

There are effective medications for managing emotions and mood changes. Raise your concerns with your doctor at your next visit and get some information about medications that might help you to feel more in control of your emotions.

Pleasurable Activities for Improving Mood

Things I used to love to do:

Ways I could still do these activities, but I might have to do them a little bit differently (*be creative*):

Here are some ideas:

Stay organized/re-organize
 Write (poetry, journal, diary, doodle)
 Delegate responsibilities
 Listen to music
 Dance
 Physical exercise
 Massage therapy
 Get information
 Acupuncture
 Yoga
 Go out for a meal
 Talk to friends
 Bike ride
 Seek advice
 Take a walk
 Self-care and grooming (e.g., pedicure)
 Clean
 Aromatherapy

Meditation
 Bake or cook
 Take a drive
 Pray
 Color or paint
 Shop
 Restore antiques, furniture, etc
 Play a board game
 Play a musical instrument
 Learn to do something new
 Make a charitable donation
 Volunteer your time
 Walk barefoot
 Do a favor for someone
 Go to a play, musical, or concert
 Go camping or on a nature walk
 Compliment someone

Sing
 Solve a puzzle, crossword, etc
 Visit old friends
 Take a bath
 Be intimate with someone
 Bird-watch
 Write a letter or card
 Eat a snack
 Cry
 Cook a meal
 Explore (hike, walk around town)
 Go to a museum
 Laugh
 Watch a favorite TV show or movie
 Read a book
 Sing
 Resolve the conflict
 Go to a party

Joint Pain, Muscle Aches, & Headaches

The drugs you are taking for your breast cancer work by either reducing the amount of estrogen circulating in the body or preventing estrogen from working. The absence of estrogen in the body is thought to cause joint or muscle aches and pains, often called arthralgia.

This can include pain in fingers, hands, wrists, elbows, shoulders, knees, and ankles, worsening carpal tunnel syndrome, trigger finger, and/or overall muscle soreness.

There are two possible theories for why this happens.

- ❖ First, estrogen is a “natural” pain reliever, so the drop-in estrogen may lower our threshold for pain, allowing for heightened detection of joint pain symptoms that already existed.
- ❖ Second, the drop-in estrogen may lead to faster bone loss and aging.

While the link is still being investigated, there are many ways to manage joint symptoms.

Increasing control and coping with joint pain and muscle aches:

1. Relaxation.

Tension exacerbates our experience of pain. Try diaphragmatic breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, or a short breathing exercise. Take a few moments to close your eyes and focus on your breath. The more you practice this, the better you will get at calming your body and releasing tension.

2. Weight loss.

Eating a nutritious diet or losing a little weight may help with joint aches and pains. Resist focusing on the number on the scale and instead pay attention to taking care of yourself. Instead of crash or fad diets, attempt to lose weight in a slower, more controlled way.

3. Adaptive thinking and cognitive reframing.

Use these techniques to change how you think about your pain. Pain can lead to irritability and irritability can lead to more pain. Taking control of your pain can help to reduce the perception that your pain is taking over your life and preventing you from living. Try to replace negative automatic thoughts about your pain with more realistic, helpful thoughts.

4. Acupuncture.

Acupuncture has been shown to relieve joint pain for women on hormonal therapy. Talk to your doctor or study therapist about a referral to acupuncture.

5. Massage.

Depending on the location of the pain, massage can be a helpful pain reliever. Talk to your doctor about a referral to massage therapy.

6. Medication.

Talk to your medical team about medications that may be helpful to reduce pain in the long term or short term. There are many helpful medications on the market, it is worth getting some information about your options.

7. Distraction.

Distraction in moderation can be helpful, if it does not lead to unhealthy procrastination, denial, or avoidance. Engage in an activity that takes your mind off the pain and keeps you busy. This can be anything- read a book, call a friend, watch a funny TV show.

8. Pleasurable activities.

Try modifying an activity that you used to enjoy doing so that you can still enjoy it, but perhaps without as much pain. Experiencing pleasure and enjoyment releases endorphins, which are our body's natural pain killer. See next page.

Pleasurable Activities for Pain Management

Things I used to love to do:

Ways I could still do these activities, but I might have to do them a little bit differently (*be creative*):

Here are some ideas:

Stay organized/re-organize	Meditation	Sing
Write (poetry, journal, diary, doodle)	Bake or cook	Solve a puzzle, crossword, etc
Delegate responsibilities	Take a drive	Visit old friends
Listen to music	Pray	Take a bath
Dance	Color or paint	Be intimate with someone
Physical exercise	Shop	Bird-watch
Massage therapy	Restore antiques, furniture, etc	Write a letter or card
Get information	Play a board game	Eat a snack
Acupuncture	Play a musical instrument	Cry
Yoga	Learn to do something new	Cook a meal
Go out for a meal	Make a charitable donation	Explore (hike, walk around town)
Talk to friends	Volunteer your time	Go to a museum
Bike ride	Walk barefoot	Laugh
Seek advice	Do a favor for someone	Watch a favorite TV show or movie
Take a walk	Go to a play, musical, or concert	Read a book
Self-care and grooming (e.g., pedicure)	Go camping or on a nature walk	Sing
Clean	Compliment someone	Resolve the conflict
Aromatherapy		Go to a party

9. Cancer rehabilitation.

Cancer rehabilitation specialists, such as physiatrists and physical therapists, are experts in this area. They can assess pain, weakness, and restrictions, and formulate a treatment plan with pain interventions that are individualized for you. You can ask your study therapist or your oncology care team for a referral to a cancer rehabilitation specialist at MGH.

10. Acceptance.

Acceptance is the acknowledgement that you cannot change something that you might otherwise like to change, and that you recognize that something may be here to stay that you don't necessarily approve of.

By accepting the situation, we don't have to like it, or approve of it. However, reaching a point of acceptance allows us to move past the resistance, and start finding ways to work within the situation.

- ❖ In addition, when we can accept something, we begin to focus our energy on the things we can address, rather than the things we cannot change. (See Session 5.)

11. Time-based activity pacing. See page 88.

12. Social support. See page 89.

13. Physical Activity.

Many studies have shown that patients who are more physically active are less tired, less depressed, and have better sleep and quality of life. Getting moving may also help with your joint and muscle aches.

The idea of exercising or being physically active might feel overwhelming.

- ❖ Try setting small, achievable goals for yourself, and modify the exercise so that it is more manageable.
- ❖ Plan times to go for a walk, or other physical activity that you *enjoy* doing. This doesn't mean you need to spend an hour on a treadmill.
- ❖ Activity can include yoga, Zumba, hiking, biking, swimming, or walking. Start slowly and work your way up.

Sexuality & Intimacy

Hormonal therapy affects the level or activity of estrogen in your body, which directly affects sexual function. Many women describe being dissatisfied with their sex life in general, others have low sexual interest, sex-related pain or discomfort, vaginal dryness, or other sexual side effects that can cause distress related to sex. The psychological impact of a breast cancer diagnosis and treatment may also influence sexual desire and self-image.

Coping and managing sexuality and intimacy:

1. Relaxation.

Stress is a barrier to enjoying intimacy and sexuality. Relaxation can help you manage and cope with stress so that it is less likely to interfere with your relationship.

- ❖ Try diaphragmatic breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, or a short breathing exercise.
- ❖ Take a few moments to close your eyes and focus on your breath. The more you practice this, the better you will get at calming your body and releasing tension.
- ❖ Try relaxation during the day or to relax your body before engaging in sexual activity.

2. Cognitive reframing and adaptive thinking.

You may find yourself in a thinking trap that sex has to be the same as it used to be or feel the same as it used to. Being flexible in your thinking and open to new and different ways of being intimate or sexual can help you let go of expectations and be more willing to try different solutions.

3. Redefine intimacy.

Intimacy is not the same as intercourse.

There are many ways to be intimate with a partner, such as holding hands, taking a long walk, taking a bath, gently touching, or even talking. Candles or a softer, flattering light can help to create a romantic atmosphere.

- ❖ Engage in small gestures to show affection (e.g., a kiss goodbye, holding hands).

4. Increase foreplay.

For those experiencing discomfort or pain, longer foreplay or shifting the focus from genital areas to other erogenous zones such as the neck, ears, inner thighs, feet, and toes. In the past, desire and arousal may have happened more spontaneously or quickly, but now you may need to plan or initiate more foreplay and touching to stimulate desire.

5. Enhance self-image.

After surgery, you may feel less comfortable being naked or being seen naked by your partner.

- ❖ Try wearing something that you feel confident or sexy in.
- ❖ Try lingerie, or a bra that makes you feel sexy.
- ❖ If lingerie isn't for you, just try simply wearing your favorite shirt, or something you feel good in.

Remember, you are more likely to feel sexy when you are feeling confident.

6. Communication.

Talk about your concerns with your partner. Ask your partner if they have any concerns. Often, misunderstanding can lead to avoidance of sexual activity (e.g., your partner is afraid they will hurt you or make you uncomfortable).

- ❖ Agree to communicate during moments of intimacy to check in with each other.

7. Schedule time.

Just like exercise, sex is harder to resume if you haven't been doing it. Even though it might feel strange, scheduling time for intimacy or sex is the best way to make it happen more frequently.

- ❖ Rather than going immediately to intercourse, start with small steps by scheduling time to take a long walk holding hands, or to take a bath.
- ❖ Work your way slowly to more physical intimacy.
- ❖ Try not to judge yourself or berate yourself if things don't go as according to planned.
- ❖ Try to be flexible and have fun re-incorporating romance and intimacy into your life, even if it is different than how you used to do this.

9. Increasing pleasure.

There are many tools to reduce discomfort and increase pleasure.

- ❖ Try non-hormonal therapies such as vaginal moisturizers, vaginal lubrication, or topical lidocaine.
- ❖ Talk to your doctor about whether it would be safe for you to use vaginal estrogens in the form of a cream or ring.

10. Counseling.

Couples counseling can provide a safe and productive environment to talk about your sexual concerns and work through barriers together. Counseling can help with relationship building by focusing on problem-solving and communication skills that can improve sexual satisfaction and overall relationship satisfaction.

8. Additional readings.

The National Cancer Institute: Self-Image and Sexuality
(<https://www.cancer.gov/about-cancer/coping/self-image>)

LIVESTRONG: Female Sexual Health After Cancer:
<https://www.livestrong.org/we-can-help/finishing-treatment/female-sexual-health-after-cancer>

Sleep

Stress is a major reason we experience sleep difficulties, which can include trouble falling asleep, waking up during the night, waking up too early in the morning, poor sleep quality, fatigue, drowsiness during the day, etc.

There are many ways to improve your sleep habits; however, if these are not helpful for you, it may be important to speak with your doctor to rule out other complicating factors or medical conditions.

When trying these strategies to help with your sleep, stick with it for 2-3 weeks to see a change in your sleep.

Increasing control and coping with sleep difficulties:

1. Relaxation.

Stress greatly interferes with our ability to fall asleep, stay asleep, and get quality sleep. Relaxation can help you manage and cope with stress so that it interferes less with your sleep.

- ❖ Try diaphragmatic breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, or a short breathing exercise.
- ❖ Take a few moments to close your eyes and focus on your breath. The more you practice this, the better you will get at calming your body and releasing tension.
- ❖ Try relaxation during the day when you are not tired, but you can also try to use relaxation before bed as part of your nighttime routine.

2. Avoid taking naps.

While it can be tempting to take naps during the day when you are feeling tired from a restless night, naps can interfere with your nighttime sleep, making it more difficult for you to get to sleep and stay asleep. Try to avoid the temptation to take a nap and do something else that is re-energizing, such as taking a walk or getting some fresh air.

3. Modify sleep cues (bed is for sleep and sex only).

Experts advise that the bed should be for sleep and sex only. Similarly, don't sleep or nap in other parts of your home (no snoozing on the couch).

Why? We associate cues in our environment with thoughts and feelings.

- ❖ For example, the site of a fireplace may elicit pleasant feelings and thoughts of being cozy, warmth, and thoughts of hot chocolate or s'mores.

Alternatively, for others, the site of a fireplace may elicit unpleasant feelings and thoughts of a bitter winter, coldness, shoveling, and storms. Similarly, our bedroom and bed elicit thoughts and feelings as well, that influence whether we feel relaxed and will be able to sleep.

- ❖ For example, doing too many things in bed (eating, watching TV, reading, arguing with our spouse) in bed tends to lead to associations of the bed with an awake state. Similarly, tossing and turning in bed trying to get back to sleep leads to an association of the bed with feelings of irritability and frustration.

4. Establish a wind down routine.

Establish a routine at night to help you wind down. For example, light a candle, play music, take a shower, turn the lights down. Avoid eating or drinking too close to bedtime and avoid the temptation to bring your phone or iPad to bed with you.

5. Physical activity.

Regular exercise is helpful for improving sleep. Plan times to go for a walk, or other physical activity that you enjoy doing. This doesn't mean you need to spend an hour on a treadmill. Activity can include yoga, Zumba, hiking, biking, swimming, or walking. Start slow and work your way up.

6. Get out of bed if you can't sleep

It is best to get out of bed if you can't fall back asleep after 10-20 minutes (see #3 sleep cues). Try sitting in a chair or go a different room. Read a book or something else calming. When you feel sleepy, go back to your bed rather than falling asleep in the chair.

7. Adaptive thinking and cognitive reframing.

How we think about sleep affects how we feel and whether we can sleep.

- ❖ For example, a person who worries all day that she won't be able to sleep tonight (thoughts) becomes anxious as the sun goes down and the night approaches (feelings).
- ❖ By the time her head hits the pillow, she has butterflies in her stomach and her heart is racing (physical sensations).
- ❖ Her awareness of her bodily nerves perpetuates her worries about not being able to sleep, and soon she is also worried about how she will be able to function the next day on so little sleep (more thoughts and feelings around nervousness and worry).
- ❖ As a result, she is unable to sleep and lays awake checking her email and reading the news on her iPad (behaviors), which keeps her up and makes sleep even less likely to happen.

Use helpful, accurate thoughts to replace unhelpful thoughts about sleep.

8. Sleep hygiene.

Establishing sleep hygiene, or helpful sleep behaviors, is an important part of securing a good night's sleep.

- ❖ Establish a wind-down routine
- ❖ Don't eat or drink too much too close in time to bed time and avoid caffeine as of the late afternoon.
- ❖ Create a dark, quiet, cool environment to sleep in, and use a noise machine or other ambient noise to drown out sounds.

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