

# Pain Solutions

www.sepainandspinecare.com

## Cancer Pain



### How can SEPSC help patients with Cancer Pain?

Cancer is a devastating disease, and the pain that accompanies it can be debilitating. Our pain specialists work closely with the cancer patient's primary care physician, oncologist, surgeon, and other members of the healthcare team to treat cancer pain aggressively. Our physicians carefully review the patient's medical history, paying specific attention to previous cancer treatments. If multiple pain problems are found, each is treated individually.

Our physicians know that each person perceives pain differently. Each person has a unique tolerance level of pain and to the side effects of medications. That is why the doctors at Southeast Pain and Spine Care work with the patient and the family to provide a level of relief that will enable the patient to function and enjoy life to the fullest extent possible.

### What are the treatment options?

#### Medications

Common medications used in pain treatment for cancer patients include:

- Non-steroidals
- Anti-inflammatory agents
- Tricyclic antidepressants
- Anti-seizure medications
- Clonidine and narcotic pain relievers

Pain medications can be administered in a variety of ways:

- Mouth
- Injection
- Patches containing pain medication
- Intrathecal catheters and pumps

#### Epidural Injections

Epidural injections may also be used to alleviate pain in cancer patients. Our anesthesiologists inject a short-acting anesthetic into the epidural space, an area outside the spinal cord, temporarily numbs the nerves. The anesthetic is often combined with a long acting steroid which provides long lasting pain relief. Patients tend to do well with a series of three injections and occasional repeats.

#### Are feelings of depression normal?

Chronic cancer pain is often associated with anxiety and depression. These types of conditions can lead to loss of appetite, weakness, and sleep disturbance. Some patients can no longer participate in daily living activities, which often causes family problems. In addition, appetite and vitality can be affected. Our pain physicians are frequently consulted to help alleviate pain making the patient more comfortable and lessening depression.

#### Therapeutic Options

A wide variety of therapies are available for pain relief. When deciding the best treatment option to use, we must take into consideration the patient's needs and previous responses to treatment. We encourage our patients to let their doctor know about all of their pain so that we can tailor treatments specifically to their needs.

Our physicians use the World Health Organization guidelines when prescribing pain medications and other treatments. These guidelines include continual monitoring of the patient to control any major side effects from drug treatment.



**Local Resources:** American Cancer Society  
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