

Physical Assessment Guide

The purpose of this guide is to assist an individual or their caregiver to assess, document and communicate changes in health status and symptoms to members of the health care and/or research teams. This is designed to be used in conjunction with the Patient Self Diary.

Element	Normal	Abnormal (document in the Patient Self Diary and report to your health care person)
Respiration	easy, regular, no cough or sputum	• faster, slower, noisy, wheezy, persistent cough
Circulation	hands and feet warm, nail beds pink	• hands/feet cool and/or puffy, numbness or tingling in hands and/or feet • nail beds bluish, skin mottled
Energy level	will vary according to individual	• easily fatigued (tired), weakness • drowsiness
Pain	pain free	• can be intermittent • can vary in intensity from mild and localized to agony, • certain things can increase it, certain things can decrease it, • begins at a physical level but can be affected by thoughts or emotions
Nausea / Vomiting	nausea free	• an unpleasant wave-like feeling in the back of throat or stomach that may result in vomiting, • can be anticipatory, acute, delayed or chronic • affects appetite and/or ability to take oral medications, • increase with movement • vomiting greenish, clear or undigested food
Appetite	adequate for good nutrition and hydration	• will decrease naturally as activity lessens • increase due to nausea or pain, • dry or sore mouth affects appetite
Fever/Chills	temperature between 36.1° C and 37.8° C	• temp. more than 38° C or less than 36° C • skin feels damp and hot or dry and hot • skin feels cool
Bowel Function	daily bowel movement but may vary	• diarrhea (frequent, watery bowel movement), describe the colour according to individual • constipation (bowel movement is hard, dry and difficult to pass)
Kidney Function	urine has slight yellowish colour, volume of 800-2,000ml for an intake of 2,000ml (2 litres) in 24 hours	• urine colour darker yellow to orange • amount (volume) is less than fluid volume consumed in past 24 hours.
Level of Consciousness	clear thought processes, alert	• may vary according to changes in pain medication • decreased responsiveness, • unclear thought processes, confusion, change in awareness of person, place, time
Emotional Well-being	emotionally stable, support of family/friends as required, spiritual support as desired	• excessive fear, anger, anxiety, irritability