

# KNOWLEDGE CENTRAL

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## B O O K S

**Handbook of Cancer-Related Fatigue.** Roberto Patarca-Montero. New York: Haworth Medical Press, 2004, 483 pages, \$49.95 (softcover), \$89.95 (hardcover).

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Cancer-related fatigue can be one of the most distressing symptoms for patients of all ages, with all stages of disease and varying treatment therapies. Fatigue can persist for months or years after therapy is completed, impacting the quality of life of cancer survivors. Author Patarca-Montero, an assistant professor of medicine, microbiology, and immunology in the School of Medicine at the University of Miami, states that “cancer-related fatigue is a complex problem, yet increasing interest and experience with it and other chronic fatigue disorders are rendering it more manageable” (p. xi). The purpose of the *Handbook of Cancer-Related Fatigue* is to help bring awareness and education to healthcare professionals as tools in the prevention and management of cancer-related fatigue.

This book contains extensive research results about all aspects of cancer-related fatigue, intermingled with information relating to chronic fatigue syndrome, with which the author has experience. Each chapter is very well organized, beginning with an introductory paragraph and an outline of the chapter contents. Specific key points are separated from the main text. Because this text is research oriented, every topic is very

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well referenced. However, at times, the extensive references can make reading the text difficult. For example, one line of text may be followed by two pages of references, causing cumbersome reading.

The four main chapters include the definition and factors that influence the recognition and treatment of cancer-related fatigue; relevance of cancer-related fatigue to other cancer symptoms and the cancer diagnosis, predisposition, and treatment; possible causative, predisposing, and perpetuating factors of cancer-related fatigue; and treatment of cancer-related fatigue. The first three chapters can be very complex, but they provide readers with an extensive background into cancer-related fatigue. In addition, the need to assess and treat fatigue experienced by caregivers of patients with cancer is discussed. Although clinicians may find the first three chapters interesting, the content would be most helpful to researchers or those developing clinical practice guidelines.

The chapter on treatment of cancer-related fatigue is extensive, including a description of available published practice guidelines. The author acknowledges that gaps exist in the knowledge and research; therefore, current guidelines are based on a combination of research and expert clinical judgment. Topics in this chapter include graded exercise, energy management, sleep therapy, cognitive and behavioral therapy, nutritional therapy, pharmacologic therapy, complementary and alternative therapies, and immunotherapy. Especially interesting is the discussion that “exercise” is different from “activity” in fatigue management. No specific patient suggestions, patient handouts, or guidelines are supplied in this chapter.

The last 234 pages of this 483-page book are dedicated to a reference list and an index. Because the index is extensive and the chapters are well organized, readers can easily

locate specific topics. Overall, the *Handbook of Cancer-Related Fatigue* contributes to the available literature about this topic by providing the results of recent research in one source.

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**Intimacy With Impotence: The Couple's Guide to Better Sex After Prostate Disease.** Ralph and Barbara Alterowitz. Cambridge, MA: De Capo Lifelong Books, 2004, 220 pages, \$15.

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The nurse often is in the unique role of being a confidant to someone dealing with impotence after prostate cancer. *Intimacy With Impotence: The Couple's Guide to Better Sex after Prostate Disease* would be an excellent recommendation for any couple facing a future with erectile dysfunction. The authors, a married couple, wrote the book because they understand that impotence is a major quality-of-life issue for many survivors of prostate and other male pelvic diseases.

This book, updated from a previous edition, contains 10 chapters and 4 appendices. Key points are included at the beginning of each chapter to allow readers to determine the content's relevancy to their experience.

*Intimacy With Impotence* addresses both the psychological and physiologic components of impotency. The authors stress communication between partners and offer many suggestions for creating a loving environment and managing frustrations. Many topics, such as anatomy, incontinence, cleanliness, and alternatives to intercourse, are discussed frankly. Prior to describing sensitive, potentially offensive suggestions, the authors warn readers to skip the section if they might find the content uncomfortable.

Digital Object Identifier: 10.1188/05.ONF.689-691

Ease of Reference and Usability	Content Level	Book Size
🕒 Quick, on-the-spot resource	√ Basic	📖 Pocket size
🕒🕒 Moderate time requirement	√ √ Intermediate	📖📖 Intermediate
🕒🕒🕒 In-depth study	√ √ √ Advanced and complex, pre-requisite reading required	📖📖📖 Desk reference