

## FATIGUE – RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN SYMPTOM CONTROL

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Fatigue may be characterised as a multidimensional phenomenon that develops over time, diminishing energy, mental capacity, and the psychologic condition of cancer patients in the palliative phase.

Fatigue is the most prevalent and disturbing symptom in patients with advanced cancer. Despite of this, there is still limited research into interventions designed to ameliorate fatigue.

In this lecture some of the most important recent studies focusing on symptom control in fatigue in cancer patients in the palliative phase will be presented.

Further, the first results of a study performed in our own department, “*Methylphenidate (on demand) for Fatigue in Cancer Patients in the Palliative Phase – a placebo controlled study*”, will be presented. The *aim* of this study is to evaluate the effect of methylphenidate (on demand), a psychostimulant, on tiredness and power of concentration in incurable cancer patients. The *method* used is a double blind, non-randomised, paired design, where the patient is his own control. Ten tablets of methylphenidate (10mg) and 10 tablets of placebo were randomly arranged and numbered from 1-20. The patients were instructed to take the tablets consecutively when needed for heavy tiredness, starting with tablet no 1, taking maximum 3 tablets per day with minimum 3 hours intervals. Symptoms were evaluated on VAS scales before taking the tablet, 2 hours after and 5 hours after taking the tablet. *Results* will be assessed for the congress.