

CLINICAL USES: CONSTIPATION (CNIN APRIL 2010)

- You are talking with an RN in a hospital ward, who has a patient with severe constipation. They are struggling to manage this, and it is preventing the patient from going home.
- How would you advise the nurse to proceed? How can any ward nurses keep up to date with information on symptom control in palliative care patients who they see infrequently?

Constipation is a common problem for many patients. It is frequently underestimated as a cause of other symptoms, and can manifest itself in different ways. Managing constipation is something that all nurses should have as a core skill in palliative care. There is information and resources on CareSearch that can help with this.



In [Clinical Practice](#), the [Physical](#) section includes a page on [Constipation](#). Here you can also find information on [Laxatives](#).

There is also a clinical practice page on [Opioid Analgesics](#) which may also be a factor to take into consideration

As with all symptom pages, there is an associated [Constipation](#) PubMed Topic Search, as well as a [Constipation](#) set in the CareSearch Review Collection.

As they are often closely associated, there are PubMed Topic searches on: [Anorexia](#), [Appetite](#), [Bowel Obstruction](#) and [Nausea](#).

There are also CareSearch Review Collections on: [Anorexia Cachexia](#), [Bowel Obstruction](#), [Fluids and Hydration](#), [Nausea and Vomiting](#), and [Nutrition](#).

There are also resources in the GP pages on [Bowel Obstruction](#) on [Nausea and Vomiting](#) and [Opioids](#)

The nurse will be able to find information (including free full text articles) on the assessment and management of constipation and the use of laxatives, and have a way of keeping up to date.

CareSearch is an online resource funded by the Department of Health and Ageing to help clinicians and consumers find relevant evidence about palliative care. Available now at www.caresearch.com.au