

Explanation of Medical Terms for the Management of CFS/ME

Activity

Any task or series of tasks that a person performs. A task may have physical, emotional, cognitive and social components (NICE, 2007)

Activity Management

A person-centred approach to managing a person's symptoms by using activity. It is goal-directed and uses activity analysis and graded activity to enable people to improve, evaluate, restore and/or maintain their function and well-being in self-care, work and leisure (NICE, 2007)

Exercise

Any kind of physical activity, including general tasks of daily living. For example, brushing hair or getting dressed, sitting up in bed and walking about are all exercise (NICE, 2007).

Graded Exercise Therapy (GET)

An evidence-based approach to CFS/ME that involves physical assessment, mutually negotiated goal-setting and education. The first step is to set a sustainable baseline of physical activity, then the duration of the activity is gradually increased in a planned way that is tailored to the person. This is followed by an increase in intensity, when the person is able, taking into account their preferences and objectives, current activity and sleep patterns, setbacks/relapses and emotional factors. The objective is to improve the person's CFS/ME symptoms and functioning, aiming towards recovery (NICE, 2007).

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy

When it is used for CFS/ME, the aim is to reduce the levels of symptoms, disability and distress associated with the condition. The use of CBT does not assume or imply that symptoms are psychological or 'made up' (NICE, 2007).

Rest

Short periods of time when a person is neither sleeping nor doing things. Rest periods are an important part of any therapy for CFS/ME (NICE, 2007).

Relaxation techniques

These include learning how to relax your muscles progressively and breathing techniques. They can be used to help with sleep problems, stress, anxiety and pain, and can be included in rest periods (NICE, 2007).

Setback/Relapse

An increase in symptoms above the usual daily fluctuations, which may result in a reduction in function for a time (NICE, 2007).