

Introduction to ME/CFS Cycle of Care

What is a Cycle of Care?

A Cycle of Care is a practice tool used to systematically review and manage a patient's health condition and general health. It is important to do an ME/CFS Cycle of Care Checklist to identify emerging health concerns and discuss the best treatment options with patients.

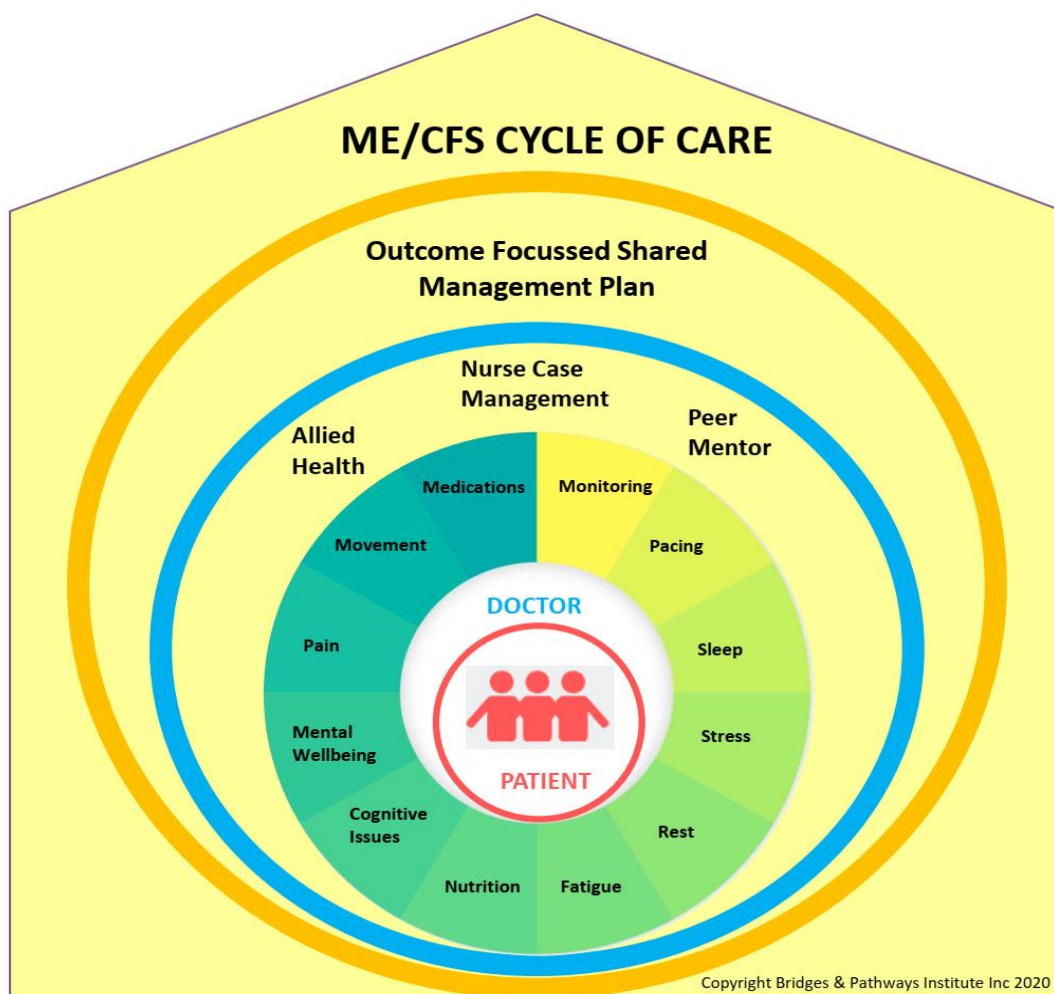
This Checklist has been adapted specifically for use with ME/CFS patients, from generic chronic disease lifestyle management programs. This management tool is useful for

case managers and patients to demonstrate they are proactively managing and coordinating ME/CFS multi-disciplinary care over the 12-month care plan.

The ME/CFS Cycle of Care will be tailored to each patient, based on their priorities, needs, and their individual Chronic Disease Management Care Plan (Medicare).

Cycle of Care Patient Participation

Each ME/CFS Cycle of Care focus area is summarised on the following page. Patients are encouraged to learn more about these areas, in order to proactively participate in their own care.



Monitoring

Monitoring involves keeping a record of your symptoms, activities and treatments for both yourself and your doctor.

See ME/CFS Easy Guides:

Monitoring 1 – Introduction

Monitoring 2 – What, When and How to Monitor

Monitoring 3 – Monitoring Tools

Pacing

Pacing is about planning your daily activities to achieve the best lifestyle within your body's capabilities, rather than doing less.

See ME/CFS Easy Guides:

Pacing 1 - Beginning Pacing

Pacing 2 – Recovery and Healing

Pacing 3 – The Pacing Lifestyle

Sleep

Refreshing sleep is a priority for healing and the prevention of the downward cycle.

See ME/CFS Easy Guide: Sleep and ME/CFS

Stress/Stressors

Understand personal triggers and stressors and the connection between stressors and worsening symptoms / symptom cycle

See ME/CFS Easy Guide: Managing Stress

Rest

Planning rest breaks throughout the day can help reduce symptoms, increase stability, and reduce total rest time.

See ME/CFS Easy Guide: Rest

Fatigue/PEM

Manage Post Exertional Malaise (PEM) and fatigue by planning ahead, prioritising activities, pacing, reducing stress, and reviewing sleep, pain, movement and diet management.

See ME/CFS Easy Guides:

Fatigue 1

Fatigue 2 – Minimising Relapses

Nutrition

Maintaining good nutrition is important.

Dietary changes may reduce ME/CFS symptoms and help stabilise the condition.

See ME/CFS Easy Guide: Nutrition

Cognitive Issues

Cognitive issues (e.g. 'brain fog', forgetfulness, confusion) are an everyday part of ME/CFS.

See ME/CFS Easy Guide:

Cognitive Issues in ME/CFS

Mental Health & Wellbeing

Focus on health and wellbeing and what is possible. Talk to a friend or family member. If you feel overwhelmed ask your doctor for a referral to a ME/CFS-aware mental health professional.

See ME/CFS Easy Guide:

Mental Health & Wellbeing

Pain

Unmanaged pain can exacerbate other ME/CFS symptoms, so it is important to prioritise pain management.

See ME/CFS Easy Guide: Pain

Movement/Exercise

Exercise programs are NOT recommended as they can potentially cause harm. People with ME/CFS can have reduced capacity to replenish ATP energy (Adenosine triphosphate). Any movement program must be ME/CFS appropriate and tailored for each person and their illness stage

Prescriptions & Complementary Medications

Keep a record of all your prescribed and supplementary medications. Introduce new medications/vitamins one at a time to monitor benefit.

See ME/CFS Easy Guide:

Prescriptions/Complementary Medications

Allied Health Referrals

Use the GP Chronic Disease Management Planning and Team Care Arrangement process to plan, monitor and coordinate allied health services (Medicare)

See Patient Leaflet 8 Working with your Healthcare Team

Services available

There are a range of community groups, educational resources and networking forums you can access:

See ME/CFS Easy Guide:

Community Groups/ Education and Networking and online:

<https://bridgesandpathways.org.au/me-cfs-2/>