

2.01 Fatigue

RFQs

- Have you noticed any change in your bowel habit, or blood in your stool?
- How has your weight been?
- Do you have a cough? Fever? Sweats? Swellings or lumps?
- Is there a family history of this sort of thing?
- How have you been emotionally recently? Please tell me a little about your stresses.

Safety nets:

The majority of people who are tired most of the time don't have a problem that is helped with tests. I would usually wait for a month before doing those tests. How does that sound? I should see you again at that time too. I know you were worried about (cancer), but your symptoms don't point towards cancer at this stage.

Symptoms that would make me want to rule out cancer would be (remove the ones that are not relevant to your patient):

- persistent looser stools,
- persistent blood in your stool, or blood in your urine,
- losing weight when not trying, or loss of appetite,
- night sweats or persistent fever,
- a persistent cough (longer than 4 weeks),
- coughing up blood when there is no chest infection,
- any lumps or swellings, bigger than a couple of centimetres, that persist for more than a couple of weeks. ((Or lymph nodes that are painful when you drink alcohol.))
- food catching in your gullet as you swallow,
- dyspepsia that doesn't get better with treatment,
- breathlessness,
- (itching all over)

Would it be OK to leave any tests until I see you again in a months time? (Do you think any tests really need to be done at this stage?)