

# Clinical Excellence Through Evidence-Based Practice: Fatigue Management as a Model

Victoria Mock, DNSc, RN, AOCN<sup>®</sup>, FAAN  
2003 Oncology Nursing Society Distinguished Researcher Award

## Introduction

by Ruth McCorkle, PhD, RN, FAAN

Victoria Mock, DNSc, RN, AOCN<sup>®</sup>, FAAN, was born in South Carolina to Geneva and James Mock. The family had three daughters—Tyke, Vicki, and Betsy—who grew up in a modest home; their parents worked hard to make ends meet. Vicki continues to be inspired by her mother. The three girls are strawberry blondes and loved the sun in their youth, but, as they have gotten older, they have come to realize that the sun can be harmful to them. After Vicki graduated from high school, she attended Duke University in Durham, NC, and obtained a bachelor's degree in nursing. Vicki worked as a staff nurse at Duke University Medical Center before relocating to San Francisco, where she earned a master's degree in medical-surgical nursing from the University of California, San Francisco. Her thesis was titled "The Deliberative Nursing Process and the Pain Experience of Patients." She was inducted as a charter member of the Alpha Eta chapter of Sigma Theta Tau. She left California to work as a faculty instructor in the College of Nursing at Wayne State University in Detroit, MI, and later relocated to Richmond, VA, where she worked as a staff nurse and faculty member. Vicki learned firsthand the experience of confronting cancer when she was diagnosed with melanoma and given a guarded prognosis. She knows the meaning of the experience for her patients and their families and has built her career on providing superb and empathic care that empowers patients to help themselves. After her own illness, she met her husband Quent while supervising student nurses who were caring for his mother, who was dying from breast cancer. He became her biggest supporter and recognized the remarkable sensitivities and potential that this highly gifted woman possessed. With his encouragement, Vicki had a singular focus to earn her doctorate as well as become a first-rate nurse researcher.

Vicki was enrolled in doctoral studies from 1982–1988 and graduated with a doctorate of nursing science in adult health nursing and nursing education from Catholic University of America in Washington, DC. Her dissertation was titled "Body Image in Women Treated for Breast Cancer" and subsequently was published in *Nursing Research*.

After completing the course work in her doctoral studies, she relocated to Boston in 1985 and joined the faculty at the School of Nursing at Boston University until it closed its doors in 1988; she taught at Boston College for the next six years. During that time, her program of research related to outcomes in women with breast cancer during treatment was launched. She

completed four grants associated with developing an exercise rehabilitation program for women while receiving treatment, supported by the American Nurses Association Foundation, American Cancer Society (ACS), Massachusetts Nurses Association, Boston College, and Massachusetts Department of Public Health.

In 1994, the School of Nursing at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, MD, recruited Vicki as the director of nursing research at Johns Hopkins Cancer Center, and she also assumed a joint faculty position in the School of Nursing. Since joining the faculty at Johns Hopkins, Vicki's research career has soared. Her program of research has been supported by ACS funds as well as an ACS Professorship in Nursing from the Mid-Atlantic Division, the ONS Foundation, and Johns Hopkins University, leading to her current, research-initiated grant, "Mitigating Cancer-Related Fatigue by Exercise," funded by the National Cancer Institute and the National Institute of Nursing Research. Her publications have established a solid foundation for the relationship of exercise and fatigue during breast cancer treatment. She generously has shared her knowledge with the profession at large through her presentations, publications, and leadership in various professional societies.

Vicki has worked hard to standardize her walking exercise intervention protocol. Two booklets have evolved from her research: *Every Step Counts: A Walking Exercise Program for Persons Living With Cancer* and *Managing Fatigue: A Guide for Individuals With Cancer*. One measure of success of any intervention protocol is the ability of investigators to replicate it across settings. She has been persuasive in encouraging a number of groups to test the program.

Since the 1990s, Vicki has developed a program of multisite research. In fact, every research study she has performed has been multisite. In this capacity, she has held steadfastly true to the scientific rigor required of advancing nursing as a science. Her commitment to this endeavor has meant meeting challenges with creative skills and perseverance. At the Fifth National Conference on Cancer Nursing Research, the keynote speaker, Ada Lindsey, RN, PhD, then dean of the School of Nursing at the University of Nebraska, cited Vicki's program of research as a model of the type of research needed most in oncology nursing: longitudinal, intervention testing, multisite, interdisciplinary, and focused on an identified research priority of the On-

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