

WE ARE
MACMILLAN.
CANCER SUPPORT

A practical guide to living with and after cancer

TALKING ABOUT CANCER

A guide for people with cancer



About this booklet

This booklet is about talking about cancer. It is for anyone who has a cancer diagnosis.

The booklet explains:

- the benefits of talking about cancer
- how to overcome the things that make talking difficult
- how to deal with other people's reactions.

It also has practical tips for talking and asking for support.

We hope it helps you deal with some of the questions or feelings you may have.

This booklet does not have information for the friends and family of someone with a cancer diagnosis. We have other booklets about how to talk to a friend or family member who has cancer, and how to give support:

- **Talking with someone who has cancer**
- **Be there for someone facing cancer.**

See page 64 for information about ordering these booklets.

For more information

If you have more questions or would like to talk to someone, call the Macmillan Support Line free on **0808 808 00 00**, Monday to Friday, 9am to 8pm, or visit **macmillan.org.uk**

If you would prefer to speak to us in another language, interpreters are available. Please tell us, in English, the language you want to use.

If you are deaf or hard of hearing, call us using NGT (Text Relay) on **18001 0808 808 00 00**, or use the NGT Lite app.

We have some information in different languages and formats, including audio, eBooks, easy read, Braille, large print and translations. To order these visit **macmillan.org.uk/otherformats** or call **0808 808 00 00**.

How to use this booklet

The booklet is split into sections to help you find what you need. You don't have to read it from start to finish. You can use the contents list on page 3 to help you.

It is fine to skip parts of the booklet. You can always come back to them when you feel ready.

We have included quotes from people who have had cancer and shared their experiences with us. One of these people is Ashley, who is on the cover of this booklet with his wife Lara. We hope you find these helpful. To share your experiences, visit **macmillan.org.uk/shareyourstory**

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**'My nurse would hold my hand
and we'd talk. And that, to me,
was everything.'**

David, diagnosed with throat cancer in 2008



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Talking about a cancer diagnosis

After being diagnosed with cancer, you may find the idea of talking about it upsetting or uncomfortable. It may take you some time to cope with your diagnosis. Remember, there is not a right way to cope.

Putting feelings into words may seem overwhelming. But it is important to think about who needs to know and the best way to talk to them about it. This can help you get the support you need at home, at work and from your healthcare team. It can also help you to make decisions that are right for you.

Many people don't like talking about their own needs. But it is okay and important to confide in others. Some people fear they will be seen as demanding. However, there will often be friends and relatives who want to help. Try starting a conversation and saying what you need, even if you just want them to listen. You may be surprised at how willing they are to support you. By asking for someone's support, it shows that you value them.

The benefits of talking

Talking can help you cope with uncertainties or difficulties that are ahead. It can give you support and help you have some control over your situation.

We explain some of the possible benefits of talking here.

Understand how you are feeling and why

If you don't talk about how you are feeling, you may feel confused. Putting your thoughts into words will often help you understand what you are feeling and why.

Express how you are feeling

You may feel overwhelmed with lots of worries. Talking about how you are feeling can help with this.

Be reassured that your feelings are normal

You may have lots of different emotions. Having someone listen to you without judgement may reassure you that what you are feeling is normal.

Find the solution to a problem

Talking with another person may help you think of solutions you may not have thought of on your own.

Feel more in control

Talking about any problems may make you feel more confident about dealing with difficult issues in the future. It may also make you feel better about having hard conversations.

Make important decisions

If you have to make decisions that affect others, you may assume you know what other people are thinking or feeling. But sometimes they surprise you with their views and can help you make tough decisions.

Feel more supported and less anxious

If you feel someone else understands, cares and is there for you, it may reassure you that you are not going through difficult times alone.

Build bonds with your family and friends

Talking about personal issues with people close to you and including them in important decisions often makes them feel valued.

If you feel that you cannot talk to your friends or family, there are other people who can offer support (see pages 11 to 15).

'I think the one thing that got me through treatment was being able to talk about it. To have everyone talking to me about it openly was really important.'

Amrik, diagnosed with Hodgkin lymphoma in 2010



Things that make it hard to talk

Being diagnosed with cancer is often a life-changing experience. It can have a huge effect on your emotions, as well as on the practical aspects of your life.

Many people used to think cancer shouldn't be talked about. But things have changed and it is now talked about in magazines, on TV and on the internet. However, there are several reasons why talking about the cancer may still be difficult:

- You may be afraid you will lose control of your feelings. Before you talk to other people, you may want to spend time thinking about how you feel. Writing any issues down may help you prioritise them.
- Your family and friends may find it hard to talk about the cancer because they are struggling to accept your illness. See pages 20 to 26 for advice on talking to family and friends.
- Some people have never had a serious illness or known anyone who has. They may be unsure of what you need or how to talk to you. See pages 22 to 26 for tips on asking for support.
- You may be afraid of losing your job or being discriminated against at work. See page 36 for information on talking about cancer to your employer.
- You may feel your healthcare team are too busy to talk about your feelings. See pages 42 to 51 for information on talking to healthcare staff.
- You may live alone or have no one close to talk to. See pages 11 to 15 for other sources of support.

Who can you talk to?

Think about who you usually talk with about important issues or difficult problems. This is probably the best person to talk with. They could be anyone – your partner, your closest friend, a family member, a work colleague, a counsellor or a religious leader. It may be somebody who is going through or been through a similar experience.

Family, friends and people you work with

Some people have a close circle of family and friends who can give them a lot of support. Or close relationships with people they work with. But even with supportive people around you, it may be hard to talk about cancer. You may feel isolated.

See pages 20 to 26 for tips on telling family and friends about your diagnosis and asking for support. See pages 36 to 39 for advice on talking about cancer at work.

Some people may have disagreements in their family or have friends that live far away. They may work alone or not get along with people they work with. If you are in this situation, you may feel there is no one for you to talk to.

It may be easier to talk with someone you don't know. You may feel less pressure to act a certain way. You may also feel safe knowing that they will not share the conversation with your friends or family. If you feel this way, there are a number of groups, organisations and healthcare professionals that can help you – see pages 12 to 15 and pages 69 to 76.

Support helplines

Macmillan Support Line

You can contact the Macmillan Support Line, Monday to Friday, 9am to 8pm. You can talk about a cancer diagnosis, discuss money worries, get guidance about work or just have someone listen to you. Our team includes:

- **cancer information support officers** who can give you emotional support or just be someone to chat to
- **cancer information nurse specialists** who can answer your questions about cancer or its treatment
- **welfare rights advisors** who can give guidance on claiming benefits
- **financial guides** who can give guidance on financial matters, including mortgages, pensions, insurance and savings.

Other support lines

If you need to talk to someone when our support line is closed, you can contact any of these 24-hour services.

For medical help or advice:

- In England, call NHS 111 on **111**.
- In Scotland, call NHS 24 on **111**.
- In Wales, call NHS Direct Wales on **0845 4647**.
- In Northern Ireland, it varies by region (see page 72).

For emotional support:

- Call Samaritans for free on **116 123** (UK-wide).

Counselling

Talking with a counsellor can sometimes help. Counsellors are trained to listen and help people talk through their problems.

They won't give advice or answers, but will help you find your own answers. Talking one to one with a trained counsellor can help you express and understand your feelings. It can also help you find ways to deal with these feelings or the problems they relate to. Some people find it easier to talk to people who aren't involved with them or their care.

GP practices and hospitals often have their own counsellors. If they don't, they should be able to refer you to one. The British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy can also give you details of counsellors in your area – see page 69.

Support groups

Joining a self-help or support group can have many benefits. These groups give you a chance to talk with other people who may be in a similar situation to you and facing the same challenges.

Who are support groups for?

Most groups cover all types of cancer. They can also help carers, family and friends come to terms with what is happening, how best to help and how to take care of themselves emotionally.

Other groups are for people with a specific type of cancer. For example, it may be a breast care group or laryngectomy club.

What happens at a support group?

Each cancer support group is different, but you can expect a warm welcome from someone who has been in the group for some time. You will be introduced to other members and can talk about yourself and your experience of cancer.

You do not have to talk about anything you don't want to. It can take a few visits before you feel comfortable enough to talk about anything personal.

Some groups are made up of a few people who meet regularly in someone's front room. Others are much larger and might have a different meeting space, like an office or a drop-in centre. Meetings could include an activity, a social event or a talk from a guest speaker.

Most groups train members or volunteers in listening skills. This means they can give you their complete, non-judgemental, caring attention.

If you have questions about the group, contact the organiser. They can tell you what to expect, how big the group is and common discussion topics and activities. You may find it helpful to go and see what the group is like before making a decision.

You may be able to access support services through the group. These could include complementary therapies, counselling or bereavement support.

Most groups are free. Some may charge for tea and biscuits, or welcome donations for any complementary therapies or counselling they offer.

How do I find a support group?

You can search for support groups near you by visiting **[macmillan.org.uk/in-your-area](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/in-your-area)**

You can also speak to your GP, a Macmillan nurse or a cancer support specialist on **0808 808 00 00** to find out about local support groups.

If there is more than one group in your area, it may be helpful to contact a few of them to see which one suits you best.

Online support

If you use the internet, you may want to join an online support group or chat room. Some groups are aimed at particular types of cancer, while others are more general. They are easy to join and you can talk to other people in real time. If you prefer, you can stay anonymous and just read other people's emails or posts. These messages can be both uplifting and sad.

Getting support online can be very helpful. You may find that other people have similar thoughts, emotions and experiences. It can help you feel less alone, learn how to cope with your treatment and live with cancer.

Online groups are easy to leave. You don't need to tell anyone you are leaving or give explanations.

You may want to join our Online Community – visit **[macmillan.org.uk/community](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/community)** You can talk with people in chat rooms, blog about your experiences, make friends and join support groups. You can share your thoughts and feelings, and get support from others.

If you don't want to talk

There may be times when you don't feel like talking and want to be on your own. Don't feel that you have to see people if you don't want to or if you need time to yourself.

Allow other people to go to the door or answer the phone for you. If you are in hospital, you may want to save your energy to cope with treatment. It may help to limit the number of visitors you have. You can ask a relative or the nurses to help you with this.

'I couldn't watch TV adverts about cancer, I couldn't read stories about anyone having my cancer, because I felt as if I had never actually sat down and spoken about what I went through myself.'

**Megan, diagnosed with
Hodgkin lymphoma in 2009**

Dealing with family and friends

You may not want to talk about the cancer, but people you care about may want to. If this happens, try to be open and honest with your family and friends. Let them know that it is hard for you to talk. You could tell them there may be a limit to how much you feel able to share.

If family or friends want to talk about the cancer when you don't, it can cause conflict. See pages 59 to 61 for tips on resolving conflict in relationships.

It is up to you how much you want to talk about your diagnosis. For example, if you are going out to enjoy yourself with your friends, don't be afraid to tell them that you would rather not talk about cancer today. Or you could say that you will bring it up if you want to discuss it.

However, not talking about the cancer at all can cause problems if it goes on for weeks or months. It may become difficult to make decisions about treatment or your employment situation. This can delay the start of your treatment, cause financial difficulty and make relationships worse.

Our booklet **How are you feeling? The emotional impact of cancer** has information about dealing with difficult feelings. We also have a booklet called **Talking with someone who has cancer** that has advice for family and friends. See page 64 for details on ordering this information.



'I was feeling really nervous about having to go home and tell my wife. I wasn't sure how she would react, but knew it was going to be difficult.'

Ashley

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Talking about your diagnosis

Telling family and friends about a cancer diagnosis can be hard. Although you may feel alone at this time, it is important to remember the cancer also affects them.

They will be worried about you because you are an important part of their life. They may also be concerned about the changes you may have to make to your working life or education, and the financial impact of this.

You may worry about how your family or friends will react. Or you may feel guilty about the effect of the cancer and its treatment on the lives of your family and friends.

See pages 28 to 33 for more information on relationships.

Taking someone to hospital appointments

You may want to ask someone to go to hospital appointments with you. It can make future conversations easier, as it may give your partner, family member or friend a chance to:

- ask the doctor any questions you or they have
- take notes of important information.

It could also help you feel supported and cared for.

Before you go to an appointment, it can help to prepare any questions you would like answered. If you are feeling shocked or upset, you may struggle to prepare or ask things yourself. This can lead to frustration when trying to tell other people what was said. If someone comes with you, they can help you remember and tell people.

Telling people the news

If you have told your family and friends you have been for tests, they might be waiting to hear the results. This may make you feel under pressure. You may feel forced into talking about the cancer before you are ready. If this is the case, it can help to tell your family and friends you need some time for the news to sink in before you are ready to talk about it in detail. If you don't want to talk, see pages 16 to 17 for advice.

People usually tell the people closest to them first. It is also important to tell any children you have. Depending on how old they are, you might need to prepare more for this conversation – see pages 28 to 29.

Other family members or friends may say nothing. This could be because they are afraid of saying the wrong thing. You may have to bring the subject up.

Before the conversation:

- Make a list of who you want to talk to in person.
- Take some paper to write down any questions they ask, so you can ask your healthcare team.
- Think about how much you want to share the first time you talk with someone. You may want to tell them the type of cancer you have and which treatments you may need. If you don't feel ready to talk any more at this stage, you can say you need a break and will talk more at a later time.
- Try to get the setting right. If you are in a space that you find quiet and comfortable, it can help the conversation.

Practical tips for talking

Talking about your situation can help people support you in the future. It may also help you to feel less alone. Talking can also make you feel better, as though a weight has been lifted off you, even if nothing has changed.

These tips can help make a difficult conversation a bit easier:

During the first conversation, introduce the subject gradually

Do this in a way that is most natural to you. If you are struggling, you could try saying something like:

- ‘This is going to be difficult, but I need to tell you something.’
- ‘I’ve had some bad news, but there’s a good chance that everything will be okay after I’ve had treatment.’
- ‘You know I’ve been feeling unwell for a while. I have had some tests and they have found out what’s wrong.’

Tell them in the way that feels best for you

Sometimes it is easier to give the news over the phone, in a letter or by email rather than face-to-face. If you are far away, this may be the only option.

Ask what they already know and give them more information

This can stop you repeating information.

Give the information in small chunks

Say a few sentences and check the other person understands what you are saying before you carry on. You can ask things such as, 'Does that make sense?' Asking the other person if they understand may help you feel listened to.

Don't worry about silences

You, your family member or friend may sometimes not know what to say. Holding hands, hugging or just sitting together can often say more than any words.

If you find a silence makes you feel uncomfortable, break it with a simple question such as, 'What are you thinking about?'

Say what you need to say

You may want to be positive and cheerful to make your family member or friend feel better. If your situation seems like it will be okay, this is fine. But if you are really worried about the future, it is important they know so they can support you.

Be truthful

It is better for your family and friends to know the truth now, rather than find out how serious your situation is later on. If they find out later, they may feel hurt and upset that they haven't been supporting you.

Tell your family and friends if things seem uncertain and it is difficult to know whether your treatment will be successful. This will help them support you better.

Think about which issues are most important to you

You may feel as though there is a lot on your mind. But when you focus your thoughts, you might find that there are only two or three things that you really want to discuss.

Try to tell the person what in particular is worrying you. It may be easier to narrow this down by taking the conversation in stages. You could start by saying something general, such as, 'I'm worried about how things are at the moment.'

Ask for help to tell others

Explaining the cancer diagnosis to people can be exhausting. You can choose someone you trust to tell more distant family members or friends. Let them know what information you are happy for them to share.

It is okay to go back to small talk

You don't have to discuss serious issues all the time. Just chatting about everyday things can also help you feel that normal life still goes on.

Accept and ask for support

Family and friends will often offer their support. If they can help, you don't have to cope alone. If you cannot think of anything at that moment, thank them and tell them you may come back to them at a later date. If they haven't offered support, don't be afraid to ask. Use these tips to help when you ask for support.

You may want to use the space on the next page to write down what support you need. We have added one example. If you feel that you need support, but do not know how others could give it, this may be a useful starting point for a conversation with people close to you.

What is important to me

How to support me

To carry on working _____

Ask to help with the housework _____



Talking to children and teenagers

If children are told about an adult's cancer in a way they can understand, they may often cope better with it.

You may think not telling your children will help you to protect them. However, many children may know when something serious is affecting their family. Not knowing what is happening may cause some children more distress. This may have a negative impact on your relationship with them.

Benefits of talking to your children

There are many benefits to being open with children. Talking can help them feel more secure. It also gives them permission to ask questions and tell you how they feel about it.

If they know about the cancer, it means you can be more open about what you say.

Effects of not talking to your children

Not talking to your children about cancer may mean they feel frightened because they don't know what is going on. They may also feel alone, worried and that they have no one to talk to.

Children often find out about what is going on even when they haven't been told. For example, they may hear something from friends whose families know each other. They may wonder if they can trust you to tell them about important things.

How your children may react

Children can react in lots of different ways. Their understanding and behaviour will depend on how old they are. Be prepared to repeat the information. This can be difficult if the subject is painful for you.

Younger children may not understand what is happening, but will be aware of changes to their routine. Teenagers usually understand, but may find it hard to talk about.

We have a booklet called **Talking to children when an adult has cancer**, which has advice on how to talk to children and teenagers. See page 64 for details on ordering this information.

If you have a partner

How cancer affects your relationship with your partner may depend on:

- how long you have been together
- how long you have had cancer
- how cancer affects your day-to-day life
- how well you and your partner understand the changes you are going through.

If you live with your partner, their life is likely to be affected the most by the cancer.

For any couple, talking is important to work through issues such as money, work and, if you have children together, childcare. This is even more important after a cancer diagnosis.

Our booklet **Cancer, you and your partner** aims to help you with any issues you and your partner may face. See page 64 for details on ordering this information.

'My relationship with my wife suffered after the diagnosis. We slowly moved further and further apart, as we buried our fears to a certain degree. Psychological support really helped bring us back together.'

Ashley

Practical tips for talking to your partner

Let your partner know how they can support you

See pages 22 to 26 for tips on asking for support.

Ask your partner to come to hospital appointments

You will feel supported and your partner will feel valued, as they can ask questions too. This can make later conversations easier.

Remember your partner will be affected too

A cancer diagnosis affects both partners, so let them talk to you about how they feel as well. If your relationship is strong, it can be a great source of strength for both of you.

Talk together as a team

Trying to protect each other from bad news or difficult feelings will create distance in the relationship. If one partner feels they always have to be strong for the other one, they may begin to feel angry and resentful.

Deal with strong emotions

Strong emotions can often make talking difficult. See pages 59 to 61 for tips on dealing with disagreements and resolving conflict in your relationship.

Talking is only one way to communicate

Facial expressions, body language, gestures and tone all contribute to how we express our thoughts, feelings and ideas.

Write down your feelings

Share these with your partner. The tool on page 26 may help with this.

Nurture your relationship

Spend time together and plan fun activities. It is important to maintain a normal routine for your relationship.

Talk about whether cancer is affecting your sex life

Our booklets **Cancer and your sex life – information for women** and **Cancer and your sex life – information for men** discuss how cancer and its treatments can affect your sexuality, sex life and relationships. See page 64 for details on ordering this information.

Find support outside of the relationship

It may also be helpful for you or your partner to talk to others in a similar situation. You can do this on our Online Community at **macmillan.org.uk/community** You may also want to speak to a counsellor or go to a support group, either on your own or with your partner. See pages 12 to 15 for more information.

We have included the contact details of useful organisations such as Relationships Scotland and Relate on page 69. They may be able to offer you relationship counselling.

If your partner is your carer

Your partner may also be your carer. A carer is anyone who provides unpaid support to a family member or friend who could not manage without this help. If your partner is your carer, this can also have a big impact on your relationship.

Our booklet **Looking after someone with cancer** has practical tips for carers which your partner may find helpful. See page 64 for details on ordering this information.

If you are single

If you are single, you may or may not feel like this is the right time to start a new relationship.

If you do want to start a new relationship, it may be hard to decide:

- what to tell a new partner about the cancer
- when to tell a new partner about the cancer.

It is best to be open with the other person and make time to discuss your situation.

If you think that you need some help, you can get support from family, friends or one of the organisations on pages 69 to 76.

You can also call our cancer support specialists on **0808 808 00 00**.



'I found it helpful talking to people to get things off my chest, even if they couldn't really understand what I was going through.'

Paul, diagnosed with colon cancer in 2007

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Talking to your employer

Many people find their employer supportive. But some people worry about telling their employer they have cancer. They may be concerned that their employer won't support them, or will sack them or find an excuse to make them redundant. This should not happen. Legislation protects you from being discriminated against at work because of cancer.

Our booklet **Your rights at work** has more information about laws to protect you. It also have information about the adjustments your employer is legally obliged to make. See page 64 for details on ordering this information.

Asking your employer questions

Some questions you might like to ask your employer include:

- How can my job be adjusted so that I spend less time on tasks that cause me extra discomfort?
- Where can I find information about any company or organisation policies that relate to my situation?
- Can you and I talk about what we will tell everyone at work about the cancer and its effect on my work situation?

Our booklet **Work and cancer** has more information about employment rights and coping with the effects of treatment at work. See page 64 for details on ordering this information.

Talking to other people at work

You may find it difficult to talk to people you work with about your diagnosis. You may worry about their reactions or if it will be awkward.

The first people you tell may be those you feel closest to. They may be able to help you plan how to tell other people.

Telling people can have benefits:

- It gives them the chance to support you and know what to expect.
- You can let them know when you need help.
- They may suggest helpful ways for you to cope with your work.
- It may make you feel closer to the people you work with.
- There may be people with experience of cancer who could support you.

You could give people a short explanation of your treatment and its side effects. Tell them if tiredness is a problem, if your concentration is affected or if you are at risk of infection.

If some people avoid you, it is usually because they don't know what to say or are worried about saying the wrong thing. Showing them that you are willing to talk openly about your illness may help.

If you don't want to tell people you work with

You may prefer not to tell your work colleagues or to only tell a few people. Some people want to keep this part of their life as normal as possible. If you want to keep your diagnosis private, it is important that this is respected.

Sometimes treatment side effects, such as hair loss, may make it difficult not to tell people. They may be aware something is wrong, which could make things feel uncomfortable at times. If you are not comfortable talking about it, don't feel under pressure to explain. You know what works best for you and your situation.

Risk to colleagues

There are still misunderstandings about cancer. For example, some people worry they can catch cancer. But cancer is not infectious and there is no risk to the people you work with.

People you work with are not at risk from any treatments you have. Chemotherapy can't harm anyone you have contact with. Radiotherapy doesn't make you radioactive.

People having a type of internal radiotherapy to treat thyroid cancer may have to avoid close contact with others for a few days. Your doctor or nurse will explain any precautions you need to take when you go home.

Our cancer support specialists on **0808 808 00 00** can give you advice and support.

If you are self-employed

As a self-employed person, you may feel there are fewer people who you can talk to. This can feel isolating. You can call our support line on **0808 808 00 00** to talk about how you are feeling. You can also talk to one of our financial guides about the practical needs of your business. It may also be helpful to find someone who works in the same field as you who can give you advice on your business.

When you are self-employed, other people or businesses may rely on you to deliver goods or services. They may also rely on your payments. They may need to know you have cancer. You will have to balance your feelings about telling people with the needs of your business. For example, if the cancer affects your ability to drive, you could be fined if you don't tell the DVLA about it. On the other hand, some people may not need to know. It is your choice whether to tell them or not.

It may be hard to tell people about the cancer, but it can mean they will be able to give you practical and emotional support. It may help to take some time to think about the benefits and disadvantages of telling people.

Our booklet **Self-employment and cancer** gives advice on the support available to help you continue with your business. See page 64 for details on ordering this information.



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Talking with your healthcare team

Most conversations between you and your doctors or nurses will probably go smoothly.

However, sometimes you might find it difficult to ask your medical team the right questions and remember their answers. You could use the space on page 77 to write down what they tell you.

It is common for people to sometimes feel they are not getting the information or support they need.

'Being able to talk to my nurse about things was very important. She was so well informed and always gave me the time of day.'

**Patrick, diagnosed with
bowel cancer in 2013**

Practical tips for talking with healthcare staff

Think of the most important questions before you meet with your doctor

The tool on page 46 may help you to think about:

- things that are going well with your cancer treatment
- things that could be improved with your cancer treatment
- anything else you want to mention.

Write down the important points on a piece of paper that you can take with you

Some people are happy for you to record the conversation, so you can listen to it later.

You can also ask your healthcare team for a copy of any letters that have the details of your discussions.

Take a relative or friend with you to appointments

They can help you remember things that the doctor says, and questions you want to ask but may forget.

Be honest and factual when describing problems

Do not say that your symptoms are better than they are. Talk about how you feel, including feelings of anxiety or depression. Even if your healthcare team cannot help you, they should refer you to someone who can help.

Use your own language

Your doctors or nurses may use medical terms, but you don't have to. Using terms that you only partly understand may cause problems. For example, healthcare professionals may think you know more than you do.

Ask for simpler explanations

It is okay to say you don't understand the terms used. Ask your doctor or nurse to explain things in a simpler way.

Say if you are embarrassed

Medical symptoms and problems can be embarrassing. They are often the kind of personal things we don't want to talk about.

When you start talking, you can say, 'This is embarrassing to talk about, but...'

Make sure you understand

Briefly repeat the doctor's words back to them by saying:

- 'You are saying that...'
- 'If I have got that right, you mean that...'

This makes it clear how much you have understood. It will encourage your doctor or nurse to explain things more clearly.

Remember, you will have other chances to ask questions

You could make another appointment to ask your questions if:

- you don't cover everything in the first discussion
- you are given surprising news that changes the questions you wanted to ask.

You may also be given a phone number for a nurse specialist. If you have forgotten to ask a question or if you don't understand something, you can phone them.

Our leaflet **Ask about your cancer treatment** may help you to think of questions you would like to ask your doctors or nurses. See page 64 for details on ordering this information.



Getting information

Some people want to know as much as possible about their illness. This can help them explain things to their family and friends, and helps them during talks with their medical team.

Sometimes you may have a choice of treatments. In this situation, it is helpful to ask your doctor to explain all the benefits and disadvantages of each treatment so you can make the right choice for you.

You may find our booklet **Making treatment decisions** helpful – see page 64 for details on ordering this information. You can also discuss your treatment choices with our cancer support specialists by calling **0808 808 00 00**.

For some people, having more information helps them feel involved in their care and more in control generally. Other people prefer not to know all the details of their illness and want to leave treatment decisions to their doctors.

However, you need to have a certain amount of information to be able to give consent to your treatment. It is best if you explain how you feel to your healthcare team so they know how much information to give you.

Talking to your healthcare team about what you think and feel will help them focus on the issues that are important to you. Then you will really benefit from conversations with your medical team.

Reliable sources of information

You may sometimes find it difficult to get all the information you need from the team looking after you.

Your own healthcare team is in the best position to help you and answer your questions. They have the most information about your situation, the cancer and your general health. See pages 42 to 46 for information about talking to healthcare staff.

However, there are many other sources of support and information. It is important to get information from a reliable source, which is up to date and relevant to your situation. See page 64 for details on ordering this information.

Many people still believe myths about cancer. For example, they may believe that cancer can never be cured. And some well-meaning people may want to tell you about bad experiences of cancer that are not relevant to your situation. If this happens, let the person know that you feel uncomfortable hearing about other people's bad experiences. You could say that you would rather get the information you need from healthcare professionals.

You can get reliable information from our cancer support specialists on **0808 808 00 00** or the other organisations listed on pages 69 to 76. These organisations often provide a helpline, booklets and audio resources.

Problems with your healthcare team

If you are unhappy with the care you get from your healthcare team, try to talk about your worries with them. Say what you are unhappy with and how it affects you. This will help your healthcare team to change the situation.

If your disagreement is about your treatment at the hospital, you can contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS). They can help sort out any problems. You can also write a formal complaint, which the hospital will respond to.



Dealing with uncertainty

It isn't always possible to get answers. You may have to accept that uncertainties are common during cancer treatment. Even if statistics show that a treatment has been successful in the past, doctors don't know how well it will work for you. If you understand how your progress will be measured, it may help you cope better. For example, you could ask, 'Can you see from the x-rays if the treatment is working?'

Uncertainty can be one of the hardest emotions to deal with. Talking to family, friends and healthcare professionals about how you feel can help. See pages 22 to 25 for tips on asking for support.

Some people find it useful to talk about things with a counsellor. Your local cancer information centre or cancer support group may have a counsellor who you can talk to (see pages 13 to 15). Or your doctors and nurses can help you contact one.

Try focusing on things in your life that you can control. It may help you feel less anxious. See pages 20 to 26 for ideas on how you could take control of your situation.

'I couldn't talk openly to the Asian community because cancer is a taboo subject. But I felt I needed to make other ladies aware. And by talking with them, my confidence has grown too.'

Ravinder, diagnosed with breast cancer in 2013



DEALING WITH OTHER PEOPLE'S REACTIONS

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Ways people may react

How people react when you tell them about the cancer may depend on different things. These include what experience they have of cancer and how well they cope with fear and anxiety.

Some people will be keen to support you. They may even want to talk about things before you are ready – see page 17. But you may find the news makes other people uncomfortable.

Lack of experience

Many people have no experience of talking to or supporting someone with cancer. They may be unsure of what you need. They may be too embarrassed to ask if they think they should already know. You may have to bring up the subject.

Fear of your reaction

People may worry about how you will react if they start talking about the cancer. They may be scared of upsetting you. They may think they won't know what to do if you cry or get upset. If you are open and can talk about your situation and feelings, you can tell people what support you need.

Sharing stories

Many people know someone who has had cancer. Some people may share stories with you that you find negative or distressing. It is okay to tell them you don't want to hear those kind of stories right now.

Avoidance

People may not know what to say, but feel that they should know. This may mean they avoid you or simply say very little. This can be hurtful and disappointing.

Other people may only be able to talk about things they think are helpful and positive. If you need to talk about your fears, this may be frustrating.

You may find that other people go into denial. They may cope with the situation by pretending that it is not happening. This can be upsetting when you need their support.

More information

We talk about the feelings you may experience when diagnosed with cancer in our booklet **How are you feeling? The emotional effects of cancer**. See page 64 for details on ordering this information.

Visit healthtalk.org to watch videos of people talking about their cancer experiences and how they coped with other people's reactions.

Practical tips for dealing with reactions

Acknowledge their feelings

Remember that the person cares about you. But they may be struggling to accept the cancer or do not know the best way to help. When you are trying to cope with cancer yourself, this may make you feel resentful about having to deal with their feelings. But try not to push them away or brush their feelings aside, as it is likely to make things worse.

Always try to respond to their feelings

If you are good at recognising how people feel, it can help to identify their emotion and what caused it. You could say:

- ‘When I talk about the cancer you look really upset’
- ‘I know you are feeling very helpless and taking control is your way of coping, but...’

Don't be afraid to say how you feel too

For example, you may say:

- ‘I think both of us are finding this awful.’
- ‘I know you are worried about what could happen and so am I.’

The more aware you both are of each other's feelings, the better the communication will be. Arguments are common. If you get into an argument, see our section about resolving conflict on pages 59 to 61.

Try not to compete with their feelings

Reminding the other person that you feel worse can make them feel like you don't acknowledge their feelings.

If a person is avoiding talking, gently ask them to listen

Tell them that they don't need to respond right now, but you would just like them to listen. See pages 22 to 26 for practical tips about talking and asking for support.

Ask to have a break from talking

Ask to have a break from talking if:

- you are being forced to talk before you are ready
- you are finding it difficult to deal with emotional people.

You can come back to the conversation at a later date. See pages 16 to 17 for information if you don't want to talk.

With some honest discussion and time, you may find your relationship becomes supportive for you and the other person. The tool on page 26 may help you to talk to family and friends about how they can support you in practical ways.

Some people may not be able to support you in the way you would like. They may need more time to deal with their own feelings. You may have to accept they cannot help and find other sources of support. See pages 11 to 15 to find out who else you can talk to.

Talk about everyday things

You will learn to assess people's reactions and focus on those who want to talk to you and be supportive. If some people find it hard to discuss your illness or react in a way that isn't helpful, you may just want to talk about everyday issues. This can also be useful, as it gives you time to talk about things other than cancer.

Tips for your family and friends

Your family and friends may find it useful to visit our website The Source at source.macmillan.org.uk It has simple, practical tips from people who have first-hand experience supporting someone with cancer.



Managing disagreements

When dealing with cancer, people are often worried and nervous. This means arguments can happen. It is possible there will be times when you won't always agree with your family or friends, colleagues or with a member of your healthcare team. But there are ways you can try to manage any disagreements.

Try to describe your feelings rather than acting on them

For example, try saying you feel angry instead of shouting.

Try to accept emotions

Remember that your family and friends may have strong feelings too. Try to accept those feelings, as well as your own.

Remember you don't have to agree

If you cannot agree on an issue, you can 'agree to disagree'.

Don't assume you know what the other person thinks or wants

Ask them how they are feeling instead.

Let the other person talk about how they feel

You should both have time to talk, even if you disagree.

Avoid 'all or nothing words' such as 'always' and 'never'

For example, try not to say:

- 'You never listen to me.'
- 'I always call you.'

These words may make the other person defensive.

Avoid criticising someone's character

Say how their actions made you feel instead. For example, instead of saying, 'You are thoughtless. I have to remember everything', try saying, 'I feel overwhelmed and stressed when I have a lot to remember.'

Talk about the issue with someone else

You may find a solution by seeing things from a different point of view.

Try to see the other person's side of the argument

They may feel bad about the conflict and seeing this may help you feel less angry.

Write down some of your feelings

This can help you to put things in perspective.

Contact a counselling service

If you are unhappy about how you are feeling or your home life with people close to you, it may be helpful to talk to a counsellor.

If you feel very angry

Many of these arguments can be resolved with time. But some people find themselves getting very angry with others. If you feel anger is a problem for you, talk to your healthcare team about the help available. There may be anger management courses in your area. See page 13 for information on counselling.



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About our information

We provide expert, up-to-date information about cancer. And all our information is free for everyone.

Order what you need

You may want to order more leaflets or booklets like this one. Visit **be.macmillan.org.uk** or call us on **0808 808 00 00**.

We have booklets on different cancer types, treatments and side effects. We also have information about work, financial issues, diet, life after cancer and information for carers, family and friends.

All of our information is also available at **macmillan.org.uk /information-and-support**. There you'll also find videos featuring real-life stories from people affected by cancer, and information from health and social care professionals.

Other formats

We also provide information in different languages and formats, including:

- audiobooks
- Braille
- British Sign Language
- easy read booklets
- eBooks
- large print
- translations.

Find out more at **macmillan.org.uk/otherformats**

If you'd like us to produce information in a different format for you, email us at **cancerinformationteam@macmillan.org.uk** or call us on **0808 808 00 00**.

Help us improve our information

We know that the people who use our information are the real experts. That's why we always involve them in our work. If you've been affected by cancer, you can help us improve our information.

We give you the chance to comment on a variety of information including booklets, leaflets and fact sheets.

If you'd like to hear more about becoming a reviewer, email reviewing@macmillan.org.uk You can get involved from home whenever you like, and we don't ask for any special skills – just an interest in our cancer information.



Other ways we can help you

At Macmillan, we know how a cancer diagnosis can affect everything, and we're here to support you.

Talk to us

If you or someone you know is affected by cancer, talking about how you feel and sharing your concerns can really help.

Macmillan Support Line

Our free, confidential phone line is open Monday to Friday, 9am to 8pm. Our cancer support specialists can:

- help with any medical questions you have about cancer or your treatment
- help you access benefits and give you financial guidance
- be there to listen if you need someone to talk to
- tell you about services that can help you in your area.

Call us on **0808 808 00 00**
or email us via our website,
macmillan.org.uk/talktous

Information centres

Our information and support centres are based in hospitals, libraries and mobile centres. There, you can speak with someone face to face.

Visit one to get the information you need, or if you'd like a private chat, most centres have a room where you can speak with someone alone and in confidence.

Find your nearest centre at **macmillan.org.uk/informationcentres** or call us on **0808 808 00 00**.

Talk to others

No one knows more about the impact cancer can have on your life than those who have been through it themselves. That's why we help to bring people together in their communities and online.

Support groups

Whether you are someone living with cancer or a carer, we can help you find support in your local area, so you can speak face to face with people who understand. Find out about support groups in your area by calling us or by visiting [macmillan.org.uk/selfhelpandsupport](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/selfhelpandsupport)

Online Community

Thousands of people use our Online Community to make friends, blog about their experiences and join groups to meet other people going through the same things. You can access it any time of day or night. Share your experiences, ask questions, or just read through people's posts at [macmillan.org.uk/community](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/community)

The Macmillan healthcare team

Our nurses, doctors and other health and social care professionals give expert care and support to individuals and their families. Call us or ask your GP, consultant, district nurse or hospital ward sister if there are any Macmillan professionals near you.

'Everyone is so supportive on the Online Community, they know exactly what you're going through. It can be fun too. It's not all just chats about cancer.'

Mal

Help with money worries

Having cancer can bring extra costs such as hospital parking, travel fares and higher heating bills. If you've been affected in this way, we can help.

Financial guidance

Our financial team can give you guidance on mortgages, pensions, insurance, borrowing and savings.

Help accessing benefits

Our benefits advisers can offer advice and information on benefits, tax credits, grants and loans. They can help you work out what financial help you could be entitled to. They can also help you complete your forms and apply for benefits.

Macmillan Grants

Macmillan offers one-off payments to people with cancer. A grant can be for anything from heating bills or extra clothing to a much-needed break.

Call us on **0808 808 00 00**

to speak to a financial guide or benefits adviser, or to find out more about Macmillan Grants. We can also tell you about benefits advisers in your area.

Visit **[macmillan.org.uk/financialsupport](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/financialsupport)** to find out more about how we can help you with your finances.

Help with work and cancer

Whether you're an employee, a carer, an employer or are self-employed, we can provide support and information to help you manage cancer at work. Visit **[macmillan.org.uk/work](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/work)**

Macmillan's My Organiser mobile app

This free mobile app can help you manage your treatment, from appointment times and contact details, to reminders for when to take your medication. Search 'My Organiser' on the Apple App Store or Google Play on your phone.

Other useful organisations

There are lots of other organisations that can give you information or support.

Counselling

Association for Family Therapy & Systemic Practice (AFT)

Tel 01925 444414

www.aft.org.uk

Promotes effective family therapy, systemic services and high standards of professional training and practice. Search for a family therapist on its website.

British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP)

Tel 01455 883 300

Email bacp@bacp.co.uk

Promotes awareness of counselling and signposts people to appropriate services across the UK. You can search for a qualified counsellor at **itsgoodtotalk.org.uk**

Relate

Tel 0300 100 1234

www.relate.org.uk

Offers counselling and support to help people of all ages, backgrounds and sexual orientations to strengthen their relationships.

Relationships Scotland

Infoline 0345 119 2020

(Mon to Fri, 9.30am to 4.30pm)

www.

relationships-scotland.org.uk

Provides sex and relationship therapy, relationship counselling and family support. Has a helpline and can suggest local services for young people.

**UK Council for
Psychotherapy (UKCP)**
Tel 020 7014 9955
Email info@ukcp.org.uk
www.psychotherapy.org.uk

Holds the national register of psychotherapists and psychotherapeutic counsellors, listing practitioners who meet exacting standards and training requirements.

Youth Access

Tel 020 8772 9900
(Mon to Fri, 9.30am to 1pm,
then 2pm to 5.30pm)
Email
admin@youthaccess.org.uk
www.youthaccess.org.uk

A UK-wide organisation providing counselling and information for young people. Find your local service by visiting **youthaccess.org.uk/find-your-local-service**

**Emotional and mental
health support**

Samaritans
Helpline 116 123
Email jo@samaritans.org
www.samaritans.org

Samaritans branches are located across England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales. Provides confidential and non-judgemental emotional support, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, for people experiencing feelings of distress or despair.

**General cancer support
organisations**

Cancer Black Care

Tel 020 8961 4151

Email

info@cancerblackcare.org.uk
www.cancerblackcare.org.uk

Offers UK-wide information and support for people with cancer, as well as their friends, carers and families, with a focus on those from BME communities.

Cancer Focus

Northern Ireland

Helpline 0800 783 3339

(Mon to Fri, 9am to 1pm)

Email

nurseline@cancerfocusni.org
www.cancerfocusni.org

Offers a variety of services to people affected by cancer in Northern Ireland, including a free helpline, counselling and links to local support groups.

Cancer Support Scotland

Tel 0800 652 4531

(Mon to Fri, 9am to 5pm)

Email

info@cancersupportscotland.org

www.

cancersupportscotland.org

Runs cancer support groups throughout Scotland. Also offers free complementary therapies and counselling to anyone affected by cancer.

Macmillan Cancer Voices

[www.macmillan.org.uk/
cancervoices](http://www.macmillan.org.uk/cancervoices)

A UK-wide network that enables people who have or have had cancer, and those close to them such as family and carers, to speak out about their experience of cancer.

Maggie's Centres

Tel 0300 123 1801

Email

enquiries@maggiescentres.org

www.maggiescentres.org

Has a network of centres in various locations throughout the UK. Provides free information about cancer and financial benefits. Also offers emotional and social support to people with cancer, their family, and friends.

Riprap

www.riprap.org.uk

Developed especially for teenagers in the UK who have a parent with cancer. Has an online forum where teenagers going through similar experiences can talk to each other for support.

Tenovus

Helpline 0808 808 1010

(Daily, 8am to 8pm)

Email

info@tenovuscancercare.org.uk

www.

tenovuscancercare.org.uk

Aims to help everyone in the UK get equal access to cancer treatment and support. Funds research and provides support such as mobile cancer support units, a free helpline, benefits advice and an online 'Ask the nurse' service.

General health information

GP Out-of-Hours Service – Northern Ireland

A support service for medical help and advice. Lines open weekdays, 6pm until your GP surgery opens the next morning, open 24 hours Sat to Sun and bank holidays.

Belfast Health and Social Care Trust

North and West Belfast

Tel 028 9074 4447

Textphone

18001 028 90744447

South and East Belfast

Tel 028 9079 6220

Textphone

18001 028 90796220

Dalriada Urgent Care

Tel 028 2566 3500

Textphone

18001 028 2566 3500

South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust

Aards and North Down

Tel 028 9182 2344

Textphone

18001 028 90744447

Lisburn and Downpatrick

Tel 028 9260 2204

Textphone

18001 028 92602204

Southern Health and Social Care Trust

Tel 028 3839 9201

Textphone

18001 028 38399201

Western Urgent Care

Tel 028 7186 5195

Textphone

18001 028 71865195

Health and Social Care in Northern Ireland

www.hscni.net

Provides information about health and social care services in Northern Ireland.

Healthtalk

Email

info@healthtalk.org

www.healthtalk.org

www.healthtalk.org/young-peoples-experiences
(site for young people)

Has information about cancer, and videos and audio clips of people's experiences.

Also provides advice on topics such as making decisions about health and treatment.

NHS Choices**www.nhs.uk**

The UK's biggest health information website. Has service information for England.

NHS Direct Wales**www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk**

NHS health information site for Wales.

NHS Inform**Helpline** 0800 22 44 88

(Daily, 8am to 10pm)

www.nhsinform.scot

NHS health information site for Scotland.

Financial or legal advice and information**ACAS****Tel** 0300 123 1100

(Mon to Fri, 8am to 6pm)

Text Relay

18001 0300 123 1100

www.acas.org.uk

Provides information, advice, training, conciliation and other services for employers and employees to help prevent or resolve workplace problems.

Benefit Enquiry Line**Northern Ireland****Helpline** 0800 220 674

(Mon, Tues, Wed and Fri, 9am to 5pm, Thurs, 10am to 5pm)

Textphone 028 9031 1092**www.nidirect.gov.uk/****money-tax-and-benefits**

Provides information and advice about disability benefits and carers' benefits in Northern Ireland.

Citizens Advice

Provides advice on a variety of issues including financial, legal, housing and employment issues. Use their online webchat or find details for your local office in the phone book or by contacting:

England**Helpline** 03444 111 444**Email** [debt.advice@](mailto:debt.advice@citizensadvice.co.uk)citizensadvice.co.uk**www.citizensadvice.org.uk****Wales****Helpline** 03444 77 2020**www.citizensadvice.org.uk/wales**

Scotland

Helpline 0808 800 9060

www.citizensadvice.org.uk/scotland

Northern Ireland

Helpline 0800 028 1181

www.citizensadvice.co.uk/nireland

Labour Relations

Agency (NI)

Tel 028 9032 1442

(Mon to Fri, 9am to 5pm)

Email info@lra.org.uk

www.lra.org.uk

Provides an impartial and confidential employment relations service to those engaged in industry, commerce and the public services in Northern Ireland.

Money Advice Scotland

Tel 0141 572 0237

Email info@

moneyadvicescotland.org.uk

www.

moneyadvicescotland.org.uk

Use the website to find qualified financial advisers in Scotland.

The Money Advice Service Helpline

0800 138 7777 (English)

0800 138 0555 (Welsh)

(Mon to Fri, 8am to 8pm,

Sat, 9am to 1pm)

Typetalk

18001 0300 500 5000

Email enquiries@

moneyadviceservice.org.uk

www.

moneyadviceservice.org.uk

Runs a free financial health check service and gives advice about all types of financial matters across the UK. Has an online chat service for instant money advice.

National Debtline (England, Wales and Scotland)

Tel 0808 808 4000

(Mon to Fri, 9am to 8pm,

Sat, 9.30am to 1pm)

www.nationaldebtline.org

A national helpline for people with debt problems. The service is free, confidential and independent. Has an online chat service with an expert debt advisor.

Unbiased.co.uk**Helpline** 0800 023 6868**Email** contact@unbiased.co.uk**www.unbiased.co.uk**

You can search the website for qualified advisers in the UK who can give expert advice about finances, mortgages, accounting or legal issues.

Support for young people**CLIC Sargent****Tel** 0300 330 0803**www.clicsargent.org.uk**

Provides clinical, practical, financial and emotional support to children with cancer in the UK.

Hope Support Services**Tel** 01989 566317**Email** [help@](mailto:help@hopesupportservices.org.uk)hopesupportservices.org.uk**www.hopesupport.org.uk**

Supports young people when a close family member is diagnosed with a life-threatening illness. Online and face-to-face help is available.

Teenage Cancer Trust**Tel** 0207 612 0370

(Mon to Fri, 9am to 5.30pm)

Emailhello@teenagecancertrust.org**www.teenagecancertrust.org**

A UK-wide charity devoted to improving the lives of teenagers and young adults with cancer. Runs a support network for young people with cancer, their friends and families.

Support for older people**Age UK****Helpline** 0800 678 1174

(Daily, 8am to 7pm)

www.ageuk.org.uk

Provides information and advice for older people across the UK via the website and advice line. Also publishes impartial and informative fact sheets and advice guides.

Support for carers

Carers Trust

Email support@carers.org

www.carers.org

www.youngcarers.net

Provides support, information, advice and services for people caring at home for a family member or friend. You can find details of Care and Carer Services local to you on the website – visit

www.carers.org/carers-services/find-your-local-service

Carers UK

Helpline

(England, Scotland, Wales)

0808 808 7777

(Mon to Fri, 10am to 4pm)

Helpline (Northern Ireland)

028 9043 9843

Email advice@carersuk.org

www.carersuk.org

Offers information and support to carers across the UK. Has an online forum and can put people in contact with support groups for carers in their area.

You can search for more organisations on our website at macmillan.org.uk/organisations, or call us on **0808 808 00 00**.

Disclaimer

We make every effort to ensure that the information we provide is accurate and up to date but it should not be relied upon as a substitute for specialist professional advice tailored to your situation. So far as is permitted by law, Macmillan does not accept liability in relation to the use of any information contained in this publication, or third-party information or websites included or referred to in it. Some photos are of models.

Thanks

This booklet has been written, revised and edited by Macmillan's Cancer Information Development team. It has been approved by our Chief Medical Editor, Tim Iveson, Macmillan Consultant Medical Oncologist.

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Thanks also to the people affected by cancer who reviewed this booklet, and those who shared their stories.

Sources

We've listed a sample of the sources used in the publication below. If you'd like further information about the sources we use, please contact us at **cancerinformationteam@macmillan.org.uk**

NHS Choices. www.nhs.uk/Conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/pages/controlling-anger.aspx (accessed June 2017).

Step MM, Ray EB. Patient perceptions of oncologist-patient communication about prognosis: changes from initial diagnosis to cancer recurrence. *Health Communication*. 2011.

Can you do something to help?

We hope this booklet has been useful to you. It's just one of our many publications that are available free to anyone affected by cancer. They're produced by our cancer information specialists who, along with our nurses, benefits advisers, campaigners and volunteers, are part of the Macmillan team. When people are facing the toughest fight of their lives, we're there to support them every step of the way.

We want to make sure no one has to go through cancer alone, so we need more people to help us. When the time is right for you, here are some ways in which you can become a part of our team.



Share your cancer experience

Support people living with cancer by telling your story, online, in the media or face to face.

Campaign for change

We need your help to make sure everyone gets the right support. Take an action, big or small, for better cancer care.

Help someone in your community

A lift to an appointment. Help with the shopping. Or just a cup of tea and a chat. Could you lend a hand?

Raise money

Whatever you like doing you can raise money to help. Take part in one of our events or create your own.

Give money

Big or small, every penny helps. To make a one-off donation see over.

Call us to find out more

0300 1000 200

macmillan.org.uk/getinvolved

Please fill in your personal details

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Other _____

Name _____

Surname _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Please accept my gift of £ _____

(Please delete as appropriate)

I enclose a cheque / postal order /
Charity Voucher made payable to
Macmillan Cancer Support

OR debit my:

Visa / MasterCard / CAF Charity
Card / Switch / Maestro

Card number

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Don't let the taxman keep your money

Do you pay tax? If so, your gift will be worth 25% more to us – at no extra cost to you. All you have to do is tick the box below, and the tax office will give 25p for every pound you give.

- I am a UK tax payer and I would like Macmillan Cancer Support to treat all donations I make or have made to Macmillan Cancer Support in the last 4 years as Gift Aid donations, until I notify you otherwise.

I understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference. I understand Macmillan Cancer Support will reclaim 25p of tax on every £1 that I give.

Macmillan Cancer Support and our trading companies would like to hold your details in order to contact you about our fundraising, campaigning and services for people affected by cancer. If you would prefer us not to use your details in this way please tick this box.

In order to carry out our work we may need to pass your details to agents or partners who act on our behalf.



If you'd rather donate online go to macmillan.org.uk/donate

Please cut out this form and return it in an envelope (no stamp required) to:
Supporter Donations, Macmillan Cancer Support, FREEPOST LON15851,
89 Albert Embankment, London SE1 7UQ

This booklet is about talking with people when you have cancer. It is for anyone who has been diagnosed with cancer.

The booklet explains why it is important to talk about cancer and who you might want to talk with. It also has practical tips for having a conversation.

We have other booklets for carers, friends and family.

If you have more questions or would like to talk to someone, call the Macmillan Support Line free on **0808 808 00 00**, Monday to Friday, 9am to 8pm, or visit **macmillan.org.uk**

Would you prefer to speak to us in another language? Interpreters are available. Please tell us in English the language you would like to use. Are you deaf or hard of hearing? Call us using NGT (Text Relay) on **18001 0808 808 00 00**, or use the NGT Lite app.

Need information in different languages or formats? We produce information in audio, eBooks, easy read, Braille, large print and translations. To order these visit **macmillan.org.uk/otherformats** or call our support line.

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