

A practical guide to living with and after cancer

WORRYING ABOUT CANCER COMING BACK



About this booklet

This booklet is for anyone who has had treatment for cancer and is worried about the cancer coming back. This is often the most common and biggest concern people have after their treatment is over.

Feeling worried, uncertain or frightened can stop you fully enjoying or getting on with your life. You may already have noticed situations that trigger these feelings and found helpful ways of coping with them. In this booklet, we suggest ways to help you manage worry and uncertainty. We also give you information and advice on where to get support and help.

Throughout this booklet, we've included some quotes from people affected by cancer. These are from our online community ([macmillan.org.uk/community](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/community)). We hope you find these useful.

There are also some other useful organisations listed at the back of this booklet (see page 37).

If you find this booklet helpful, you could pass it on to your family and friends. They may also want information to help support you.

If you'd like to discuss this information, call the Macmillan Support Line free on **0808 808 00 00**, Monday–Friday, 9am–8pm. If you're hard of hearing, you can use textphone **0808 808 0121**, or Text Relay. For non-English speakers, interpreters are available. Alternatively, visit [macmillan.org.uk](https://www.macmillan.org.uk)

Your data and the cancer registry

When you are diagnosed with cancer in the UK, some information about you and your health is collected in a cancer registry. This is used to plan and improve health and care services. Your hospital will usually give this information to the registry automatically. There are strict rules to make sure the information is kept safely and securely. It will only be used for your direct care or for health and social care planning and research.

Talk to your doctor or nurse if you have any questions. If you do not want your information included in the registry, you can contact the cancer registry in your country to opt out. You can find more information at [macmillan.org.uk/cancerregistry](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/cancerregistry)

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Worry and uncertainty

You will probably feel relieved when you have finished treatment. But you may worry about whether it has worked and what might happen to you in the future. This is normal and it doesn't mean you aren't getting on with life. Feelings of uncertainty can be very strong after treatment, but they often get better as you recover.

For many people, treatment cures the cancer and it never comes back. But doctors may avoid using the word cure, because some cancers can come back.

Everyone's cancer and treatment is different, and a person's outlook depends on different things. Some people live with cancer that is under control, knowing it is likely to come back in the future.

Even when doctors reassure you, it can still be hard not to feel uncertain or scared. Some people may ask if they need to wait a number of years to be confident the cancer won't come back. Or they may ask if there's a time period when the cancer is more likely to come back.

Your doctor may not be able to answer all your questions because there are many different things to consider. But you will usually find it helpful to talk to them.

Sometimes coping with uncertainty can be very hard. It may make you feel like you don't have much control over your life. Some research suggests younger people may find it more difficult to cope with uncertainty than older people.

There are different ways to help you manage worry and uncertainty. This can take practice, but there are people who can support you with this. Accepting that you will always have some of these feelings and that they are normal can often be a good place to start.

One way of managing your worries is trying to focus on what you can control right now. It can help you to stop dwelling on future 'what ifs'. Rather than worrying about things that may never happen, try to concentrate on what you can influence and do now. This can include:

- talking about your feelings and getting support (see pages 8–11)
- being involved in your recovery and focusing on your well-being (see pages 23–25)
- finding helpful ways of managing anxiety and stress (see pages 26–29)
- looking ahead and getting back to work, or other hobbies and activities (see pages 30–31).

Situations that may trigger worry

You may find there are different situations that trigger feelings of worry and uncertainty. Sometimes worry can feel like a vague sense of dread rather than anything specific.

These situations are different from person to person and knowing what your triggers are can help. These may include:

- a hospital appointment or test – you may worry you will get bad news or it may bring back difficult memories of your diagnosis or treatment
- hearing someone else's cancer has come back or that they have died – this could be someone you knew or even a celebrity in the news
- reading or hearing about cancer in magazines, newspapers, films, TV programmes or online
- noticing an ache, pain or other symptom that you would have normally ignored.

Worry and anxiety are common reactions, but there can be helpful ways to manage these feelings. For example, try not to compare yourself with others. It's not usually helpful and no two cancers are alike, even if they're the same type.

A new symptom could be nothing to do with cancer. You'll still get the everyday aches and pains everyone gets, or they may be caused by treatment side effects. Always check any new symptoms with your doctor, or you'll continue to worry. See pages 21–22 for more information on symptoms or signs to be aware of.

'The treatment may be over, but you are left with uncertainty. Every niggle, ache or pain makes you think twice. It is how you deal with the uncertainty which helps you move forward. Some people have counselling, others may join local groups or become volunteers.'

Richard



Talking and getting support

Talking openly about how you feel with people you trust and feel comfortable with is a good place to start. It can help you to feel less anxious and less frightened. Being open also shows family and friends that it's okay for them to talk about their own feelings.

Don't feel you have to protect family and close friends by always appearing positive and like you're coping. The people close to you usually want to know how you're really feeling so they can support you.

Our booklet **Talking about cancer – a guide for people with cancer** has more information to help you.

Talking about your worries or uncertainties helps you:

- get your feelings out in the open and stops you going over and over things
- understand your feelings and put them into perspective
- work out if you need to act on them, for example by contacting your cancer team
- feel closer to the people you talk to.

If you find it hard to talk to the people close to you, you might find self-help groups or online communities useful. Try talking to your cancer team too. If you need more help they may be able to refer you to a psychologist or counsellor.

When we talk about the cancer team, we mean the main people involved in your care. This usually includes your cancer doctor (oncologist), surgeon, specialist nurse, GP or other health professionals such as your physiotherapist, pharmacist or dietitian.

Join a support group or online community

Joining a self-help or support group offers a chance to talk to other people who may be facing similar challenges. It can help to go along to see what the group is like first, and then stay if you feel comfortable. Some organisations or support groups offer buddy systems, counselling or complementary therapies.

You can also go along to local Macmillan information and support centre to talk to experts and trained volunteers who can give you support and answer your questions.

You can search for groups or cancer information centres near you by visiting [macmillan.org.uk/inyourarea](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/inyourarea). Or call our cancer support specialists on **0808 808 00 00**.

You may prefer not to share your experiences with others face to face. Our Online Community gives you a chance to blog about what you've been through, ask questions, or just read through people's posts. It's often best to use online forums which follow guidelines and have a moderator. Visit [macmillan.org.uk/community](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/community) for more information.

If you find sharing your own experience or reading about other people's makes you anxious, it's probably better to get support in another way.

'Be kind to yourself and try to take it one day at a time. Talking to someone outside the situation like a counsellor might help. There is always the Macmillan helpline too.'

Sue

Write it down

Writing about your feelings can help you to express yourself and might help give you back a sense of control. Keeping a diary or journal can help you work through different problems privately. Reading it back may help you become more aware of your thoughts and feelings. It can identify what the triggers and issues are for you, and what helps you to cope. Include the good or positive things that have helped you as well.

You might find it helpful to use the thinking tool on the opposite page. It was developed by people who had cancer. You can see examples, stories and support to use the tool at **thinkaboutyourlife.org** There's also space for you to think about the next steps you could take to help you manage your concerns.

Did you find this thinking tool useful?

Email **cancerinformationteam@macmillan.org.uk**



Hopes



Fears

Next steps:

Being aware of your thoughts

It's not unusual to have some negative thoughts when you're coping with cancer. But if this becomes your usual way of thinking, it can affect your mood, make you less confident and more anxious. You may ignore positive things and believe your negative thoughts are all true and realistic.

Becoming more aware can help you see unhelpful patterns of thinking and the effect they have on you. This may help you to challenge unhelpful thoughts.

Challenge unhelpful thinking

Try asking yourself the following questions:

- Is what I'm thinking definitely right – what's the evidence for and against my thinking?
- What would you say to a friend who had this thought in a similar situation?
- Am I jumping to conclusions, seeing the negative, forgetting the positives or getting things out of proportion?
- What would be the effect of thinking about things less negatively?

It might be helpful to write down your thoughts. This may help you to see if there's a pattern, such as **over-generalising** or **black and white thinking**.

If something goes wrong in our lives, we may over-generalise and see it as a sign that now everything will go wrong. Black and white thinking is when we think in extremes of all or nothing, with no grey area in between.

Here's an example showing both over-generalising and black and white thinking. We've given an example of how to challenge this with more balanced, positive thinking.

Negative thinking

'The cancer will come back and I won't be able to cope with more treatment.'

Balanced thinking

'My cancer doctor told me there's a very good chance the cancer won't come back. But if it did, I've already coped with treatment and I could probably do it again.'



There are NHS recommended online programmes that help you to become more aware of your thoughts. Some talking therapies are based on this, see pages 27–28 for more information.

Getting the right information

Having information about cancer and its treatment can help give you a sense of control. It helps you understand your condition and make decisions. It also means you can know more about what to expect and what you can do.

Some people want a lot of information. Others may only want to know the basics and prefer to leave the details to their doctor. Tell your cancer team what you prefer. Everyone has their own ways of coping and it is okay to do what's best for you.

There is a lot of information available on the internet and in print. It's important to make sure what you read is from a reliable source. Ask your specialist nurse or doctor for advice on this and the information that's most likely to help you.

Information that has the **Information Standard** logo on it means it's based on evidence and produced according to strict quality control guidelines. You can see the Information Standard logo on the back cover of this booklet. If you're not sure whether something you've read is reliable, check with your doctor or nurse. Or you can call our support line for free on **0808 808 00 00**.

Make sense of statistics

Statistics about cancer can be difficult to understand. If you want to know more about the chances of the cancer coming back, your cancer doctor may be able to give you statistics about it.

Statistics about surviving cancer are based on large numbers of people. Because everyone is different, statistics can't be used to predict what will happen to you as an individual. There may also be factors that make your situation different from usual.

Clinical trials may give doctors more information about how many people may benefit from a treatment. They help doctors decide which treatments are the most effective overall.

Although doctors cannot predict exactly what will happen to you, they may be able to give you some general guidance. They base this advice on the stage of the cancer, how it usually behaves, the treatments you have had, and the evidence they have available to them.

Talk to your doctor if any statistics you've read have worried you or you can't understand them.

Before treatment finishes

Being involved in your recovery after treatment and knowing what to expect may help you to adjust and feel more in control. You may want to talk to your doctor or specialist nurse about:

- what to expect and how you can help to improve your short- and long-term recovery
- your follow-up plan, or how often your appointments or tests will be
- symptoms to look out for and who you should contact if you're worried about any
- any late effects of treatment.

Don't worry if you don't want to know all of this. The main things are to keep your appointments and to let your doctor or nurse know about new or ongoing symptoms.

Some people may have a **holistic needs assessment (HNA)** at the end of treatment. This is where someone from the cancer team talks to you about your feelings and concerns. They discuss any side effects you have and explain how you're likely to feel over the next few months.

Or you may be offered a **Treatment Summary**. This describes the treatment you had, and gives you information about follow-up dates or appointments.



Our booklet **What to do after cancer treatment ends: 10 top tips** has more information you might find helpful. You can order this from [be.macmillan.org.uk](https://www.be.macmillan.org.uk) or by calling **0808 808 00 00**.



Follow-up appointments and tests

Going back to the hospital for follow-up appointments or tests can sometimes be difficult, but it's very important to go. Many people feel reassured after their follow-up visits. It also gives you a chance to talk to your doctor about any concerns you have.

Your doctor or nurse will check everything is going well. They can also check any problems or possible signs that the cancer has come back. If cancer does come back, finding it earlier may make it easier to treat and treatment may work better. Treatment may cure certain cancers that have come back.

Fewer hospital visits may make some people feel less anxious. Instead of routine appointments, you may be asked to contact your nurse specialist or cancer doctor if you have any symptoms or concerns. See page 21 for more information about symptoms to look out for.

'My cancer treatment has come to an end and I've gone from hospital/doctor appointments, treatments, nurses, oncologists etc and suddenly its all gone and you are on your own, and every little ache and pain raises a worry, its scary. I've found this forum a tremendous help.'

Dorothy

Get the most from your visit

You might find going to appointments or tests easier if you:

- write a list beforehand of questions or things you'd like to talk about – try rehearsing them so you feel more confident
- have someone with you for support and so you can talk to them about what was said later
- bring something to distract you while you're waiting, such as music or a book
- plan to do something you enjoy afterwards.

When you feel anxious, it can be difficult to take in what your doctor or nurse is saying. You can write notes on what your doctor says during your visit. Or you can ask if they can give you a brief written summary of the main points. Some people may want to ask their doctor if they can record the conversation so they can listen to it afterwards.

If you're unsure of anything, ask your doctor to explain it in simple, clear language. Otherwise you may worry afterwards about what they said. Tell your doctor or nurse as much as you can and try not to play anything down. Be open with them about how you have been feeling so they can support you.

Following the advice from your cancer team

Your cancer team (see page 8) may give you advice on what you can do to help your recovery. Your GP can also give you support and advice.

If you have ongoing side effects, your cancer team may explain how to manage these. You may have been shown how to do some simple checks, or told about specific signs or symptoms to look out for. They may also have given you advice on lifestyle factors, such as smoking, diet and being active.

If you're taking drugs to reduce the risk of the cancer coming back, for example hormonal therapies, it's very important to keep taking them. Not taking these can increase the chance of the cancer coming back.

Always let your cancer nurse, doctor or GP know about any side effects that are worrying you. They can often help with these, or may be able to change the drugs you're taking. Talking to your pharmacist about your medicines can also be helpful.

This may seem like a lot to deal with after treatment, when you probably want a break from it all. But it's important to follow the advice from your cancer team and make it part of your normal routine.

Symptoms or signs to look out for

After treatment, it's common to worry that every ache and pain is linked to the cancer. You'll also be getting used to what's now 'normal' for you. This can make it harder to know what to pay attention to.

You can ask your doctor or nurse if there are certain symptoms that could be a possible warning sign of the cancer coming back.

It's useful to be aware of the side effects of any ongoing treatment and any possible late treatment effects. Knowing more can help you put things into perspective. But it's always important to get your symptoms checked, even if you think they're not serious.

Always let your cancer doctor or nurse know if you have:

- new symptoms or side effects that don't get better over time
- symptoms similar to the ones you had when you were diagnosed
- general symptoms, such as losing weight, feeling more tired than usual, or losing your appetite for no obvious reason
- constant thoughts about waiting for symptoms to happen, problems sleeping or trouble coping emotionally.

You can contact your cancer doctor or nurse between appointments. They can often reassure you and explain if the symptoms are likely to be linked to treatment. They can arrange for you to have tests to check things out if necessary. You can also see your GP and ask for advice.

Constantly checking yourself for symptoms or signs isn't likely to be helpful. This can make you worry more and make you feel very anxious. Talk to your doctor if you're doing this or thinking about it a lot of the time. Focusing more on your recovery and well-being can also help (see pages 23–25).

You may not always be able to speak to your cancer team when you need to. It may help to talk to one of our cancer support specialists by calling our free support line on **0808 808 00 00** (open Monday–Friday, 9am–8pm).

Focusing on your well-being

You may decide to focus more on what you can do to help you stay healthy and feel good. You can't change that you have had cancer, but you can have some control over your well-being.

Making healthy choices can have positive effects for the rest of your life. These could include stopping smoking, being more active, managing your weight and eating more healthily. You may also decide to learn ways to help control stress.

Many people can now be cured of cancer or live for a long time with it. So looking after your long-term health is important. It helps reduce the risk of illnesses such as heart disease and diabetes. It also helps reduce the chance of some late treatment effects – certain treatments increase the risk of heart disease or bone problems later in life. Making some lifestyle changes can also reduce the risk of getting a new cancer.

Give up smoking

If you smoke, giving up is the healthiest decision you can make. Stopping smoking reduces your risk of heart and lung disease, bone thinning (osteoporosis), and smoking-related cancers. You'll also feel better, look better and save money.

Our booklet **Giving up smoking** can give you some helpful tips.

Be physically active

Short walks, gardening, or taking the children to the park all count towards being active. You can start gently and build it up. Being more physically active helps look after your heart and bones, and keeps you to a healthy weight. It also gives you more energy and reduces stress.

Our booklet **Physical activity and cancer treatment** has more information.

Keep to a healthy weight

If you're concerned about your weight, talk to your GP or practice nurse. They can tell you the right weight for your height and give you advice if you need to lose or gain weight.

Our booklets **Managing your weight after cancer treatment**, **Eating problems and cancer** and **The building-up diet** have helpful tips.

Eat healthily

This will help you to feel better and give you more energy.

A well-balanced diet should include:

- five portions of fresh fruit and vegetables a day
- foods high in fibre, such as beans and cereals
- more chicken and fish (especially oily fish).

Try to eat less:

- red and processed meat
- salt
- pickled or smoked foods.

We have a booklet called **Healthy eating and cancer**, which has more information.

Stick to sensible drinking guidelines

The UK government recommend that women and men don't drink more than 14 units of alcohol a week and have a few alcohol free days. A unit is half a pint of ordinary strength beer, lager or cider, one small glass of wine (125ml) or a single measure of spirits (25ml).

Managing stress and anxiety

Living with stress and anxiety can be hard. Learning ways to manage stress may help to reduce your worries about cancer. Think about how you used to relax in the past and try this again.

Make time to relax

One way of coping with stress is to make time to relax. Relaxing can be as simple as:

- going for a walk
- enjoying a meal with friends or family
- listening to music or watching a film
- having a bath.

Doing things you look forward to and being with people you're close to, can distract you from your worries. It can help you to enjoy the present and look forward in a more positive way. Starting a new hobby, perhaps something you've always wanted to do, can be relaxing and distracting (see page 30).

Relaxation techniques

You could think about learning certain ways of relaxing and coping with stress. These might include meditation, yoga, regular physical activity or having a massage.

Some cancer support groups or organisations may offer relaxation, massage, aromatherapy or reflexology. You could try some out and find what suits you. See page 37 to find details of other useful organisations.

Relaxation exercises to reduce stress often involve learning to relax your breathing or your body. You could ask your GP about these. They may be able to refer you to a healthcare professional who can show you how to do them.

You can find information on stress and anxiety from the NHS websites listed on page 37. You might also find it helpful to visit Anxiety UK's website. There are many DVDs, CDs or podcasts to help guide you at home.

You might also like to read our booklet on complementary therapies. It has more information about relaxation techniques.

Talking with a professional

Often the support you get from talking to people close to you or people going through a similar experience is all you need. But sometimes it helps to talk to a trained counsellor or psychologist, especially if you feel very low or anxious.

They can help you sort out your feelings and find ways of coping with them. GP practices and hospitals often have their own counsellors or can refer you to one. The British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (see page 37) can also give you details of counsellors in your area.

Certain talking therapies help people look at ways of coping when they feel anxious. Some of these and other approaches are being looked at to help people manage fear and uncertainty about cancer coming back. Ask your cancer nurse, doctor or GP about getting referred to services that provide counselling or psychological support.

Cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT)

CBT is a talking therapy that can help you change the way you think and behave, so you manage your problems in a more effective way. It can be used to treat anxiety, panic attacks or depression. A psychologist will talk to you about the number of sessions you need and set goals with you. CBT and other forms of therapy are available on the NHS.

There are also online CBT services approved by the NHS that you can do on your own.

Mindfulness

Mindfulness also helps you become aware of your thoughts and feelings, without judging them or becoming overwhelmed by them. It uses techniques like meditation, breathing exercises and yoga to help you focus on the present moment.

Mindfulness-based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) uses the techniques of mindfulness with some CBT to help you change thought patterns. A few centres in the UK offer classes on MBCT on the NHS.

Another type of therapy that involves mindfulness is Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT). It focuses on accepting what's beyond your personal control, while still committing to doing things that will improve your quality of life.

Knowing if you need more help

The worry or fear of cancer coming back can sometimes be overwhelming. It may make you feel very anxious or depressed, or cause panic attacks. If you feel like this a lot of the time, or it doesn't get better or gets worse, talk to your doctor.

Sometimes it's difficult to know if you're depressed or to even talk about it. Other people may notice and suggest that you might need help.

If you or someone close to you thinks you need help with anxiety or depression, speak to your GP, cancer doctor or nurse.

They can give you advice and refer you to a psychologist or a counsellor for a type of talking therapy. They may also ask you how you feel about taking medicines that help treat depression and anxiety.

There is more information about depression and anxiety in our booklet **How are you feeling? The emotional effects of cancer**. There are also other organisations that can help you (see page 37).

'I still felt adrift, depressed and stressed out. I went to the Maggie's centre at the hospital where I was being treated, and had a course of counselling and stress management training that I found really helped me. Don't feel unable to reach out for support just because your treatment has ended.'

Michael

Looking ahead

Having a sense of purpose in your life can help you shift your focus away from worrying, on to something more positive. Worrying about the cancer coming back may never go away completely. It may be tough at times but it's still possible to live life fully, with the right help and support.

The day-to-day things you did before the cancer will gradually start to fit back into your life. Going back to work or starting to do the activities you did before are often important steps forward. You can read more advice in our booklet **Work and cancer**.

Although you wouldn't have chosen it, the experience of cancer may change you in positive ways. You may decide what's important to you, focus on relationships with family and friends, or decide to do things you have always wanted to do.

Having goals for the future can help to shift your focus away from the cancer. Getting involved in a new activity can help to both distract and relax you. Some hobbies help you express your feelings – for example, learning to play a musical instrument or painting. You may decide to be more active and take up cycling or dancing, or join a walking group. For others, it could be gardening, drawing, knitting, quilting, photography or joining a choir.

You don't have to be trained in these activities or be creative to benefit from them. Look out for any groups or classes in your area. Find something you enjoy and feel comfortable with.

When you feel ready, you may decide to look at opportunities to volunteer. If you prefer to do something that isn't cancer-related, find something that matters to you or makes you feel part of your community.

These are all different ways and ideas to help you focus on the present and feel you are getting back control of your life.

i Our booklet **Life after cancer treatment** has more information about the emotional and practical issues you may face after treatment is over. You can order this from be.macmillan.org.uk Or you can call our free support line on **0808 808 00 00**.



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](https://www.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 online at [macmillan.org.uk/cancerinformation](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/cancerinformation). 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](https://www.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. No one should face cancer alone.

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–Friday, 9am–8pm. Our cancer support specialists can:

- help with any medical questions you have about your cancer or 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](https://www.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](https://www.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 advice 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 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.

Anxiety UK

Tel 08444 775 774

Email support@anxietyuk.org.uk

www.anxietyuk.org.uk

Promotes the relief and rehabilitation of people suffering with anxiety disorders through information and self-help services.

British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP)

Tel 01455 883 300

Email enquiries@bacp.co.uk

www.bacp.co.uk

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

Health and Social Care in Northern Ireland

www.hscni.net

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

Maggie's Centres

Tel 0300 123 1801

Email enquiries@maggiescentres.org

www.maggiescentres.org

Provides information about cancer, benefits advice, and emotional or psychological support.

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

www.nhsinform.co.uk

NHS health information site for Scotland.



You can search for more organisations at **macmillan.org.uk/organisations**

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.

Thanks

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

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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 bookletfeedback@macmillan.org.uk

Butow et al. Fear of cancer recurrence. *Psycho-Oncology*. 3rd edition. Oxford University Press. 2015. 625-7.

Crist, Grunfeld. Factors reported to influence fear of recurrence in cancer patients: a systematic review. *Psycho-Oncology*. 2013. 22(5).

Lebel et al. Addressing fear of cancer recurrence among women with cancer: a feasibility and preliminary outcome study. *Journal of Cancer Survivors*. 2014. 8:485–496.

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

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I enclose a cheque / postal order /
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Macmillan Cancer Support

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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

27530

More than one in three of us will get cancer. For most of us it will be the toughest fight we ever face. And the feelings of isolation and loneliness that so many people experience make it even harder. But you don't have to go through it alone. The Macmillan team is with you every step of the way.

We are the nurses and therapists helping you through treatment. The experts on the end of the phone. The advisers telling you which benefits you're entitled to. The volunteers giving you a hand with the everyday things. The campaigners improving cancer care. The community there for you online, any time. The supporters who make it all possible.

Together, we are all Macmillan Cancer Support.

For cancer support every step of the way, call Macmillan on 0808 808 00 00 (Mon–Fri, 9am–8pm) or visit macmillan.org.uk

Hard of hearing? Use textphone 0808 808 0121, or Text Relay.
Non-English speaker? Interpreters available.
Braille and large print versions on request.

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