

A practical guide to
understanding cancer

UNDERSTANDING MELANOMA

TREATMENT WITH LOCAL SURGERY

**WE ARE
MACMILLAN.
CANCER SUPPORT**



Macmillan and Cancerbackup have merged.
Together we provide free, high quality information for all.

This booklet is one of a series of booklets on melanoma. It gives information about treating melanoma using local surgery. Information about what melanoma is and other treatments for melanoma are covered in other booklets in the series.

Our information booklets on melanoma are:

- *Understanding melanoma*
- *Understanding melanoma – treatment with local surgery*
- *Understanding melanoma – lymph node assessment and treatment*
- *Understanding melanoma – adjuvant treatments after surgery*
- *Understanding melanoma that has come back in the same area*
- *Understanding advanced melanoma*

It's important to check with your hospital consultant or nurse specialist that this is the right booklet for you, and whether you need any additional information.

If you would like more information about these booklets, you can contact our cancer support specialists on **0808 808 00 00**. They will be able to send you the booklet or booklets that contain the information you need.

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About Understanding melanoma – treatment with local surgery

Melanoma is a type of skin cancer that develops from cells called **melanocytes** (see our booklet *Understanding melanoma*). These cells give our skin its colour.

Melanomas are commonly treated with local surgery, known as a **wide local excision**. This is the main treatment for melanoma and usually it's the only treatment that's needed for early-stage melanomas. Further treatment may be needed after surgery if the melanoma has spread to the lymph nodes or if there's a risk that it could come back (see page 15).

This booklet is about treating a melanoma with local surgery. We hope it answers some of your questions and helps you deal with some of the feelings you may have. We've also listed other sources of support and information, which we hope you'll find useful.

We can't advise you about the best treatment for you. This information can only come from your doctor, who knows your full medical history.

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**

Turn to pages 30–38 for some useful addresses, helpful books and websites, and page 39 to write down questions for your doctor or nurse.

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

Planning your treatment

A team of doctors and other staff will work together to decide the best treatment for you. They are known as a **multidisciplinary team (MDT)**, and normally include:

- a **dermatologist**, a doctor specialising in the treatment of skin disorders
- a **plastic surgeon**, a doctor specialising in reconstructive surgery
- **pathologists**, who advise on the type and extent of the melanoma
- a **skin cancer specialist nurse**, who gives information, support and co-ordinates your treatment
- **oncologists**, doctors experienced in cancer treatments.

It may also include other healthcare professionals, such as a psychologist or counsellor.

The MDT will take a number of factors into account when advising you on the best course of action, including your age, general health, the type and size of the tumour and whether it has begun to spread.

Remember to ask your cancer specialist or nurse specialist questions about your treatment, including the benefits and disadvantages of the treatment. Don't be afraid to ask for more information if there's anything you don't understand or feel worried about.

You may find it useful to write down a list of questions you'd like to ask. You could use the form on page 39 to do this. It may also be helpful to take a relative or friend with you when you discuss your treatment.

You can also contact our cancer support specialists on **0808 808 00 00** for information about your treatment.

Giving your consent

Before you have any treatment, your doctor will explain its aims. They'll ask you to sign a form saying that you give permission (consent) for the hospital staff to give you the treatment. No medical treatment can be given without your consent, and before you're asked to sign the form you should be given full information about:

- the type and extent of the treatment
- its benefits and disadvantages
- any significant risks or side effects.

If you don't understand what you've been told, let the staff know straight away so they can explain again. Some cancer treatments are complex, so it's not unusual for people to need explanations repeated.

People sometimes feel that hospital staff are too busy to answer their questions, but it's important for you to know how the treatment is likely to affect you. The staff should be willing to make time for your questions.

You can always ask for more time if you feel you can't make a decision when your treatment is first explained to you.

You're also free to choose not to have the treatment. The staff can explain what may happen if you don't have it. It's essential to tell a doctor or the nurse in charge, so they can record your decision in your medical notes. You don't have to give a reason for not wanting treatment, but it can help to let the staff know your concerns so they can give you the best advice.

Second opinion

Your multidisciplinary team uses national treatment guidelines to decide the most suitable treatment for you. Even so, you may want another medical opinion. If you feel it will be helpful, you can ask either your specialist or GP to refer you to another specialist for a second opinion. Getting a second opinion may delay the start of your treatment, so you and your doctor need to be confident that it will give you useful information.

If you do go for a second opinion, it may be a good idea to take a relative or friend with you, and have a list of questions ready. This will help you make sure your concerns are covered during the discussion.

Our booklet *Making treatment decisions* has more information that you may find helpful.



Surgery

You'll begin by seeing your specialist, who will remove the whole mole during a procedure called an **excision biopsy** (see our booklet *Understanding melanoma*).

After the entire mole has been removed and if the biopsy results show that it was a melanoma, your specialist will advise you to have a wide local excision (see page 10). This is to make sure no melanoma cells are left behind. Very occasionally, if enough normal (non-cancerous) tissue was taken away when your melanoma was removed during the excision biopsy, you might not need to have a wide local excision.

Examination of the lymph nodes

Before you have a wide local excision, your specialist will carry out a physical examination of your lymph nodes to check whether the melanoma has spread to them. This is because the most common place for melanoma cells to spread to is the lymph nodes closest to the melanoma.

Your specialist will examine these nodes to see if they look or feel swollen. For example, if the melanoma was on your leg, they'll examine the lymph nodes behind your knee and in your groin. If it was on your chest, back or abdomen, the lymph nodes in your groin, armpits, above the collar bones and in the neck will be checked.

If any of these lymph nodes are obviously swollen, your specialist will suggest that you have further tests to check your lymph nodes. **Early-stage melanomas rarely spread to the lymph nodes.**

You can read more about these further tests and treatment for affected lymph nodes in our booklet *Understanding melanoma – lymph node assessment and treatment*.

Wide local excision

The surgeon removes a small amount of normal-looking tissue, known as a margin, from all around the area where the melanoma was, including underneath it. This is to make sure that no melanoma cells have been left behind. The amount of tissue that's removed will depend on how far the melanoma has grown into the deeper layers of the skin and tissue. For example, if the melanoma is less than 1mm thick (deep), the margin of tissue removed is usually 1cm. If the melanoma is between 1 and 2mm thick, the margin of tissue removed is 1–2cm. If the melanoma is more than 2mm thick, a margin of up to 3cm of tissue may be removed, depending on where the melanoma is.

You'll probably have the wide local excision under a local anaesthetic in the day surgery unit. This will be the same way that you had your melanoma removed for diagnosis (see our booklet *Understanding melanoma*). It may sometimes be done under a general anaesthetic, depending on how much tissue needs to be removed. The wound can usually be stitched together.

Your specialist nurse will give you information and advice about looking after the wound area. It will look red and sore at first, but this will gradually settle. Your stitches will be removed 5–14 days after the procedure, depending on where the melanoma was. You'll be left with a scar, which is usually small and will eventually fade.

Occasionally, the wound may be too big to stitch together. In this case, you may need to have a skin graft or a skin flap to mend the wound.

Skin grafts

A skin graft is a layer of skin that's taken from another part of the body and placed over the area (**grafted area**) where the melanoma has been removed. The place where the skin is taken from is known as the **donor site** (see below). The amount of skin taken depends on the area to be covered. Your doctor or specialist nurse will tell you more about what to expect.

The grafted area

The grafted area may be secured with stitches. You'll have a dressing over the area, which will be left in place while the graft heals. The skin graft will connect with the blood supply from the area, allowing it to survive. This usually takes 5–7 days. The grafted area will look red and swollen to begin with, but eventually it will heal and the redness will fade.

The donor site

You'll also have a dressing on the donor site to protect it from infection. The length of time the donor site takes to heal will depend on how much skin has been removed. If the donor skin has been taken from the thigh, buttock or upper arm, it may take up to two weeks to heal. If it's been taken from the neck, behind the ears or the inner side of the upper arm, it may only take about five days to heal. The donor area can often feel more uncomfortable than the grafted area, and you may need to take regular painkillers for a while.

After skin graft surgery

After a skin graft, it's usually possible to go home on the same day. But you may need a short stay in hospital, depending on where the graft is and how big it is.

You'll need to take things easy for the first couple of weeks to allow the graft to heal properly. The grafted area will be quite fragile, so it's important not to put pressure on it or rub or brush against it. Depending on where and how big your graft is, you may need to take some time off work until it's healed. If you have young children, you may need some extra help at home until you feel able to do the things you normally do.

Your stitches will be removed 5–14 days after your operation. Some people may have stitches that dissolve and don't need to be removed.

Both the grafted and donor areas of skin will develop scars, which should gradually fade. There will be some difference between the grafted skin and surrounding skin – usually this lessens over time. But some people may have scars that are more noticeable, depending on the amount of skin and tissue that's been removed. The operation to the grafted area will leave a slightly hollowed (concave) area in the skin. Occasionally, there may be some raised scarring.

We have a fact sheet about skin grafts that we can send you.

Skin flaps

A skin flap is a slightly thicker layer of skin taken from an area very close to where the melanoma has been removed. The flap is cut away but left partially connected so it still has a blood supply. It's moved over the wound and stitched in place. If you have a skin flap, you may need to stay in hospital for up to four days after the surgery.

Skin flap surgery is very specialised, so you may have to travel to a different hospital to have it. If you need a skin flap, your doctor will be able to tell you more about it.

Coping with a change in appearance

Some people may have had a melanoma on a visible part of the body, such as the face or neck, and its removal may change their appearance. Others may be left with some scarring from the surgery. Changes in appearance can be difficult to come to terms with. Some skin clinics have a make-up specialist who can advise on the best way to cover up scars. There are also organisations that provide camouflage make-up to cover scars (see pages 30–31).

Coping with a change in how you look can be difficult. It's important to get support and many people find it helps to talk things through with someone close or a trained counsellor. The organisations listed at the end of this booklet can help.

You may also find it helpful to read our booklet *Coping with body changes after cancer*.



Further treatment

If all the melanoma (cancerous) cells have been removed during the surgery and there's no risk that any melanoma cells have spread, no further treatment will be needed.

Sometimes, further tests are needed in addition to local surgery to see whether the melanoma has spread to nearby lymph nodes (see page 9). If these tests show that the lymph nodes are affected, further surgery will be carried out to remove the lymph nodes.

You can read more about tests to check the lymph nodes and removal of the lymph nodes in our booklet *Understanding melanoma – lymph node assessment and treatment*.

Occasionally, other treatments are given after surgery if there's a risk that the melanoma could come back. These are known as adjuvant treatments.

We have information about these treatments in our booklet *Understanding melanoma – adjuvant treatments after surgery*.

Follow-up

After the melanoma has been removed, your skin cancer specialist will want to see you again. How many follow-up appointments you have and how often they are will vary depending on the stage of your melanoma.

If your melanoma was 1mm thick or less and not ulcerated (stage 1A), it's likely you'll have follow-up appointments for 12 months after diagnosis. This is because the risk of a thin melanoma coming back is very small. UK guidelines recommend that you should be seen two to four times over the 12 months. In these appointments you'll be shown how to check the scar, the surrounding skin and lymph nodes closest to where the melanoma was. The team will also show you how to check your skin for further melanomas and will give you advice on protecting yourself from the sun.

After the 12 months, it's likely that you'll be discharged. You'll be told how to get in touch with the team again if you're worried that your melanoma has come back or if you notice any new moles that you're worried about.

People who have melanomas that are ulcerated and/or thicker than 1mm (stage 1B and above) are usually seen every three months for three years. After this, they tend to be seen every six months for two years. Further follow-up once a year after this period may be recommended for some people.

If you had a melanoma in situ, the very earliest stage of melanoma, it's likely that you'll only be seen once after it's been removed.

At the clinic

Your doctor or specialist nurse will examine your scar and the surrounding area. They'll also check the lymph nodes close to the area where the melanoma was removed.

If your melanoma was in the:

- **Leg** – The lymph nodes behind your knees and in your groin will be checked.
- **Chest, back or abdomen** – The lymph nodes in your groin, armpits, above the collar bones and in the neck will be checked.
- **Arm** – The lymph nodes around the elbow, above your collar bones and in the lower neck will be checked.
- **Head or neck area** – The lymph nodes in the side of your neck, under the chin, above the collar bones, behind your ears and at the back of your neck will be checked.

Some people may have photographs of their skin taken and some of their moles measured. This is just a way of comparing and keeping a check on any changes that may develop.

What to look for

Your specialist nurse or doctor will advise you on what to look for and how to examine yourself for any signs of the original melanoma coming back or another melanoma developing. It's important to do this at least once a month. This is because of the risk of getting another primary melanoma and the small risk of your melanoma coming back. The earlier anything like this is picked up, the more chance there is of curing it.

You'll be asked to check (by looking and feeling):

- your scar and the surrounding area
- the lymph nodes nearby
- your skin, from head to toe, for any new or changing moles – the ABCDE list below will give you an idea of what to look for.

The ABCDE checklist

- **A**symmetry – Melanomas are likely to be irregular or asymmetrical. Ordinary moles are usually symmetrical (both halves look the same).
- **B**order – Melanomas are more likely to have an irregular border with jagged edges. Ordinary moles usually have a well-defined, regular border.
- **C**olour – Melanomas tend to be more than one colour. They may have different shades, such as brown mixed with a black, red, pink, white or bluish tint. Normal moles tend to be one shade of brown.
- **D**iameter (width) – Melanomas are usually more than 7mm in diameter. Moles are normally no bigger than the blunt end of a pencil (about 6mm across).
- **E**volving (changing) – Look for changes in the size, shape or colour of a mole.

A good time to check your skin is after a bath or shower. Make sure you have plenty of light. Use a full length mirror and a small hand-held mirror for areas that are hard to reach. This will get easier with time, as you become more familiar with your

skin and what your moles normally look like. You can ask your partner, a relative or friend to look at your back, neck and parts of your skin that are hard to see.

After melanoma

Most people with a thin melanoma will be cured, and getting back to normal after surgery is usually straightforward.

Skincare in the sun

After any treatment for melanoma, it's important to make sure you protect your skin from the sun. This reduces the chance of developing another melanoma.

Protecting yourself from the sun doesn't mean that you can no longer enjoy sunshine or have holidays in sunny countries. But you'll need to take sensible precautions that will, in time, become part of your normal routine. There are a number of things you can do to protect your skin and ensure it doesn't burn:

- Stay out of the sun or strong sunlight during the hottest part of the day – usually between 11am and 3pm.
- Wear clothing made of cotton or natural fibres that has a close weave and gives more protection against the sun.
- Keep your legs and arms covered by wearing long sleeves and trousers. Wear a wide-brimmed hat to protect your face, neck and ears.
- Always wear sunglasses in strong sunlight.

- Use a high-factor sunscreen (SPF 30 or above) whenever you're exposed to the sun. Follow the instructions on the bottle and re-apply it as recommended, especially after swimming. Choose one that protects against both UVA and UVB radiation (broad spectrum).
- Don't use sunscreen instead of other methods of protecting your skin. Some people think that if they use sunscreen they can stay out in the sun for longer. But the best protection is to cover up and to stay out of strong sunlight.
- Avoid using a sunbed or sunlamp. If it's important for you to look tanned, use fake tanning lotions or sprays.

If you have a skin condition and use a sunbed as part of your treatment, your dermatologist will advise you to stop using the sunbed.

- Talk to your doctor about whether you should take vitamin D supplements if you always keep your skin covered.

Help us raise awareness

As well as protecting yourself from a further melanoma, you might want to use your experience to help protect your family, friends and others from the disease.

If you'd like to help us raise awareness of melanoma, call us on **0808 808 00 00** and ask one of our cancer support specialists about what opportunities you can get involved in.

Pregnancy

Having a family can be an important part of moving on with life after cancer. If you're thinking of becoming pregnant or fathering a child after you've been treated for melanoma, talk to your specialist first. In some situations they may advise you to avoid having children for a couple of years after your diagnosis, as this is the most likely time for melanoma to come back.

For women who do become pregnant, there's no evidence that pregnancy is more likely to make a melanoma come back.

Coping with feelings

Most people feel overwhelmed when they are told they have cancer and experience many different emotions. Even if your melanoma is cured, you may still feel anxious and upset for a while. These feelings are part of the process people go through while dealing with their illness. You may find it helpful to read our booklet *The emotional effects of cancer*, which discusses the feelings you may have and how to cope with them.

Talking to family and friends about how you are feeling often helps. You can also get support and advice from your doctor or specialist nurse, or you may want to contact one of our cancer support specialists on **0808 808 00 00**.

Occasionally some people need support from a trained counsellor. If you think you need more support and would like to see a counsellor, talk to your specialist or GP as they can usually refer you to one.

Making lifestyle changes

After your treatment, you may want to think about making changes to your lifestyle and find out more about healthy living. Perhaps you already followed a healthy lifestyle before your cancer, but you may now want to be more focused on making the most of your health. There are things you can do to help your body recover. These can also help improve your sense of wellbeing and lower your risk of getting other illnesses and some cancers.

Eat well and keep to a healthy weight

Eat plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables (at least five portions a day) and eat more high-fibre foods. Cut down on red meat, animal fats and salted, pickled and smoked foods. Stick with sensible drinking guidelines.

Our booklet *Eating well after cancer treatment* has more helpful advice on nutrition.

Regular exercise

This can be an important part of your recovery after treatment. It can improve your sense of well being and build up your energy levels. It reduces the risk of heart disease, stroke, diabetes and bone thinning (osteoporosis). Talk to your cancer specialist or GP before you start. Start slowly and increase your activity over time.

You can read more about exercise and its benefits in our booklet *Physical activity and cancer treatment*.

Stop smoking

If you're a smoker, speak to your doctor or call a stop smoking helpline for further advice and to find out where your local stop smoking service is.

Our booklet *Giving up smoking* has more advice and tips to help you succeed.

Share your experience

When treatment finishes, many people find it helps to talk about it and share their thoughts, feelings and advice with other people.

This can be especially helpful for other people with melanoma who are perhaps about to start their treatment. Just hearing about how you've coped, what side effects you had and how you managed them is very helpful to someone in a similar situation.

We can help you share your story. Call us on **0808 808 00 00** or visit our website **[macmillan.org.uk/CancerVoices](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/CancerVoices)** for more information about becoming a Cancer Voice.



How we can help you

Macmillan Cancer Support

89 Albert Embankment,
London SE1 7UQ

General enquiries

020 7840 7840

Questions about living with cancer?

Call free on **0808 808 00 00**

(Mon–Fri, 9am–8pm)

Alternatively, visit

macmillan.org.uk

Hard of hearing?

Use textphone 0808 808 0121, or Text Relay.

Non-English speaker?

Interpreters available.

Macmillan Cancer Support improves the lives of people affected by cancer. We are a source of support: providing practical, medical, emotional and financial help. We are a force for change: listening to people affected by cancer and working together to improve cancer care locally and nationally.

We have a wide variety of services and activities that might be of help and interest.

Clear, reliable information

We provide expert, up-to-date information about cancer – the different types, tests and treatments, and living with the condition.

We can help you by phone, email, via our website and publications, or in person. And our information is free to all – people with cancer, families and friends, as well as professionals.

Just call and speak to one of our cancer support specialists. Or visit one of our information and support centres – based in hospitals, libraries and mobile centres – and speak with someone face-to-face.

Need out-of-hours support? Someone to talk to

Our phone service is open Monday–Friday, 9am–8pm. At any time of day, you can find a lot of information on our website, **macmillan.org.uk**, or join our online community at **macmillan.org.uk/community**. For medical attention out of hours, please contact your GP for their ‘out-of-hours’ service.

The following organisations can offer immediate information and support:

NHS Direct 0845 4647
www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk

NHS Scotland
08454 24 24 24
www.nhs24.com

Samaritans 0845 790 9090
www.samaritans.org

When you, or someone close to you, has cancer, it can be difficult sometimes to talk about how you’re feeling. You can call our cancer support specialists to talk about how you feel and what’s worrying you.

Alternatively, we can help you find support in your local area, so you can speak face-to-face with people who understand what you’re going through.

Professional help

Our Macmillan nurses, doctors and other health and social care professionals offer expert treatment and care. They help individuals and families deal with cancer from diagnosis onwards, until people decide they no longer need this help.

You can ask your GP, hospital consultant, district nurse or hospital ward sister if there are any Macmillan professionals available in your area, or call us.

Support for each other

No one knows more about the impact cancer has on a person's life than those who have been affected by the disease themselves. That's why we help to bring people with cancer and carers together in their communities and online.

You can find people affected by cancer who meet in your area to support each other by calling us or by visiting **macmillan.org.uk/selfhelpandsupport**

You can also share your experiences, ask questions and get support from others by heading to our online community at **macmillan.org.uk/community**

Review our information

Help us make our resources even better for people affected by cancer. Being one of our reviewers gives you the chance to comment on a variety of information including booklets, fact sheets, leaflets and website text.

Financial and work-related support

Having cancer can bring extra costs such as hospital parking, travel fares and higher heating bills. Some people may have to stop working.

If you've been affected in this way, we can help. All you need to do is call our helpline and one of our specialists will tell you about the benefits and other financial help you may be entitled to.

We can also give you information about your rights as an employee, and help you find further support.

Helping you to help yourself

Many people affected by cancer want to take control of their lives again and regain their independence. We help you do this by providing opportunities to learn how to manage the impact cancer can have on your life.

You can do this online through our Learn Zone – **macmillan.org.uk/learnzone** – which offers a variety of courses and information.

We produce booklets on specific cancers and treatments to help you manage the disease and side effects. And we provide a variety of face-to-face training that offers practical advice to help you help yourself.

Other useful organisations

Melanoma support organisations

Skin Cancer Research Fund (SCaRF)

SCaRF Office, Department of Plastic Surgery, Frenchay Hospital, Bristol BS16 1LE
Tel 0117 340 3130

Email

Caroline.Newton@nbt.nhs.uk

www.skin-cancer-research-fund.org.uk

Centre for the treatment of skin cancer, particularly melanoma. Offers a psychological support service for anyone affected by a disfigurement.

Wessex Cancer Trust MARCS Line

Dermatology Treatment Centre, Salisbury District Hospital, Salisbury SP2 8BJ

Helpline 01722 415 071
(Mon–Fri, 8.30am–5pm)

Email

MARCSLine@salisbury.nhs.uk

www.wessexcancer.org

This helpline provides a skin

cancer information service for patients, families, health professionals and the general public. Can also provide free printed information.

Living with a change in appearance

The British Association of Skin Camouflage (BASC)

PO Box 3671,
Chester CH1 9QH
Tel 01254 703 107

Email

info@skin-camouflage.net

www.skin-camouflage.net

Shows people how to use make-up as skin camouflage. Holds camouflage awareness presentations, and demonstrations for healthcare professionals and patient support groups.

Changing Faces

The Squire Centre,
33–37 University Street,
London WC1E 6JN

Tel 0845 4500 275
(Mon–Fri, 9am–5pm)

Email

info@changingfaces.org.uk
www.changingfaces.org.uk
and **www.iface.org.uk**

(website for young people)
Offers support and information to children, young people and adults who have any sort of disfigurement, and their families. Helps people build effective coping strategies and self-confidence. Also works with healthcare professionals, schools and employers to promote awareness about disfigurement.

General cancer support organisations

Cancer Black Care

79 Acton Lane,
London NW10 8UT
Tel 020 8961 4151
(Mon–Fri, 9.30am–4.30pm)

Email

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

Offers a variety of information and support for people with cancer from ethnic communities, their families, carers and friends. Welcomes

people from different ethnic groups including African, Asian, Turkish and African-Caribbean communities.

Irish Cancer Society

43–45 Northumberland Road,
Dublin 4, Ireland

Cancer Helpline

1 800 200 700 (Mon–Thurs,
9am–7pm, Fri, 9am–5pm)

Email helpline@irishcancer.ie

www.cancer.ie

Operates Ireland’s only freephone cancer helpline, which is staffed by qualified nurses trained in cancer care.

Maggie’s Cancer Caring Centres

8 Newton Place,
Glasgow G3 7PR
Tel 0300 123 1801

Email

enquiries@maggiescentres.org
www.maggiescentres.org

Located throughout the country, Maggie’s Centres offer free, comprehensive support for anyone affected by cancer. You can access information, benefits advice, and emotional or psychological support.

Tak Tent Cancer

Support – Scotland

Flat 5, 30 Shelley Court,
Gartnavel Complex,
Glasgow G12 0YN

Tel 0141 211 0122

Email taktent4u@gmail.com

www.taktent.org

Offers information and support to cancer patients, families, friends, and healthcare professionals. Runs a network of monthly support groups across Scotland. Also provides counselling and complementary therapies.

Tenovus

9th Floor, Gleider House,
Ty Glas Road, Llanishen,
Cardiff CF14 5BD

Freephone helpline

0808 808 1010

Tel 029 2076 8850

Email post@tenovus.org.uk

www.tenovus.org.uk

Provides a variety of services to people with cancer and their families, including counselling and a freephone cancer helpline.

The Ulster

Cancer Foundation

40–44 Eglantine Avenue,
Belfast BT9 6DX

Freephone helpline

0800 783 3339

Helpline email

infocis@ulstercancer.org

Tel 028 9066 3281

Email info@ulstercancer.org

www.ulstercancer.org

Provides a variety of services to people with cancer and their families including a free telephone helpline, which is staffed by specially trained nurses with experience in cancer care.

Counselling and emotional support

British Association

for Counselling and

Psychotherapy (BACP)

BACP House,

15 St John's Business Park,
Lutterworth LE17 4HB

Tel 01455 883 300

Email enquiries@bacp.co.uk

www.bacp.co.uk

Promotes awareness and availability of counselling, and signposts people to

appropriate services. Has a database on the website where you can search for a qualified counsellor.

United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy (UKCP)

2nd Floor, Edward House,
2 Wakley Street,
London EC1V 7LT

Tel 020 7014 9955

Email info@ukcp.org.uk

www.psychotherapy.org.uk

Holds the national register of psychotherapeutic counsellors, listing those practitioner members who meet exacting standards and training requirements.

Money or legal advice and information

Benefit Enquiry Line

2nd Floor, Red Rose House,
Lancaster Road, Preston,
Lancashire PR1 1HB

Freephone 0800 882 200

Textphone 0800 243 355

Email BEL-Customer-Services@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

www.direct.gov.uk/en/D11/Directories/DG_10011165

Provides advice about benefits,

and can also provide help with the completion of some disability related claim packs.

Citizens Advice

Provides free, confidential, independent advice on a variety of issues including financial, legal, housing and employment. Find contact details for your local office in the phone book or at

citizensadvice.org.uk

Find advice for the UK online, in a variety of languages, at **adviceguide.org.uk**

Citizens Advice Scotland

www.cas.org.uk

The Personal Finance Society – ‘Find an Adviser’ service

42–48 High Road,
South Woodford,
London E18 2JP

Tel 020 8530 0852

Email info@findanadviser.org

www.findanadviser.org

The UK’s largest professional body for independent financial advisers. Use the ‘Find an Adviser’ website to find qualified financial advisers in your area.

Unbiased Ltd

117 Farringdon Road,
London EC1R 3BX

Email

ifacontact@unbiased.co.uk

www.unbiased.co.uk

Helps people search for details of local member independent financial advisers and online at **unbiased.co.uk** and **moneymadeclear.org.uk**

Support for carers

Carers UK

20 Great Dover Street,
London SE1 4LX

Tel 020 7378 4999

Advice Line 0808 808 7777

(Weds and Thurs,
10am–12pm and 2–4pm)

Email info@carersuk.org

Advice Line email

adviceline@carersuk.org

www.carersuk.org

Offers information and support to carers. Can put people in contact with support groups for carers in their area. Has national offices for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland:

Carers Scotland

The Cottage, 21 Pearce
Street, Glasgow G51 3UT

Tel 0141 445 3070

Email

info@carerscotland.org

www.carerscotland.org

Carers Wales

River House, Ynsbridge
Court, Gwaelod-y-Garth,
Cardiff CF15 9SS

Tel 029 2081 1370

Email info@carerswales.org

www.carerswales.org

Carers Northern Ireland

58 Howard Street,
Belfast BT1 6PJ

Tel 028 9043 9843

Email info@carersni.org

www.carersni.org

Support for children and teenagers

Teenage Cancer Trust

3rd Floor, 93 Newman Street,
London W1T 3EZ

Tel 020 7612 0370

Email from website

**www.teenagecancer
trust.org**

A charity devoted to improving the lives of teenagers and young adults with cancer. Runs a support network for young people with cancer and their friends and families. They also raise funds to build dedicated teenage cancer units in hospitals.

Further resources

Related Macmillan information

You may want to order some of the booklets mentioned in this booklet. These include:

- *Coping with body changes after cancer*
- *Eating well after cancer treatment*
- *Giving up smoking*
- *Making treatment decisions*
- *Physical activity and cancer treatment*
- *The emotional effects of cancer*

Other booklets in this series:

- *Understanding melanoma*
- *Understanding melanoma – adjuvant treatments after surgery*
- *Understanding melanoma – lymph node assessment and treatment*

- *Understanding melanoma that has come back in the same area*
- *Understanding advanced melanoma*

To order, visit **be.macmillan.org.uk** To order the fact sheets mentioned in this booklet, call **0808 808 00 00**. This information is also available online at **macmillan.org.uk/cancerinformation**

Audio resources

Our high-quality audio materials, based on our variety of booklets, include information about cancer types, different treatments and about living with cancer.

To order your free CD, visit **be.macmillan.org.uk** or call **0808 808 00 00**.

Useful websites

A lot of information about cancer is available on the internet. Some websites are excellent, others have

misleading or out-of-date information.

The sites listed here are considered by nurses and doctors to contain accurate information and are regularly updated.

www.macmillan.org.uk (Macmillan Cancer Support)

Find out more about living with the practical, emotional and financial effects of cancer. Our website contains expert, accurate and up-to-date information on cancer and its treatments, including:

- our 100+ booklets, 300+ fact sheets, and videos featuring real-life stories from people affected by cancer and information from medical professionals
- how Macmillan can help, the services we offer and where to get support
- how to contact our cancer support specialists, including an email form to send your questions

- local support groups search, links to other cancer organisations and a directory of information materials
- a huge online community of people affected by cancer sharing their experiences, advice and support.

www.cancer.org
(American Cancer Society)
Nationwide community-based voluntary health organisation dedicated to eliminating cancer as a major health problem. It aims to do this through research, education, advocacy and service.

www.cancerhelp.org.uk
(Cancer Research UK)
Contains patient information on all types of cancer and has a clinical trials database.

www.healthtalkonline.org
www.youthhealthtalk.org
(site for young people)
Both websites contain information about cancer,

and have video and audio clips of people talking about their experiences.

www.macmillan.org.uk/
CancerVoices
(Macmillan Cancer Voices)
Macmillan Cancer Voices is 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.

www.cancer.gov
(National Cancer Institute – National Institute of Health – USA)
Gives comprehensive information on cancer and its treatments.

www.nhs.uk
(NHS Choices)
NHS Choices is the online ‘front door’ to the NHS. It is the country’s biggest health website and gives all the information you need to make decisions about your health.

**www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk
(NHS Direct Online)**

NHS information site for England. Covers all aspects of health, illness and treatments.

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

**www.nhs24.com
(NHS 24 in Scotland)**

**www.n-i.nhs.uk
(Health and Social Care in Northern Ireland)**

The official gateway to health and social care services in Northern Ireland.

**www.patient.co.uk
(Patient UK)**

Provides information about health and disease. Includes evidence-based information leaflets on a wide variety of health topics. Also reviews and links to many health- and illness-related websites.

**www.riprap.org.uk
(Riprap)**

Developed especially for teenagers who have a parent with cancer.

**www.click4tic.org.uk
(TIC – Teen Info on Cancer)**

Macmillan’s cancer information site written specifically for young people. Get advice and support on how to cope with cancer, and join a community of young people.

Questions you might like to ask your doctor or nurse

You can fill this in before you see the doctor or nurse then use it to remind yourself of the questions you want to ask and the answers you receive.

1.

Answer

2.

Answer

3.

Answer

4.

Answer

5.

Answer

6.

Answer

Notes

Notes

Disclaimer

We make every effort to ensure that the information we provide is accurate, but it should not be relied upon to reflect the current state of medical research, which is constantly changing. If you are concerned about your health, you should consult a doctor. Macmillan cannot accept liability for any loss or damage resulting from any inaccuracy in this information or third-party information, such as information on websites to which we link. We feature real-life stories in all of our articles.

Some photographs are of models.

Thanks

This booklet has been written, revised and edited by Macmillan Cancer Support's Cancer Information Development team. It has been approved by our medical editor, Dr Terry Priestman, Consultant Clinical Oncologist.

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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 regular or 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 almost a third more to us – at no extra cost to you. All you have to do is write your name below, and the tax office will give 25p for every pound you give.

- I am a UK taxpayer and I would like Macmillan Cancer Support to treat all donations I have made for the six years prior to this year and all donations I make in future as Gift Aid donations, until I notify you otherwise.

I understand that I must pay an amount of Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax for each tax year (6 April one year to 5 April the next) that is at least equal to the amount of tax that Macmillan will reclaim on my gifts for that tax year.

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

Cancer is the toughest fight most of us will ever face. If you or a loved one has been diagnosed, you need a team of people in your corner, supporting you every step of the way. That's who we are.

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 supporting you online, any time. The fundraisers who make it all possible.

You don't have to face cancer alone.
We can give you the strength to get through it.
We are Macmillan Cancer Support.

Questions about living with cancer?
Call free on 0808 808 00 00 (Mon–Fri, 9am–8pm)
Alternatively, visit macmillan.org.uk

Hard of hearing? Use textphone
0808 808 0121, or Text Relay.
Non-English speaker? Interpreters available.

 The Information Standard	This organisation has been certified as a producer of reliable health and social care information.
Certified member	www.theinformationstandard.org

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