

# Patient or carer's support group

You do not need to cope with cancer on your own. For many people, family or friends are a main source of support. During your treatment, it is important to [communicate](#) with those around you. But it is not always easy to talk to people you are close to. You may find it easier to talk to someone outside your family. There are many ways you can get the support you need.

You may want to write down what is important to you. You can keep track of how you are feeling in the [My records](#) booklet. You can show this to your support network or healthcare team. This can help them understand the areas of your life you need support with. You can order a My records booklet for free from [be.macmillan.org](http://be.macmillan.org)

[Self-help or support groups](#) offer a chance to talk to other people in a similar situation. Other people may be facing the same challenges as you. Joining a group can be helpful if you live alone, or do not feel able to talk about your feelings with the people around you. However, not everyone finds talking in a group easy, so it might not be right for you. You can go and see what the group session is like before you decide.

Some groups offer support for people with different types of cancer. Other groups are for people with a specific type of cancer, such as a breast cancer group. Support groups can help carers, family and friends cope with what is happening, [learn how to help you](#) and take care of themselves.

## Benefits of joining a support group

Joining a support group can help you:

- gain a sense of community and know that you are not alone
- learn from the experience of others
- join in activities to support your well-being
- share common feelings and coping strategies.

## Tips for finding a support group

- To find a support group in your area, visit [macmillan.org.uk/inyourarea](http://macmillan.org.uk/inyourarea) or call the Macmillan Support Line on **0808 808 00 00**.
- Many people find support on the internet. You may want to join online support groups such as the [Macmillan Online Community](#). Or you can join social networking sites, forums, chat rooms or blogs.
- Macmillan has information and support centres in hospitals and libraries. These are places you can talk with someone face to face and get written information. Most centres also have a room where you can speak with someone privately. Find [your nearest centre](#) or call us on **0808 808 00 00**.
- Macmillan's free, confidential [support line](#) and webchat are open 7 days a week, 8am to 8pm. Our cancer support specialists can help with any medical questions, provide financial guidance and be there to listen if you need someone to talk to.
- Our nurses, doctors and other health and social care professionals give expert care and support to individuals and their families. Call us on **0808 808 00 00** or ask your healthcare team if there are any Macmillan professionals near you.
- Sometimes it can help to talk to a counsellor. A counsellor is a trained professional who can listen and help you explore your feelings. Many NHS services, including GPs and hospitals, have a counsellor you can talk to. Or you can refer yourself to a counselling service. Visit [nhs.uk](http://nhs.uk) for more information.
- Some support groups, and charities such as Mind, offer free counselling services.

## Macmillan Cancer Support resources

We have more information on our [website](#), including audiobooks. Or you can order our free booklets and leaflets on [be.macmillan.org.uk](http://be.macmillan.org.uk) such as:

- [How are you feeling? The emotional effects of cancer](#)
- [How are you feeling? The emotional effects of cancer audiobook](#)
- [The cancer guide](#)
- [Talking about cancer](#)
- [Talking about cancer and your feelings – easy read](#)
- [Your feelings after cancer treatment.](#)

We produce information in a [range of formats](#) and [languages](#). To order these, visit our website or call our support line.

## Further Macmillan support

If you have more questions or would like to talk to someone, call the Macmillan Support Line free on **0808 808 00 00**, 7 days a week, 8am to 8pm. Or visit [macmillan.org.uk](http://macmillan.org.uk) where you can [chat online](#) to one of our team.

Deaf or hard of hearing? Call using NGT (Text Relay) on **18001 0808 808 00 00**, or use the NGT Lite app. Speak another language? Telephone interpreters are available. Please tell us in English the language you would like to use.

Or if you want to share your experiences or ask questions, you can find others who understand on our [Online Community](#).

Our free [Macmillan Buddy service](#) can arrange weekly calls or visits with a friendly volunteer who understands what you're going through.

## Other useful contact details

- Cancer Black Care – visit [www.cancerblackcare.org.uk](http://www.cancerblackcare.org.uk) or call **020 8961 4151**
- Macmillan Cancer Support – find a support group near you – visit [www.macmillan.org.uk/inyourarea](http://www.macmillan.org.uk/inyourarea)
- Mind – visit [www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk) or call **0300 123 3393**
- Self Help UK – visit [www.selfhelp.org.uk](http://www.selfhelp.org.uk) or call **0115 911 1661**

## Notes and questions

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