

# Pain

For most people, pain can be managed using:

- [different medicines](#)
- [non-drug treatments](#), including complementary therapies and things you can do yourself.

Treating pain involves finding the pain relief that works best for you. Pain control is more effective when it starts as soon as possible. It should continue for as long as you need it. Getting emotional support can also help to relieve pain.

There are many different types of painkillers and other drugs that help control pain. They can be given as:

- tablets or capsules
- a liquid
- skin patches, gels or creams
- tablets you absorb through the lining of your mouth
- an injection under the skin, or into a vein
- a continuous injection under the skin through a small pump
- suppositories put into the back passage (rectum).

Treatments such as radiotherapy, surgery or a nerve block can also be used to treat pain.

## Tips to help with pain

- It is important to tell your doctor or nurse if you have pain and how it affects you. If your pain is well managed, you can stay more positive and active.
- Describe your pain clearly. Explain where it is, what it is like, when it happens and anything that makes it better or worse. It may help to keep a [pain diary](#) to describe your pain.
- Take any painkillers or other drugs as they have been prescribed. The pharmacist or nurse can give you advice about this. If the pain gets worse, tell your doctor or nurse. Then they can treat it before it becomes harder to control. You may need your painkiller dose adjusted, or a different painkiller.
- Some people get [side effects](#) from painkillers, especially strong painkillers. But they will not affect everyone, and most side effects improve after a few days. If you have any side effects, let your doctor know straight away. They can change your dose of painkiller or give you another type.
- You may find it helps to do something to distract you from pain. You could try watching TV, listening to music or talking to a friend.
- Some types of gentle exercise, such as walking, may help to manage pain. [Exercise](#) can help relieve stress, distract you and give you more energy.
- Being in pain can affect how you think and feel. You may feel angry, frustrated, frightened or isolated. Talking to a family member, friend or partner about your feelings may help. If you need more specialist help, your doctor or nurse may refer you to a counsellor or psychologist.
- [Talking therapies](#) such as cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) may help you to manage pain. Meditation techniques such as mindfulness may also help.
- If you would like to try a [complementary therapy](#), always talk to your doctor first. Complementary therapies should not replace any treatments prescribed by your doctor.

## 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](#)
- [Managing cancer pain](#)
- [Managing the symptoms of cancer](#)
- [Talking about cancer and your feelings – easy read.](#)

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.

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

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

## Other useful contact details

- Action on Pain – visit [www.action-on-pain.co.uk](http://www.action-on-pain.co.uk) or call **0345 603 1593**
- British Pain Society – visit [www.britishpainsociety.org](http://www.britishpainsociety.org) or call **0207 269 7840**
- Pain Concern – visit [www.painconcern.org.uk](http://www.painconcern.org.uk) or call **0300 123 0789**

## Notes and questions

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---