

Ask about your cancer treatment



About this booklet

This booklet aims to help you find out more about cancer treatments. It is for anyone who has been diagnosed with cancer. You may also find this booklet helpful if you want to support a partner, family member or friend who is having cancer treatment.

The booklet suggests questions you can ask your healthcare team. There are questions to help you understand:

- your diagnosis
- your treatment
- the benefits and risks of different treatment options
- the practical and financial help available to you.

Some questions may be more useful than others. This will depend on your treatment and your situation.

We cannot give advice about the best treatment for you. You should talk to your doctor, who knows your medical history.

How to use this booklet

This booklet is split into sections to help you find what you need. You do not have to read it from start to finish. You can use the [contents list](#) to help you.

At the [end of the booklet](#) there are details of other organisations that can help.

There is also [space to write down questions and notes](#) for your doctor or nurse.

Quotes

In this booklet, we have included quotes about talking to healthcare professionals which you may find helpful. These are from people who have chosen to share their story with us. To share your experience, visit macmillan.org.uk/shareyourstory

For more information

If you have more questions or would like to talk to someone, call the Macmillan Support Line free on [0808 808 00 00](tel:08088080000), 7 days a week, 8am to 8pm, or visit macmillan.org.uk

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

If you are deaf or hard of hearing, call us using NGT (Text Relay) on [18001 0808 808 00 00](tel:1800108088080000), or use the NGT Lite app.

We have some information in different languages and formats, including audio, eBooks, easy read, Braille, large print and translations. To order these, visit macmillan.org.uk/otherformats or call [0808 808 00 00](tel:08088080000).

Your data and the cancer registry

When you are diagnosed with cancer, some information about you, your diagnosis and your treatment is collected by a cancer registry.

The information is used to help understand cancer in the UK better. This is important for planning and improving health and care services. It can be used to ensure that people living with cancer get the best possible care and support.

Hospitals automatically send information to the cancer registry. There are strict rules about how the information is stored, accessed and used. Information about health is sensitive, so by law it has to be kept under the highest levels of security.

If you have any questions, talk to your doctor or nurse. 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



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Asking questions

You probably have lots of questions about your treatment. Understanding what is happening, and why, can make you feel more involved in your care. It can also make it easier to make decisions.

Your main point of contact at the hospital is your key worker. This is usually your clinical nurse specialist. A team of healthcare professionals, called a multidisciplinary team (MDT), is responsible for your treatment and care. Members of your MDT and your key worker can answer any questions you have. They can also refer you to other people who can help.

Difficult questions

Some questions may be difficult to ask, particularly when they are about very personal issues. For example, you might want to talk about the impact that cancer and its treatment are having on your sex life. Or you may want to ask about symptoms you are experiencing that feel embarrassing.

You may feel embarrassed or afraid to ask these questions. But healthcare professionals are used to all kinds of questions and are happy to help.

5 top tips for asking questions

You may have questions you wish to ask your healthcare team. Here are some tips to help you get the answers you need.

1. Plan your questions

Appointments and other chances to speak with your healthcare team can be short. To make the best use of your time, it is good to be prepared. We have information to help you prepare for an appointment. Visit [macmillan.org.uk/talk-healthcare-team](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/talk-healthcare-team)

It may help to write down your questions before your appointment. Keep a notebook handy and write things as you think of them, or you can [order a free Macmillan organiser](#).

“ I'd recommend that people with cancer write everything down that they can at their appointments. It's vital that you are told a plan so you can get the best outcome. ”

Karen, diagnosed with endometrial cancer

2. Keep notes

You can make notes during appointments in a notebook or the [Macmillan organiser](#). This may help you to remember what is said. You can also get copies of any documents your cancer doctor or healthcare team sends to your GP. This might include information about your test results or treatment.

Some healthcare professionals may be happy for you to record consultations using a voice recorder or smartphone. You must ask their permission first.

3. Ask someone to come with you

You may find it helpful to bring someone with you to appointments, such as a family member, friend or carer. They may also be able to make notes while you talk to the healthcare professional, and help you to remember what is said.

You may prefer to bring someone with you for support who is not a family member or friend. These people are called advocates. Advocates are independent of social services and the NHS. They can help you:

- understand and remember information
- talk about your thoughts and feelings
- make decisions about your treatment and care.

You can find more information about patient advocate services on the [NHS website](#).

4. Do not feel you have to ask everything at once

You do not have to ask all your questions at once. There will be other chances to speak to your healthcare team. It is fine if you think of new questions or need to ask a question again. You can make another appointment, or speak to your healthcare team over the phone. Some healthcare professionals can also be contacted by email.

Your key worker should give you their contact details so that you can talk over the phone or arrange a face-to-face meeting. You can use this to go over anything you do not understand or need them to repeat.

5. Remember that professionals are there to help

You may have questions that feel difficult to ask. Remember that the healthcare professionals you speak to will be used to talking to people with all sorts of issues. They are there to help. It is very likely they will have helped other people in similar situations.

Who you can ask

If you have questions, you might talk to someone in your healthcare team, another professional, or someone who has been in the same situation.

Your healthcare team

Depending on the type of cancer you have and how it is treated, you may meet some, or all, of these healthcare professionals:

- Surgeon – a doctor who does operations (surgery).
- Oncologist – a doctor who treats people who have cancer.
- Haematologist – a doctor who diagnoses and treats blood disorders and cancers.
- Pathologist – a doctor who looks at cells or body tissue under a microscope to diagnose cancer.
- Clinical nurse specialist – a nurse who gives information about cancer, and support during treatment.
- Radiographer – someone who plans and gives radiotherapy, and supports people during radiotherapy treatment
- Radiologist – a doctor who looks at scans and x-rays to diagnose problems.
- Palliative care doctors and nurses – doctors and nurses who help with symptom control and end-of-life care.
- Oncology pharmacist – someone who gives out medicines and gives advice about taking medicines used to treat cancer.

You may also meet other health or social care professionals, including the following:

- Physiotherapist – someone who gives advice about exercise and mobility.
- Occupational therapist – someone who gives information, support and aids to help people with tasks such as washing and dressing.
- Dietitian – someone who gives information and advice about food and food supplements
- Counsellor – someone who is trained to listen to people's problems and help them find ways to cope.
- Psychologist – someone who gives advice about managing feelings and behaviours.
- Social worker – someone who can help sort out practical and financial problems.

Your GP and practice nurse may also be involved in your treatment and care.

Your care will be managed by a multidisciplinary team (MDT). This is a group of different professionals who work together to manage your treatment and care.

Your key worker is your main point of contact at the hospital. They can answer any questions you have, or refer you to other people who can help.

If you have a question about a particular cancer medicine, you may be able to ask an oncology pharmacist in the pharmacy department at your hospital or treatment centre.

Financial specialists

It is normal to worry about money when you or someone in your family has cancer. For example, you may have to pay to travel to hospital. Or you may have higher energy bills, if you stay at home more often.

You can call 0808 808 00 00 to speak to our experienced financial advisers. They can help with personal finance issues or claiming benefits. You could also speak to [Citizens Advice in England, Scotland or Wales](#) and [Advice NI](#) in Northern Ireland for advice over the telephone or face-to-face.

Social services

You might have questions about getting support at home. For example, you may need help with tasks like shopping or cleaning. Or you may have care needs.

Your GP or a member of your healthcare team may refer you to social services if they think you need help with some of these issues.

If you have been referred to social services, you can ask them about any practical issues you have. They can also help with financial problems.

Other people affected by cancer

If you have questions about your condition and treatment, you should ask your healthcare team. However, you may have questions you want to ask someone who is going through a similar experience to you.

You could speak with other people affected by cancer:

- at a local support group – visit [macmillan.org.uk/in-your-area](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/in-your-area) to search for one, or call our support line on [0808 808 00 00](tel:08088080000)
- on our Online Community – visit community.macmillan.org.uk



Questions after diagnosis

Asking questions during and after your diagnosis can make it easier to understand what is happening and why.

Being told you need to have tests and meet a specialist can be a shock. It can often be some time before your appointment, so you might feel worried.

Your healthcare team will tell you how to prepare for your tests and what is involved. They will also explain any results to you.

But you might want to ask some extra questions. Someone should be available after your first appointment to discuss your diagnosis and how it may affect you. This is usually a clinical nurse specialist.

If you think of questions later, you may also find it helpful to speak to someone at your nearest Macmillan cancer information and support centre. Visit [macmillan.org.uk/in-your-area](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/in-your-area)

You can also call our cancer support specialists on [0808 808 00 00](tel:08088080000), 7 days a week, 8am to 8pm, or visit [macmillan.org.uk](https://www.macmillan.org.uk)

You may want to ask questions about:

- being referred for tests for cancer
- having tests and getting the results
- getting more information about your cancer diagnosis
- any practical issues, such as work and finances.

You are likely to have many different feelings during this time. If you need emotional support, help is available. Your GP, cancer doctor or specialist nurse will be able to help you find the support you need.

Here are some suggestions about the types of questions you could ask after your diagnosis.

About your diagnosis

- Where did the cancer start?
- What is a primary cancer?
- What is a secondary cancer?
- What is the stage of the cancer? This tells you how advanced it is.
- What is the grade of the cancer? This gives an idea of how quickly it is growing.
- What are the average survival rates for this type of cancer, and what might this mean in my case?

Getting more information

- Who can I contact if I think of questions later? Can I talk to someone in person?
- Will someone tell my GP about the diagnosis? How quickly will this happen?
- Can I ask for a second opinion about my diagnosis or the plan for my treatment?
- Who can I talk to about how I am feeling?
- Who can I ask about practical issues?

We have more suggested [questions about getting practical and financial support](#).

“ I encourage everyone who is going through this to be their loudest advocate. If you can't do that, or don't feel comfortable doing that, take someone along with you who can and will. You may sit in many rooms with many professionals, but the most important person in that room will always be you. ”

Charlii, diagnosed with breast cancer

Questions about treatment

You can ask your healthcare team any questions you have before, during and after your treatment.

When you are making decisions about treatments, it is very important that you understand all the information you are given. You can ask questions about anything you do not understand.

The type of questions you have are likely to change in each stage of treatment.

You can continue to ask your healthcare team questions during your treatment. Your cancer doctor or specialist nurse will answer any questions you have. They should also offer you some written information about the treatment that you can take home.

Here are some questions you could ask about treatment.

Your treatment options

- What treatment or treatments do you recommend for me?
- What is the aim of my treatment?
- Are there any other treatments that might work just as well?
- What are the benefits and risks of each treatment option?
- What might the side effects of each option be?
- Would there be different treatment options if I were treated privately?

Taking part in a clinical trial

- Is there a clinical trial I can take part in?
- What does taking part in a clinical trial mean?
- What sort of trial am I being offered?
- Why is the trial taking place?
- How does taking part in a trial change my treatment options?

Choosing treatment

- How can I choose between the treatments you have offered me?
- Can I change my mind after I have started my treatment?
- Can I get a second opinion?
- Can you suggest a consultant who could offer a second opinion?

Choosing not to have treatment

- Can I choose not to have any treatment?
- If I choose not to have treatment, what is likely to happen?
- If I choose not to have treatment now, could I have treatment later?
- If I was able to have treatment later, would the aim of the treatment be the same?

Where to have your treatment

- Can I choose where I am treated?
- Can I be treated privately?
- Will I have all my treatment at this hospital, or will I have to travel?
- How long will I need to stay in hospital for?
- Can I have my treatment at home, or closer to home?
- Is there any help or support that I can have at home?

What treatment will involve

- How soon will the treatment start?
- How long will the treatment last?
- How often will I have my treatment?
- If I have chemotherapy, will I have tablets, injections or drips?
- If I need to take tablets at home, how should I handle and store these medicines? What will happen if I forget to take a dose?
- If I need radiotherapy, what will this involve?
- Can I have a family member or friend with me while I am having the treatment?
- If I need surgery, what will this involve?
- How long will I need to be in hospital for?
- How long is my recovery likely to take?

How treatment might affect you

- What does this treatment do?
- Do I need to change my lifestyle while having this treatment?
- Will I be able to drive?
- Can I drink alcohol?
- Do I need to change what I eat?
- Can I exercise regularly?
- Will the treatment affect my fertility or sex life?
- Can I continue working while I am having treatment?
- Do I need to avoid people who are pregnant or young children while I am having treatment?

How well treatment is working

- How effective is my treatment likely to be?
- How and when will I know if the treatment has worked?
- How will the doctors know if the treatment is working?
- Will I need to have any more tests?
- If my treatment is delayed, will this make a difference?

Side effects

- What are the possible side effects?
- How long are side effects likely to continue for?
- Will side effects eventually go away, or might some be permanent?
- How will I be monitored for side effects during and after treatment?
- What should I do if I have side effects?
- What can be done to reduce side effects and how can they be controlled?
- Are there any complementary therapies that might help?
- If I am having lots of side effects, can I reduce or completely stop my treatment?
- What would happen if I decided to stop my treatment at any point?

During treatment

- Who will be looking after me while I have my treatment?
- Will any religious or spiritual wishes I have be met?
- Who should I contact if I have any problems?
- How long should I wait before contacting someone?
- Who should I contact in an emergency or out of hours?
- When will I next talk to my oncologist or specialist nurse?

After treatment

- What happens when treatment finishes?
- How can I expect to feel after the treatment?
- How long might it take until I feel back to normal?
- What might the long-term effects of cancer and its treatment be?
- Who do I contact if I have a problem between follow-up appointments?

Worries about cancer coming back

- How will I be checked to find out if the cancer has come back?
- I am worried about the cancer coming back. Who can I speak to?
- How can I reduce the risk of the cancer coming back?
- How can I stay healthy after treatment finishes?



Questions about help and support

You should be given information about support groups in your area. You can also find out about local groups by calling us on [0808 808 00 00](tel:08088080000).

You can also share your experiences and discuss your feelings with other people in your situation on our Online Community (page 28).

Here are some questions that could help you get support during treatment, including any practical or financial help you need.

Help with money worries

- Will there be any financial costs to me?
- Where can I get financial support?
- How do I get free prescriptions for my cancer treatment?
- Can I get help with my energy bills?
- Can I get help with travel or hospital parking costs?

Emotional support

- How can I get help with how I am feeling?
- Are there any support groups in my area?
- Is there any psychological support or counselling available?

“ I felt so overwhelmed by the treatment options, I needed help. I gave the Macmillan helpline a call. The Macmillan adviser slowly talked me through the treatment options in plain English. ”

Michael, diagnosed with prostate cancer

Work

- Will I be able to continue working?
- How much time will I need to take off work?
- Where can I get support with work-related issues?
- Who can I speak to about going back to work once treatment finishes?

Family

- What help is available for my family?
- Will I still be able to care for my children?
- How do I tell my children?
- Who can support my children?

Travel

- Can I still go on holiday?
- How can I find travel insurance providers that can cover me?

About our information

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

Our information has the PIF Tick quality mark for trusted health information. This means our information has been through a professional and strong production process.

Order what you need

You may want to order more booklets or leaflets like this one. Visit be.macmillan.org.uk or call us on [0808 808 00 00](tel:08088080000).

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

Online information

All our information is also available online at macmillan.org.uk/information-and-support You can also find videos featuring 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
- interactive PDFs
- large print
- translations.

Find out more at macmillan.org.uk/otherformats

If you would 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](tel:08088080000).

The language we use

We want everyone affected by cancer to feel our information is written for them.

We want our information to be as clear as possible. To do this, we try to:

- use plain English
- explain medical words
- use short sentences
- use illustrations to explain text
- structure the information clearly
- make sure important points are clear.

We use gender-inclusive language and talk to our readers as 'you' so that everyone feels included. Where clinically necessary we use the terms 'men' and 'women' or 'male' and 'female'. For example, we do so when talking about parts of the body or mentioning statistics or research about who is affected.

You can read more about how we produce our information at macmillan.org.uk/ourinfo

Other ways we can help you

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

Talk to us

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

Macmillan Support Line

Our free, confidential phone line is open 7 days a week, 8am to 8pm. We can:

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

Our trained cancer information advisers can listen and signpost you to further support. Our cancer information nurse specialists can talk you through information about your diagnosis and treatment. They can help you understand what to expect from your diagnosis and provide information to help you manage symptoms and side effects.

Call us on [0808 808 00 00](tel:0808808000). We are open 7 days a week, 8am to 8pm.

You can also email us, or use the Macmillan Chat Service via our website. You can use the chat service to ask our advisers about anything that is worrying you.

Tell them what you would like to talk about so they can direct your chat to the right person. Click on the 'Chat to us' button, which appears on pages across the website. Or go to macmillan.org.uk/talktous

If you would like to talk to someone in a language other than English, we also offer an interpreter service for our Macmillan Support Line. Call [0808 808 00 00](tel:08088080000) and say, in English, the language you want to use. Or send us a web chat message saying you would like an interpreter. Let us know the language you need and we'll arrange for an interpreter to contact you.

Information centres

Our information and support centres are based in hospitals, libraries and mobile centres. Visit one to get the information you need and speak with someone face to face. If you would like a private chat, most centres have a room where you can speak with someone confidentially.

Find your nearest centre at macmillan.org.uk/informationcentres or call us on [0808 808 00 00](tel:08088080000).

Help with money worries

Having cancer can bring extra costs such as hospital parking, travel fares and higher heating bills. If you have been affected in this way, we can help. Please note the opening times may vary by service.

Financial guidance

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

Help accessing benefits

Our welfare rights advisers can help you find out what benefits you might be entitled to, and help you complete forms and apply for benefits. They can also tell you more about other financial help that may be available to you.

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 energy costs

Our energy advisers can help if you have difficulty paying your energy bills (gas, electricity and water). They can help you get access to schemes and charity grants to help with bills, advise you on boiler schemes and help you deal with water companies.

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](tel:08088080000) to find out more about Macmillan Grants.

Help with work and cancer

Whether you are 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)

Work support

Our dedicated team of work support advisers can help you understand your rights at work. Call us on [0808 808 00 00](tel:08088080000) to speak to a work support adviser.

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 is why we help bring people together in their communities and online.

Support groups

Whether you are someone living with cancer or a carer, family member or friend, 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

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

You can also use our Ask an Expert service on the Online Community. You can ask a financial guide, cancer information nurse, work support advisor or an information and support advisor any questions you have.

Macmillan healthcare professionals

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.

Other useful organisations

There are lots of other organisations that can give you information or support. Details correct at time of printing.

General cancer support organisations

Black Women Rising

www.blackwomenrisinguk.org

Aims to educate, inspire and bring opportunities for women from the BAME community. Shares stories and supports Black cancer patients and survivors through treatment and remission.

Cancer Black Care

Tel **0208 961 4151**

www.cancerblackcare.org.uk

Offers UK-wide information and support for people from Black and minority ethnic communities who have cancer. Also supports their friends, carers and families.

Cancer Focus Northern Ireland

Helpline **0800 783 3339**

www.cancerfocusni.org

Offers a variety of services to people affected by cancer in Northern Ireland.

Cancer Research UK

Helpline **0808 800 4040**

www.cancerresearchuk.org

A UK-wide organisation that has patient information on all types of cancer. Also has a clinical trials database.

Cancer Support Scotland

Tel **0800 652 4531**

www.cancersupportscotland.org

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

Macmillan Cancer Voices

www.macmillan.org.uk/cancervoices

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

Maggie's

Tel **0300 123 1801**

www.maggies.org

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

Penny Brohn UK

Helpline **0303 3000 118**

www.pennybrohn.org.uk

Offers physical, emotional and spiritual support across the UK, using complementary therapies and self-help techniques.

Teenage Cancer Trust

Tel **0207 612 0370**

www.teenagecancertrust.org

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

Tenovus

Helpline **0808 808 1010**

www.tenovuscancercare.org.uk

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

General health information

Health and Social Care in Northern Ireland

www.northerntrust.hscni.net

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

NHS.UK

www.nhs.uk

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

NHS 111 Wales

111.wales.nhs.uk

NHS health information site for Wales.

NHS Inform

Helpline **0800 22 44 88**

www.nhsinform.scot

NHS health information site for Scotland.

Emotional and mental health support

Mind

Helpline **0300 123 3393**

www.mind.org.uk

Provides information, advice and support to anyone with a mental health problem through its helpline and website.

Samaritans

Helpline **116 123**

Email jo@samaritans.org

www.samaritans.org

Provides confidential and non-judgemental emotional support, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, for people experiencing feelings of distress or despair.

Counselling

British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP)

Tel **0145 588 3300**

www.bacp.co.uk

Promotes awareness of counselling and signposts people to appropriate services across the UK. You can also search for a qualified counsellor on the 'How to find a therapist' page.

UK Council for Psychotherapy (UKCP)

Tel **0207 014 9955**

www.psychotherapy.org.uk

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

Financial support or legal advice and information

Advice NI

Helpline **0800 915 4604**

Provides advice on a variety of issues including financial, legal, housing and employment issues.

Benefit Enquiry Line Northern Ireland

Helpline **0800 232 1271**

Textphone **028 9031 1092**

www.nidirect.gov.uk/money-tax-and-benefits

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

Carer's Allowance Unit

Tel **0800 731 0297**

Textphone **0800 731 0317**

www.gov.uk/carers-allowance

Manages state benefits in England, Scotland and Wales. You can apply for benefits and find information online or through its helplines.

Citizens Advice

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

England

Helpline **0800 144 8848**

www.citizensadvice.org.uk

Scotland

Helpline **0800 028 1456**

www.cas.org.uk

Wales

Helpline **0800 702 2020**

www.citizensadvice.org.uk/wales

Civil Legal Advice

Helpline **0345 345 4345**

Textphone **0345 609 6677**

www.gov.uk/civil-legal-advice

Has a list of legal advice centres in England and Wales and solicitors that take legal aid cases. Offers a free translation service if English is not your first language.

Disability and Carers Service

Tel **0800 587 0912**

Textphone **0800 012 1574**

nidirect.gov.uk/contacts/disability-and-carers-service

Manages Disability Living Allowance, Attendance Allowance, Carer's Allowance and Carer's Credit in Northern Ireland.

You can apply for these benefits and find information online or through its helplines.

GOV.UK

www.gov.uk

Has information about social security benefits and public services in England, Scotland and Wales.

Jobs and Benefits Office Enquiry Line Northern Ireland

Helpline **0800 022 4250**

Textphone **0800 587 1297**

www.nidirect.gov.uk/money-tax-and-benefits

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

Law Centres Network

www.lawcentres.org.uk

Local Law Centres provides advice and legal assistance. They specialise in social welfare issues including disability and discrimination.

Local councils (England, Scotland and Wales)

Your local council may have a welfare rights unit that can help you with benefits. You can also contact your local council to claim Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction, education benefits, and for help from social services (the Social Work department in Scotland).

You should be able to find your local council's contact details in your phone book or visit:

England

www.gov.uk/find-local-council

Scotland

www.cosla.gov.uk/councils

Wales

www.gov.wales/find-your-local-authority

Macmillan Benefits Advice Service (Northern Ireland)

Tel **0300 123 3233**

Money Advice Scotland

www.moneyadvicescotland.org.uk

Use the website to find qualified financial advisers in Scotland.

NiDirect

www.nidirect.gov.uk

Has information about benefits and public services in Northern Ireland.

Northern Ireland Housing Executive

Tel **0344 892 0902**

www.nihe.gov.uk

Offers help to people living in socially rented, privately rented and owner-occupied accommodation.

StepChange Debt Charity

Tel **0800 138 1111**

www.stepchange.org

Provides free debt advice through phone, email, the website and through online live chats with advisers.

Unbiased.co.uk

Helpline **0800 023 6868**

www.unbiased.co.uk

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

Support for older people

Age UK

Helpline **0800 678 1602**

www.ageuk.org.uk

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

LGBT-specific support

LGBT Foundation

Tel **0345 330 3030**

www.lgbt.foundation

Provides a range of services to the LGBT community, including a helpline, email advice and counselling. The website has information on various topics including sexual health, relationships, mental health, community groups and events.

Live Through This

www.livethroughthis.co.uk

A safe space for anybody who identifies as part of the queer spectrum and has had an experience with any kind of cancer at any stage. Also produces resources about LGBT cancer experiences. LTT runs a peer support group with Maggie's Barts.

Support for carers

Carers Trust

Tel **0300 772 9600**

www.carers.org

Provides support, information, advice and services for people caring at home for a family member or friend. You can find details for UK offices and search for local support on the website.

Carers UK

Helpline **0808 808 7777**

www.carersuk.org

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

Cancer registries

The cancer registry is a national database that collects information on cancer diagnoses and treatment. This information helps the NHS and other organisations plan and improve health and care services. There is one in each country in the UK.

They are run by the following organisations:

England – National Disease Registration Service (NDRS)

www.digital.nhs.uk/ndrs/patients

Public Health Scotland (PHS)

www.publichealthscotland.scot/our-areas-of-work/conditions-and-diseases/cancer/scottish-cancer-registry-and-intelligence-service-scris/overviews

Wales – Welsh Cancer Intelligence and Surveillance Unit (WCISU)

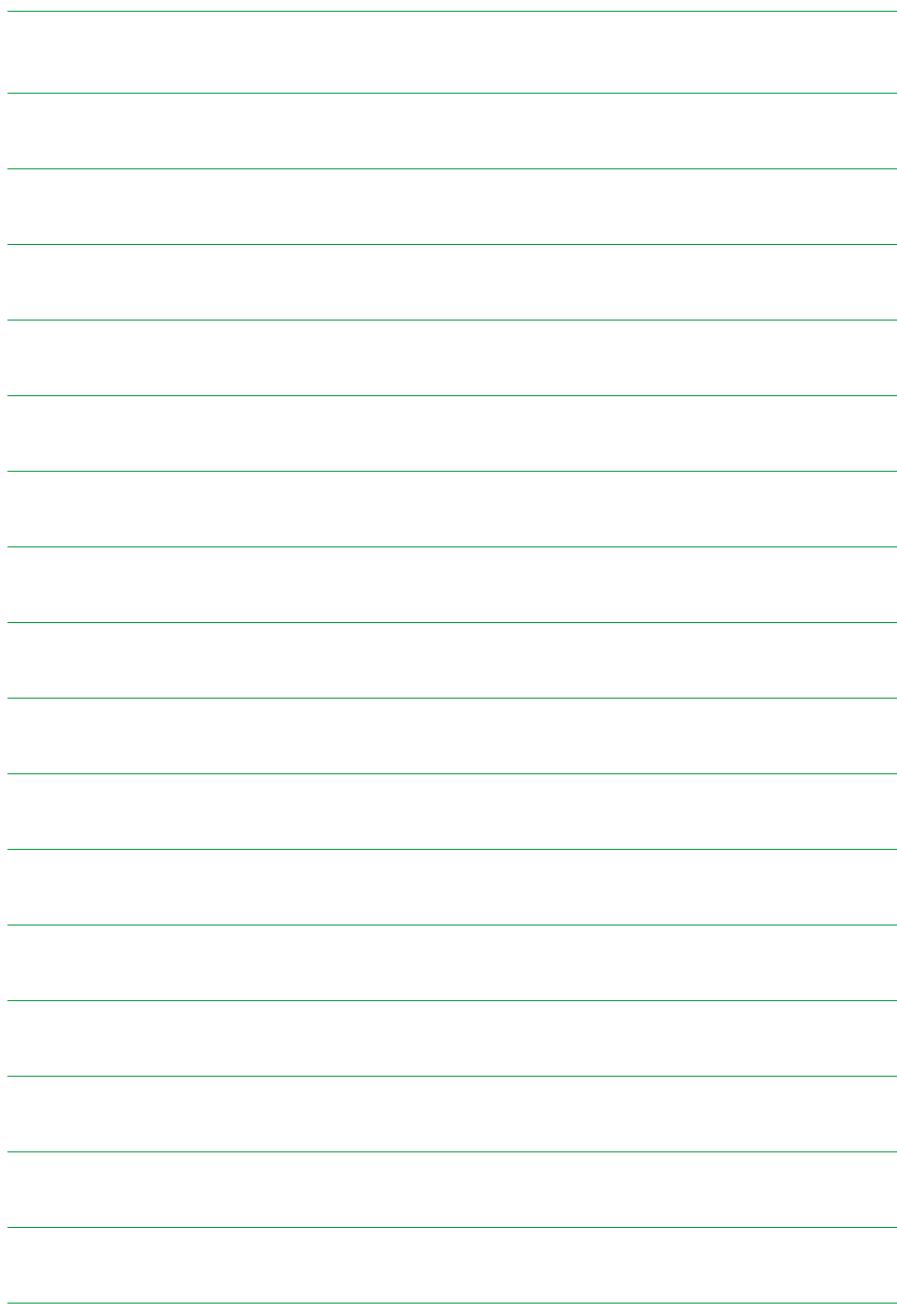
Tel **0292 010 4278**

www.phw.nhs.wales/wcisu

Northern Ireland – Northern Ireland Cancer Registry (NICR)

Tel **0289 097 6028**

www.qub.ac.uk/research-centres/nicr/AboutUs/Registry



Disclaimer

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

Thanks

This booklet has been written, revised and edited by Macmillan Cancer Support's Cancer Information Development team. It has been approved by members of Macmillan's Centre of Clinical Expertise.

With thanks to: Charlotte Bloodworth, Advanced Nurse Practitioner in Haematology; and Dr Jayne McAuley, Palliative Care Consultant.

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

We welcome feedback on our information. If you have any, please contact cancerinformationteam@macmillan.org.uk

Sources

If you would like further information about the sources we use, please contact us at [**cancerinformationteam@macmillan.org.uk**](mailto:cancerinformationteam@macmillan.org.uk)

Can you do something to help?

We hope this booklet has been useful to you. It is just one of our many publications that are available free to anyone affected by cancer. They are 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 are here 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.

5 ways you can help someone with cancer

1. **Share your cancer experience**

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

2. **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.

3. **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?

4. **Raise money**

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

5. **Give money**

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

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

Valid from

Expiry date

Issue no

Security number

Signature

Date / /

Do not let the taxman keep your money

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

This booklet aims to help you find out more about your cancer treatment. It suggests questions you can ask your healthcare team.

This booklet is for anyone who has been diagnosed with cancer. It may also be helpful for carers, family members and friends.

At Macmillan, we give people with cancer everything we've got. If you are diagnosed, your worries are our worries. We will help you live life as fully as you can.

For information, support or just someone to talk to, call [0808 808 00 00](tel:08088080000) or visit [macmillan.org.uk](https://www.macmillan.org.uk)

Would you prefer to speak to us in another language? Interpreters are available. Please tell us in English the language you would like to use. Are you deaf or hard of hearing? Call us using NGT (Text Relay) on [18001 0808 808 00 00](tel:1800108088080000), or use the NGT Lite app.

Need information in different languages or formats?

We produce information in audio, eBooks, easy read, Braille, large print and translations.

To order these, visit [macmillan.org.uk/otherformats](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/otherformats) or call our support line.

The logo consists of a blue rounded rectangle containing the text 'Trusted Information Creator' in black. To the right of the text is a large green checkmark.

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