

My medication

Many people with cancer take medicines as part of their ongoing cancer treatment. You may also be taking medication to help relieve symptoms or side effects, or for other health conditions.

You may be managing a lot of different medications. You might be taking them regularly every day, on certain days, or only when you need them. It can sometimes be hard to keep track.

You will be given some of your medications by the hospital. Some will be on prescription from your GP. Prescriptions are free for everyone in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. People with cancer in England are eligible for free prescriptions. Ask your GP surgery or oncology clinic for an exemption certificate. In England, you may be able to get free prescriptions for other reasons. This could be because you are 60 or over, or if you are receiving certain benefits.

Tips for managing medication

- Always take your medications as you have been instructed.
- Make sure you know how to take the medications, for example swallowed whole or dissolved in water.
- Read the information leaflet with the medication. It will include any special instructions and give information about any side effects.
- Ask your doctor or specialist nurse if you have any questions or are unsure about any of your prescribed medicines.
- If you are taking lots of medications, it can help to use a medication planner. The planner lists each drug and when you need to take it. You can get a planner from your pharmacist.
- A pill organiser or dosette box is a good way to keep track of tablets and capsules. The box has separate compartments that show what day and time to take them. You can refill the box each week or ask your pharmacist to. A Boots Macmillan Information Pharmacist may be able to help.
- Store your medications carefully as instructed. This may be at room temperature or in a fridge.
- Keep medicines in their labelled bottles or packets, so you do not mix them up. Keep them safe and out of sight and reach of children.
- Do not take them if they are out of date. You can check the bottle or packet for a date.
- If you need to, remember to organise a repeat prescription before you run out of your medications.
- When you are away from home, remember to take your medications with you. Make sure you have enough to cover the whole time you are away.
- If you are travelling on a plane, keep your medicines in a zipped bag in your hand-luggage. Carry a list of your medicines, copies of prescriptions and your doctor's phone number.
- Before travelling abroad, check any restrictions with the country's embassy. Some countries do not allow certain medications to be brought in.
- If you are travelling for more than 3 months, you may need a personal medicines licence from the Home Office.
- Always return any unused medications to a pharmacist. Do not throw them in the bin or down the toilet.

Local resources:

Resource	Contact details

National resources:

Resource	Contact details
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boots Macmillan Information Pharmacist finder 	www.boots.com/storelocator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Home Office Drugs and Firearms Licensing Unit (DFLU) 	www.gov.uk/controlled-drugs-licences-fees-and-returns Tel 020 7035 6330

Further information

www.macmillan.org.uk/medicationplanner

Our booklets and leaflets are available to order free on be.macmillan.org.uk

- **Help with the cost of cancer**
- **Looking after someone with cancer**
- **Managing cancer pain**
- **Travel and cancer**

More information and support

If you have more questions or would like to talk to someone, call the Macmillan Support Line free on **0808 808 00 00**, Monday to Friday, 9am to 8pm, or visit macmillan.org.uk

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.

We produce information in a range of formats and languages. To order these, visit macmillan.org.uk/otherformats or call our support line.

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