

Spiritual concerns

Spirituality can mean different things to different people. It may be religious, or it may be expressed in other ways. This can be through music, arts, nature, or how you relate to your family or community.

Many people find their faith offers them emotional support and strength during their illness. Some people may find they become more aware of religious or spiritual feelings. Others may find themselves questioning their faith.

Most people need to have a sense of meaning in their lives and to feel they are loved and valued. If you are seriously ill, having some hope and being at peace with your situation can also be important.

Things that may help

- You may find it helpful to talk through your thoughts and feelings with someone you trust. This may be a close friend, partner or family member. Talking openly about your feelings and what would help can also let them know how to support you. You should only share as much as you want to, and at a time when you feel ready.
- You can speak to a chaplain or religious leader. They are usually good listeners and may be able to help you work out your thoughts and feelings. They are used to dealing with uncertainty and being with people who are distressed. You can speak to a chaplain or religious leader even if you are not religious.
- You might find it easier to talk to a healthcare professional. Your GP, specialist nurse or healthcare team at the hospital can support you.
- Counsellors are trained to listen and help people talk through their situation and the difficulties they face. Talking with a trained counsellor can help you express and understand your feelings. It can also help you find ways to deal with these feelings or the problems they relate to. GP practices, hospitals and hospices often have their own counsellors. Or they should be able to refer you to one. You can talk to a [Macmillan cancer support specialist](#) to find out about counselling in your area. The British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy can also give you details of counsellors in your area.
- You may prefer to talk to someone who is not religious. Humanists UK have volunteers who can offer non-religious pastoral support. Your GP, specialist nurse or cancer doctor may also be able to help you find a non-religious counsellor or pastoral carer to talk to.

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 such as:

- [Coping with advanced cancer](#)
- [How are you feeling? The emotional effects of cancer](#)
- [Spirituality and religion at the end of life – easy read](#)
- [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 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

- British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy – visit www.bacp.co.uk or call **01455 883 300**
- Humanists UK – visit www.humanistcare.org.uk
- Marie Curie – visit www.mariecurie.org.uk or call **0800 090 2309**

Notes and questions
