

A practical guide to living  
with and after cancer

# HEALTHY EATING AND CANCER

**WE ARE  
MACMILLAN.  
CANCER SUPPORT**

This booklet is part of a series of booklets on diet and cancer. The other booklets in the series are:

- *Eating problems and cancer*
- *Recipes for people affected by cancer*
- *The building-up diet.*

Check with your cancer doctor, nurse or dietitian that this is the right booklet for you, and whether you need any additional information.

If you would like more information, contact our cancer support specialists on **0808 808 00 00**. They can send you any other booklets that you need.

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# About this booklet

**Many people want to make positive changes to their lives when they have been diagnosed with cancer. Taking steps to live a healthier lifestyle is often a major part of these changes.**

This booklet is for you if you're living with or after cancer and want to know more about a healthy diet. It explains why diet is important, and has tips on how to eat well and maintain a healthy weight. We hope it will help you think about what changes you may want to make, and how you can put them into practice.

There are some questions and answers about diet and cancer, and other sources of support and information, which we hope you'll find useful.

If you'd like to discuss this information, call the Macmillan Support Line free on **0808 808 00 00**, Monday–Friday, 9am–8pm. If you're hard of hearing, you can use textphone 0808 808 0121, or Text Relay. For non-English speakers, interpreters are available. Alternatively, visit **macmillan.org.uk**

Throughout this booklet we've included some quotes from dietitians and people affected by cancer. The quotes come from Macmillan's online community and from **healthtalkonline.org**. Some names have been changed.

Turn to pages 41–44 for some useful addresses and websites. On page 45 there is space for you to write down questions for your doctor, nurse or dietitian. If you find this booklet helpful, you could pass it on to your family and friends. They may also want information to help them support you.

# Diet and cancer

Experts think that up to 1 in 10 cancers (10%) in the UK may be linked to diet. There's a lot of research being done into which types of food may affect our risk of developing cancer.

Research suggests that a lack of fruit and vegetables in the diet may contribute to about 6 in 100 cancers (6%) in men. And being overweight may contribute to about 7 in 100 cancers (7%) in women. There are many reasons why people are overweight, but an unhealthy diet and lack of physical activity are often factors.

Our diets are made up of many types of foods, which in turn are made up of thousands of different substances. Some of these may increase our risk of cancer, but others may protect us. How diet affects our risk of developing cancer is complicated, and we still don't completely understand it.

Despite this, we do know that a balanced diet and regular exercise help us keep to a healthy weight, which can help reduce the risk of developing some cancers.

# A healthy diet

Having a balanced diet is one of the best choices you can make for your overall health. Many people find making this positive choice helps give them back a sense of control. It can also help you feel that you're doing the best for your health. Thinking about what and how much you drink is part of this too.

Eating well and keeping to a healthy weight will help you maintain or regain your strength, have more energy and have an increased sense of well-being. It can also help reduce the risk of new cancers and other diseases, such as heart disease, stroke and diabetes.

After cancer treatment, some people have a higher risk of other health problems, such as diabetes, heart disease or osteoporosis (bone thinning). If you've been told that you may be at an increased risk of any of these conditions, it's especially important to follow a healthy diet to help prevent them.





# Making changes

It's not always easy to make major changes to our lives. It can be even more challenging when you have to cope with cancer, and perhaps cancer treatment, too.

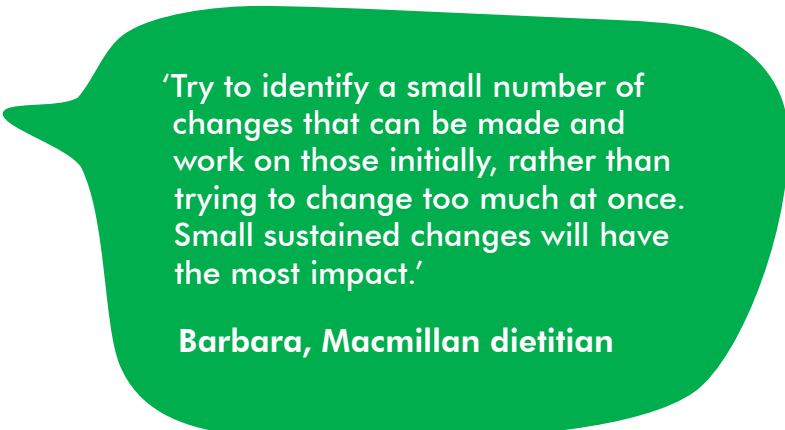
Some people eat more when life is stressful. This is known as comfort eating. Others are so busy that they don't have time to look at healthier options when food shopping. It can sometimes be easier to choose ready meals. And for some people, the cost of food is an issue.

You may want to make changes to your diet gradually, at a comfortable pace, at a budget you can afford, and when you feel ready. You could start by writing down what you normally eat for a few weeks. Compare this with information on healthy eating. Then set yourself some small, realistic goals, and decide how you will achieve them.

For example, if you've never had fruit with breakfast, you could try adding fresh or stewed fruit, or having a glass of fruit juice. For snacks, try swapping chocolate with a small portion of dried fruit and nuts. Gradually increase your goals over time. Keep track of your progress and how you feel physically and emotionally. Making changes can be enjoyable, and you may discover new foods that you haven't tried before.

Before making changes to your diet, it can help to talk to a dietitian, your GP or a specialist nurse. A dietitian can help you make changes, and can also advise you about any other dietary problems you might have during or after your cancer treatment.

Whether you choose to make small or big changes to your diet, it may take time to find healthy foods that you like, or a diet that works for you. It can help to try different foods. This can stop you getting bored and may help motivate you to continue a healthy diet in the long-term.



**'Try to identify a small number of changes that can be made and work on those initially, rather than trying to change too much at once. Small sustained changes will have the most impact.'**

**Barbara, Macmillan dietitian**

# A healthy eating guide

For most people, a daily balanced diet includes:

- lots of fruit and vegetables
- plenty of starchy foods (carbohydrates), such as bread, rice, pasta, noodles, couscous and potatoes
- some protein-rich foods, such as meat, poultry, fish, nuts, eggs and pulses (beans and lentils)
- some milk and dairy foods, such as cheese, yoghurt and cream
- just a small amount of food high in fat, salt and sugar

Drinks should mainly be water, tea and coffee (without sugar), or sugar-free drinks such as fizzy drinks, colas and squashes. See pages 20–21 for more information about alcoholic drinks.

The diagram on the next page shows how much of each type of food you should try to eat.

## What proportion of each food group should I be eating for a healthy diet?



 **Fruit and vegetables – 33%**

 **Starches – 33%**

 **Protein – 12%**

 **Milk and dairy – 15%**

 **Fat, salt or sugar – 7%**

## Fruits and vegetables

Fruits and vegetables are a good source of many vitamins and minerals, and a great source of fibre. They should make up about a third of the food we eat every day. But most of us don't eat enough of them.

People who eat diets high in fruit and vegetables may have a lower risk of heart disease. These diets may also reduce the risk of developing some types of cancer (cancers of the mouth, gullet and bowel). Fruit and vegetables help food move quicker through the digestive system and prevent constipation.

Try to eat at least five portions of fruit and vegetables a day. A portion is 80g (3oz) of raw, cooked or tinned fruit and vegetables. This is roughly:

- three heaped tablespoons of vegetables
- a cereal bowl of salad
- one average-sized fruit, such as an apple, pear or banana
- two smaller fruits, such as apricots or plums
- a slice of larger fruits, such as melon or mango
- a handful of small fruits, such as cherries or berries
- a glass of fruit juice (150ml) – fruit juice only counts as one portion a day, however much you drink.

Different coloured fruits and vegetables contain different nutrients. Eating a variety will help make sure you're getting a wide range of valuable nutrients.



## Starchy foods and fibre

### Starchy foods

Starchy foods such as bread, chapatis, cereals, rice, pasta, yams and potatoes are an important part of a healthy diet. They are a good source of energy and a major source of fibre, iron and B vitamins. Starchy foods should make up about a third of the food we eat each day.

### Fibre

Most people don't eat enough foods that are rich in fibre (roughage). Try to include a variety of fibre-rich foods in your diet. These include wholegrain bread, brown rice, oats, beans, peas, lentils, grains, seeds, fruit and vegetables. Potatoes with their skins on are also a good source of fibre.

High-fibre foods are more bulky. They help us feel full, so we're less likely to eat too much. Fibre helps keep our bowels healthy and prevents constipation. Eating a diet with plenty of high-fibre foods may help reduce the risk of bowel cancer. The fibre found in foods such as oats, beans and lentils may also help reduce the amount of cholesterol in the blood.

## Protein

Your body needs protein to perform a wide range of functions, such as the repair and growth of body cells. Protein-rich foods can also be a good source of vitamins and minerals.

### Meat

Several studies suggest that eating lots of red and processed meat can increase the risk of developing bowel cancer and prostate cancer. Red meat is beef, pork, lamb and veal. Processed meats include sausages, bacon, salami, tinned meats, and packet meats like sandwich ham.





The greatest risk seems to be for people who eat two or more portions of red or processed meat a day. People who eat less than two portions a week seem to have the lowest risk. No link has been found between eating poultry, such as turkey and chicken, and the risk of developing cancer.

A portion of meat should be about the size of a deck of playing cards. Try to avoid processed meats, and eat more fish, chicken, turkey, beans or lentils instead. Eating meat that's cooked at high temperatures – for example, fried or barbecued – may also increase the risk of developing some cancers.

### **Other sources of protein**

Other sources of protein include pulses (peas, beans, and lentils) and nuts. Pulses can form the base of lots of meals. Nuts are high in energy and can be used in both sweet and savoury dishes. They contain good amounts of both protein and some of the healthier unsaturated fats (see page 16–17).

Some vegetarians include eggs and dairy products, like cheese, as a source of protein in their diet. Although eggs are a good source of protein, hard dairy cheese can be high in unhealthy saturated fats (see page 16) and should be eaten in small amounts. Vegan cheese can be a healthier alternative to dairy cheese. It is usually made from soya or nuts. Soya is also available as mince, burgers, sausages, milk, and tofu. Mycoprotein (Quorn™) can also replace mince, burgers and sausages as a source of protein.

There have been some concerns about soya and its effect on breast cancer. Recent recommendations say it is safe to have 1–2 servings of whole soya foods a day. One serving is a large glass of soya milk, 50g of tofu, 100g of soya mince or 28g of soya nuts or edamame beans. If you are worried about eating soya, talk to your doctor or cancer nurse specialist.

## Fat

Having some fat in our diet helps us to absorb vitamins A, D, E and K, and provides us with essential fatty acids that we can't make ourselves. But most people in the UK eat too much fat. Foods that are high in fat are also high in energy (calories), so eating a lot of fat can make you more likely to put on weight.

There are different types of fat:

### Saturated fat

Saturated fat can raise cholesterol levels in the blood and increase the risk of heart disease. Foods high in saturated fat include cheese, butter, ghee, burgers, sausages, samosas, biscuits, pastries, cakes and chocolate. Current advice is for men not to eat more than 30g, and women not to eat more than 20g of saturated fat a day. You can use the nutrition label on foods as a guide. High-fat foods contain more than 17.5g of fat per 100g. Low-fat foods contain less than 3g of fat per 100g.

### Unsaturated fat

Unsaturated fat helps reduce cholesterol levels in the blood. Omega 3 fatty acids, a type of unsaturated fat, are found in oily fish like mackerel, salmon, trout and sardines. Several research studies have shown that eating 1–2 servings of oily fish a week reduces the risk of developing heart disease.

However, too much oily fish may not be good for you. The UK Food Standards Agency recommends that children, and women who are of childbearing age or pregnant, eat up to two portions a week. Women past childbearing age and men shouldn't eat more than four portions a week. This is because chemicals, pesticide residues, and metals like mercury may be found in the water the fish were caught in and could be harmful to your health. These substances can end up in the water through industrial or farming processes. Mercury can occur naturally in water.

Other good sources of unsaturated fat include nuts and seeds, as well as sunflower, olive and vegetable oil.



It's important to try to eat less fat, and to choose foods that contain unsaturated fats instead of saturated.

What you can do to eat less fat:

- Eat more skinless fish and chicken, rather than red meat.
- Choose lean cuts of meat and trim off all the fat you can.
- Eat less fried food – bake, grill, steam or poach food instead.
- Choose lower-fat dairy products when you can.
- When you're shopping, check the labels for unsaturated and saturated fat, and choose lower-fat options.
- Put more vegetables and beans and a bit less meat in stews and curries.
- Try more vegetarian recipes.
- Cut out or reduce the number of fatty takeaways, such as burgers, curries and kebabs, that you eat.
- Avoid snacks that are high in fat, such as pastries, crisps and biscuits.

## Salt

Diets that are high in salt can increase the risk of developing stomach cancer. Reducing your salt intake will help lower your blood pressure, and your risk of heart disease and strokes. Most people in the UK eat more salt than they need. The maximum recommended allowance of salt for adults is 6g a day, which is about a teaspoon.

When we think about how much salt we eat, we usually think of how much we add to our food or cooking. But about three-quarters (75%) of the salt we eat comes from processed foods such as bread, bacon, snacks and convenience foods.

You can find out how much salt is in processed foods by checking the labels. If there's more than 1.5g of salt per 100g (or 0.6g sodium), the food is high in salt. Low-salt foods contain 0.3g salt or less per 100g (or 0.1g sodium).

When you're buying bread, cereal and ready meals, compare the amount of salt in different types and choose the lower ones. Frozen meals tend to have less salt than chilled ones. When you're buying tinned vegetables and tuna, choose the type in spring water rather than salted water or brine.

What you can do to eat less salt:

- Try not to add salt to your food.
- Add herbs, spices or black pepper to pasta dishes, vegetables and meat instead of salt.
- Marinate meat and fish before cooking to give them more flavour.

# Alcohol

Alcohol has been linked with an increased risk of developing some types of cancer. An American study has shown that as little as one drink a day can increase the risk of mouth, gullet (oesophagus), breast, liver and bowel cancers. The more alcohol someone drinks, the greater the overall health risk. Alcohol is also high in calories and can contribute to weight gain. Drinking a large amount of alcohol in one session (binge drinking) is thought to be worse for your health than drinking a small amount each day.

One drink isn't the same as 1 unit of alcohol. In the UK, 1 unit is 10ml (8g) of pure alcohol. For example:

- Half a pint of lower strength (3–4%) beer, lager or cider contains 1 unit.
- Half a pint of higher strength (5%) beer, lager or cider contains 1.5 units.
- A standard glass of wine (175ml), often called a small glass in pubs and bars, contains 2.1 units.
- A large glass of wine (250ml) contains 3 units.
- A single measure (25ml) of 40% spirits contains 1 unit.
- A bottle (275ml) of an alcopop contains 1.5 units.

It's best to limit how much alcohol you drink and have one or two alcohol-free days each week. Current drinking guidelines recommended by the UK government and the NHS are:

- Men should avoid drinking more than 3–4 units of alcohol a day.
- Women should avoid drinking more than 2–3 units of alcohol a day.

Drinking one or two units of alcohol a day may give some protection from coronary heart disease, especially in men over 40 and women who have been through the menopause. However, it is a relatively small benefit.

# Keeping to a healthy weight

It's not good to be either underweight or overweight. Eating too much can make you overweight, which can lead to health problems such as heart disease, high blood pressure or diabetes. Not eating as much food as your body needs can also affect your health.



If you're underweight, or find it difficult to eat enough to maintain your weight, you may find it helpful to read our booklets *The building-up diet* and *Recipes for people affected by cancer*.

Many people in the UK are heavier than the recommended weight for their height. And unfortunately, certain types of treatment for cancer, such as hormonal therapies or steroids, can cause weight gain. Losing weight can be difficult, but keeping to a healthy body weight is one of the best ways to reduce your risk of developing cancer.

Being overweight increases the risk of many types of cancer, including cancers of the bowel, kidney, womb and gullet (oesophagus). Women who are overweight and have been through the menopause are at an increased risk of breast cancer.

There's also evidence that women who have breast cancer after the menopause may be able to reduce their risk of the cancer returning by keeping to a healthy body weight after treatment.



Try to keep your weight within the normal range for your height. Your GP can advise you on your ideal weight. If you're concerned about your weight, get in touch with your GP or a dietitian for advice and support.



There's more information and advice in our booklet *Weight management after cancer treatment*.

Be patient with yourself. Losing weight is a gradual process. It's important to eat a balanced diet to make sure you get all the nutrients you need to keep your body healthy. It's reasonable to aim to lose about 0.5–1kg (1–2lbs) a week.

What you can do to keep to a healthy weight:

- Only eat as much food as you need according to how active you are. You may need to discuss your needs with a dietitian.
- Eat a healthy diet with lots of fruit and vegetables, and less fat and sugar.
- Be more physically active.

If you're thinking of increasing your physical activity, our booklet *Physical activity and cancer treatment* and our *Move more* information pack tell you everything you need to know about how to be more active and the benefits of doing so.



# A healthy view on food

Food doesn't just give us what we need to keep our bodies healthy and energised. Food is an important part of our social lives too, whether we're spending time with family and friends at meals and barbecues, or celebrating with treats like cakes. Sometimes we eat a favourite food to reward ourselves.

Even when you've successfully changed to a more balanced diet, you may not always feel like sticking strictly to it. This is normal for all of us. Everyone enjoys having an occasional treat or enjoying a meal out. You could maybe try having a smaller portion than you'd normally have. But if you're eating well most of the time, you can allow yourself less healthy foods occasionally.

Another idea is to have one 'free' day a week, when you eat whatever you want. You may quickly find that the more healthily you eat, the less you crave the so-called 'forbidden foods'. Your idea of treats may also change to healthier options.

'I try and have my five portions of fruit and veg a day and wholemeal bread and things like that. But I eat meat. I use butter. I drink alcohol. And I aim to do those things in moderation rather than give them up.'

**Ali**

# Commonly-asked questions about diet and cancer

## Can diet reduce the risk of cancer coming back?

People often ask whether what they eat can reduce their risk of the cancer returning. There is some early evidence from breast and bowel cancer studies that diet may make a difference to the chances of the cancer coming back. But there still isn't enough clear information to make precise recommendations about what someone with a particular type of cancer should eat. In general, cancer experts recommend following a healthy, balanced diet (see pages 9–21) for the whole body and not just the prevention of one type of cancer.

For most people, the factors that are most likely to have the greatest impact on your health include diet, weight control and regular physical activity. The biggest difference will probably be from a combination of factors, rather than from making any one change.

Your healthcare team (this includes your GP, dietitian, doctors and nurses) are the best people to advise you whether there are any lifestyle changes you can make that may help reduce your risk of cancer coming back.



## What foods should I avoid when I have low immunity?

If your medical team has told you that your immunity may be lowered during your treatment, you can ask them if you should follow any special dietary advice. Here are a few general tips:

- Make sure that your food is well-cooked.
- If you are eating raw foods, such as salads or fruit, make sure they are washed thoroughly.
- You should avoid pâté, raw eggs, live bacterial yoghurt and cheeses made from unpasteurised milk, such as brie and blue-veined cheeses.

## Should I take dietary supplements?

For most people, a balanced diet provides all the nutrients they need and eating food provides more goodness than just vitamins and minerals. Large doses of vitamins, minerals and other dietary supplements are therefore not recommended for most people. But people who find it difficult to eat a balanced diet may benefit from taking a multivitamin or mineral supplement that contains up to 100% of the recommended daily allowance.

Supplements may be beneficial in some situations, such as for people who can't absorb all the nutrients they need because of surgery for stomach cancer. And people at increased risk of bone thinning (osteoporosis) may benefit from taking calcium and vitamin D supplements to help strengthen their bones.

Studies looking at whether taking supplements can reduce the risk of developing certain cancers have been disappointing. In general, the evidence is that taking supplements doesn't reduce the risk of cancer. There is even evidence that taking high doses of some supplements can increase the risk of cancer developing in some people.

It's possible that some supplements may interfere with how cancer treatments work, and make them less effective. So if you're currently having treatment for cancer, it's important to get advice from your cancer specialist before taking any supplements. They can advise you about which, if any, you should take, and which doses might be suitable for you. They can also tell you about any possible side effects and interactions with other medicines.

'There are no specific vitamin pills I would recommend unless these have been prescribed specially by your consultant. However, if you regularly take vitamin pills you could continue to take these unless your consultant requests otherwise. Eating a well-balanced and varied diet should give you all the vitamins you need.'

**Jenny, dietitian**

## What about 'superfoods'?

There isn't any scientific evidence for any one food being a 'superfood'. The greatest benefit to your health is likely to come from eating a balanced diet that includes a wide and varied combination of foods.

So instead of looking for a 'superfood', it's better to aim for a 'superdiet' as recommended in healthy eating guidelines. This will help you make sure you're getting the widest possible variety of these substances. It will also make your diet more enjoyable and interesting, and it will probably be cheaper too.

'There are no so called 'superfoods' that we would suggest you have. There is a lot of information out there that promotes these sorts of foods but the general principles of a 'healthy diet' stand.'

**Jenny, dietitian**



## Should I follow a dairy-free diet?

Many research studies have looked for a link between diets that are high in dairy products and cancer (in particular breast and prostate cancer). But these studies haven't shown a clear link. Because of this, cancer experts don't recommend following a dairy-free diet to try to reduce the risk of cancer.

Dairy products are an important source of protein, calcium and some vitamins, but can be high in fat. Choose low-fat products to avoid putting on weight. Calcium is needed for strong bones and may help reduce the risk of bowel cancer. So if you decide to follow a dairy-free diet, you'll need to make sure you get enough calcium from other food sources, such as tinned sardines and salmon (with bones); dark green or leafy vegetables, such as spinach or okra; kidney beans; dried figs; or fortified foods, such as some types of soya milk fortified with calcium, or rice, almond or oat milk.

## Does sugar feed cancer?

Sugar in your diet doesn't directly increase the risk of cancer, or encourage it to grow. But sugar contains no useful nutrients, apart from energy, and we can get all the energy we need from healthier sources. So it's best to limit the amount of sugar in your diet.

## Should I only eat organic food?

Many people wonder whether they should follow an organic diet to prevent cancer from coming back. Some studies claim that organic fruit and vegetables have better flavour and stay fresh for longer, but others find them expensive and do not see the value of them compared with non-organic products. So far, no research has been done to find out whether an organic diet is more effective at stopping cancer from developing or coming back, compared to a non-organic diet.

Some people may worry that pesticides used in non-organic farming may cause cancer. In the UK, a pesticide can only be used once its safety has been tested. Laws ensure that all agricultural pesticides are used within a safe level.

Genetically modified (GM) crops have proved to be safe in the time they've been grown. But some people might feel that the long-term effects are unknown.

It's really up to you whether you buy organic or non-organic food. Current advice is to wash all fruit and vegetables, non-organic as well as organic, thoroughly before use to remove any form of pesticide and harmful bacteria.



## Do anti-cancer diets work?

There has been a lot of publicity about alternative diets for treating cancer over the past few years. Many dramatic claims for cures have been made. It's understandable that people may be attracted to diets that seem to offer the hope of a cure. However, there isn't good evidence that these diets can make a cancer shrink, increase a person's chance of survival or cure the disease.

Some people get satisfaction from following these types of diet, but others find them very expensive, quite boring and unpleasant to eat, and time-consuming to prepare. Some diets may lack important nutrients or be unbalanced in other ways, and may even be harmful. Some of the diets can be difficult to follow and if you fail to stick to the instructions it may make you feel guilty.

'A juice diet is not necessarily something health professionals would recommend during chemotherapy or at any time ... I would be concerned you might be missing out on essential nutrients found in other foods.'

**Jenny, dietitian**

It can be confusing to be faced with conflicting advice about what to eat, but dietitians, doctors and specialist nurses recommend a well-balanced and enjoyable diet, as described in this booklet.



# About our information

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

## Order what you need

You may want to order more leaflets or booklets like this one. Visit **be.macmillan.org.uk** or call us on **0808 808 00 00**.

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

All of our information is also available online at **macmillan.org.uk/cancerinformation**

There you'll also find videos featuring real-life 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
- large print
- translations.

Find out more at **macmillan.org.uk/otherformats**

If you'd 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**.

## Help us improve our information

We know that the people who use our information are the real experts. That's why we always involve them in our work. If you've been affected by cancer, you can help us improve our information.

We give you the chance to comment on a variety of information including booklets, leaflets and fact sheets.

If you'd like to hear more about becoming a reviewer, email [reviewing@macmillan.org.uk](mailto:reviewing@macmillan.org.uk) You can get involved from home whenever you like, and we don't ask for any special skills – just an interest in our cancer information.



# Other ways we can help you

**At Macmillan, we know how a cancer diagnosis can affect everything, and we're here to support you. No one should face cancer alone.**

## 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 Monday–Friday, 9am–8pm. Our cancer support specialists can:

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

Call us on **0808 808 00 00** or email us via our website, **[macmillan.org.uk/talktous](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/talktous)**

### Information centres

Our information and support centres are based in hospitals, libraries and mobile centres. There, you can speak with someone face to face.

Visit one to get the information you need, or if you'd like a private chat, most centres have a room where you can speak with someone alone and in confidence.

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



## 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's why we help to bring people together in their communities and online.

## Support groups

Whether you are someone living with cancer or a carer, 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](https://www.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](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/community)

## The Macmillan healthcare team

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.

'Everyone is so supportive on the online community, they know exactly what you're going through. It can be fun too. It's not all just chats about cancer.'

Mal

## Help with money worries

Having cancer can bring extra costs such as hospital parking, travel fares and higher heating bills. If you've been affected in this way, we can help.

### Financial advice

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

### Help accessing benefits

Our benefits advisers can offer advice and information on benefits, tax credits, grants and loans. They can help you work out what financial help you could be entitled to. They can also help you complete your forms and apply for benefits.

### 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** to speak to a financial guide or benefits adviser, or to find out more about Macmillan Grants. 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 work and cancer

Whether you're 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)**

# Other useful organisations

There are lots of other organisations that can give you information or support.

## Nutrition and diet information and support

### British Dietetic Association (BDA)

5<sup>th</sup> Floor, Charles House,  
148–9 Great Charles Street,  
Queensway,  
Birmingham B3 3HT

**Tel** 0121 200 8080

**Email** [info@bda.uk.com](mailto:info@bda.uk.com)

**[www.bda.uk.com](http://www.bda.uk.com)**

Provides training and facilities for registered dietitians.

The website includes food facts, and has information on the role of dietitians and how to find a freelance dietitian.

### CORE

3 St Andrews Place,  
London NW1 4LB

**Tel** 020 7486 0341

**Email** [info@corecharity.org.uk](mailto:info@corecharity.org.uk)

**[www.corecharity.org.uk](http://www.corecharity.org.uk)**

Funds research into a range of gut, liver, intestinal and bowel illnesses. Its website provides information on digestive disorders, treatments and coping with the effects of digestive disorders.

### Diabetes UK

Macleod House,  
10 Parkway,  
London NW1 7AA

**Tel** 0345 123 2399

(Mon–Fri, 9am–7pm)

**Email** [careline@diabetes.org.uk](mailto:careline@diabetes.org.uk)

### Scotland email

[carelinescotland@diabetes.org.uk](mailto:carelinescotland@diabetes.org.uk)

**[www.diabetes.org.uk](http://www.diabetes.org.uk)**

Gives information and support on any aspect of managing diabetes, including medication, diet and exercise.

## Cancer information and support

### Cancer Black Care

79 Acton Lane,  
London NW10 8UT

**Tel** 020 8961 4151

#### Email

[info@cancerblackcare.org.uk](mailto:info@cancerblackcare.org.uk)

**[www.cancerblackcare.org.uk](http://www.cancerblackcare.org.uk)**

Offers information and support for people with cancer from ethnic communities, their friends, carers and families.

### Cancer Focus

#### Northern Ireland

40–44 Eglantine Avenue,  
Belfast BT9 6DX

**Tel** 0800 783 3339

(Mon–Fri, 9am–1pm)

**Email** [hello@cancerfocusni.org](mailto:hello@cancerfocusni.org)

**[www.cancerfocusni.org](http://www.cancerfocusni.org)**

Offers a variety of services to people affected by cancer, including a free helpline, counselling and links to local support groups.

### Cancer Support Scotland

Calman Cancer Support  
Centre, 75 Shelley Road,  
Glasgow G12 0ZE

**Tel** 0800 652 4531

**Email** [info@](mailto:info@cancersupportscotland.org)

[cancersupportscotland.org](http://cancersupportscotland.org)

**[www.cancersupportscotland.org](http://www.cancersupportscotland.org)**

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

### Maggie's Centres

1<sup>st</sup> Floor, One Waterloo Street,  
Glasgow G2 6AY

**Tel** 0300 123 1801

**Email** [enquiries@](mailto:enquiries@maggiescentres.org)

[maggiescentres.org](http://maggiescentres.org)

**[www.maggiescentres.org](http://www.maggiescentres.org)**

Provide information about cancer, benefits advice, and emotional or psychological support.

**Tenovus**

Head Office,  
Gleider House, Ty Glas Road,  
Cardiff CF14 5BD

**Tel** 0808 808 1010

(Mon–Sun, 8am–8pm)

**www.tenovus.org.uk**

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

**Counselling and emotional support****British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP)**

BACP House,  
15 St John's Business Park,  
Lutterworth LE17 4HB

**Tel** 01455 883 300

**Email** [bacp@bacp.co.uk](mailto:bacp@bacp.co.uk)

**www.bacp.co.uk**

Promotes awareness of counselling and signposts people to appropriate services. You can search for a qualified counsellor at **itsgoodtotalk.org.uk**

**UK Council for Psychotherapy (UKCP)**

2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Edward House,  
2 Wakley Street,  
London EC1V 7LT

**Tel** 020 7014 9955

**Email** [info@ukcp.org.uk](mailto:info@ukcp.org.uk)

**www.psychotherapy.org.uk**

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

## Support for carers

### Carers UK

20 Great Dover Street,  
London SE1 4LX

**Tel** 0808 808 7777

(Wed–Thu, 10am–12pm  
and 2–4pm)

**Email** [info@carersuk.org](mailto:info@carersuk.org)

**[www.carersuk.org](http://www.carersuk.org)**

Offers information and support to carers. Can put people in contact with local support groups. Has national offices for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland:

### Carers Scotland

The Cottage,  
21 Pearce Street,  
Glasgow G51 3UT

**Tel** 0141 445 3070

**Email** [info@carerscotland.org](mailto:info@carerscotland.org)

**[www.carersuk.org/scotland](http://www.carersuk.org/scotland)**

### Carers Wales

River House,  
Ynsbridge Court,  
Cardiff CF15 9SS

**Tel** 029 2081 1370

**Email** [info@carerswales.org](mailto:info@carerswales.org)

**[www.carersuk.org/wales](http://www.carersuk.org/wales)**

### Carers Northern Ireland

58 Howard Street,  
Belfast BT1 6PJ

**Tel** 028 9043 9843

**Email** [info@carersni.org](mailto:info@carersni.org)

**[www.carersuk.org/  
northernireland](http://www.carersuk.org/northernireland)**



You can search for more organisations on our website at [macmillan.org.uk/organisations](http://macmillan.org.uk/organisations), or call us on 0808 808 00 00.



## 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 our Chief Medical Editor, Dr Tim Iveson, Macmillan Consultant Medical Oncologist.

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# Can you do something to help?

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



## **Share your cancer experience**

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

## **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.

## **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?

## **Raise money**

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

## **Give money**

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

**Call us to find out more**

**0300 1000 200**

**[macmillan.org.uk/getinvolved](http://macmillan.org.uk/getinvolved)**

## 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

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Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date     /     / \_\_\_\_\_

## Don't 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 taxpayer and I would like Macmillan Cancer Support to treat all donations I have made for the four years prior to this year, and all donations I make in the future, as Gift Aid donations, until I notify you otherwise.

I confirm I have paid or will pay an amount of Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax in each tax year, that is at least equal to the tax that Charities & CASCs I donate to will reclaim on my gifts. I understand that other taxes such as VAT and Council Tax do not qualify and that 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'd rather donate online go to [macmillan.org.uk/donate](https://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



More than one in three of us will get cancer. For most of us it will be the toughest fight we ever face. And the feelings of isolation and loneliness that so many people experience make it even harder. But you don't have to go through it alone. The Macmillan team is with you every step of the way.

We are the nurses and therapists helping you through treatment. The experts on the end of the phone. The advisers telling you which benefits you're entitled to. The volunteers giving you a hand with the everyday things. The campaigners improving cancer care. The community there for you online, any time. The supporters who make it all possible.

Together, we are all Macmillan Cancer Support.

For cancer support every step of the way, call Macmillan on 0808 808 00 00 (Mon–Fri, 9am–8pm) or visit [macmillan.org.uk](http://macmillan.org.uk)

Hard of hearing? Use textphone 0808 808 0121, or Text Relay.

Non-English speaker? Interpreters available. Braille and large print versions on request.

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