

A practical guide to living  
with and after cancer

# HEALTHY EATING AND CANCER

WE ARE  
MACMILLAN.  
CANCER SUPPORT

This booklet is one of a series of booklets on diet and cancer. It gives information about eating a healthy diet. We also have booklets on eating problems, diets to help you gain weight and recipes.

Our information booklets on diet and cancer are:

- *Healthy eating and cancer*
- *Eating problems and cancer*
- *The building-up diet*
- *Recipes from Macmillan Cancer Support.*

It's important to check with your hospital consultant, dietitian or nurse specialist that this is the right booklet for you, and whether you need any additional information.

If you would like more information about these booklets, you can contact our cancer support specialists on **0808 808 00 00**. They will be able to send you the booklet or booklets that contain the information you need.

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# About *Healthy eating* *and cancer*

Following a cancer diagnosis, many people want to make positive changes to their lives. Taking steps to live a healthier lifestyle is often a major part of these changes. This booklet has been written for people living with or after cancer, who 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 body weight. It aims to help you think about what changes you may want to make, and help you put them into practice.

There are also answers to some commonly-asked questions 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**

Turn to pages 35–42 for some useful addresses and websites, and page 43 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 (10%) cancers 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.

One report showed that a lack of fruit and vegetables in the diet may contribute to about 6 out of 100 (6%) cancers in men. Being overweight may contribute to about 7 out of 100 (7%) cancers in women. There are many other reasons why people are overweight, but an unhealthy diet and lack of physical activity are often factors.

However, we still don't understand exactly how diet influences the risk of developing cancer. There are many reasons for this, mainly because both cancer and diet are complex.

Eating habits are very different from person to person. Our diets are made up of many types of foods, which in turn are made up of thousands of different substances. Some of these substances may increase our risk of cancer but others may protect us. And the influence on what we eat, and our risk of cancer, is likely to take many years, or even decades, to have an effect. So trying to find out how diet affects our risk of developing cancer is complicated.

For now, we do know which types of food help keep us healthy. And we know that a balanced diet and regular exercise helps us keep to a healthy weight, which can help reduce the risk of developing some cancers.

# Why a healthy diet is important

Eating 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, heart disease, strokes and diabetes.

After cancer treatment, some people have a higher risk of developing 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 turn to food when life is stressful, which is known as comfort eating. For others, being busy means we don't have time to look at healthier options when we're food shopping. It can sometimes be easier to choose ready meals. For some people, the cost of food is an issue. So you may want to change the way you eat, but thinking of how to do it may feel too hard.

It may help to make healthy 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; try adding fresh or stewed fruit, or a glass of fruit juice. For snacks, you could 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, as you may discover new foods that you haven't tried before.



If you're not sure how to go about changing your diet, ask your GP or specialist nurse. A dietitian can help you make these changes, and also advise you about any other dietary problems during or after your cancer treatment.

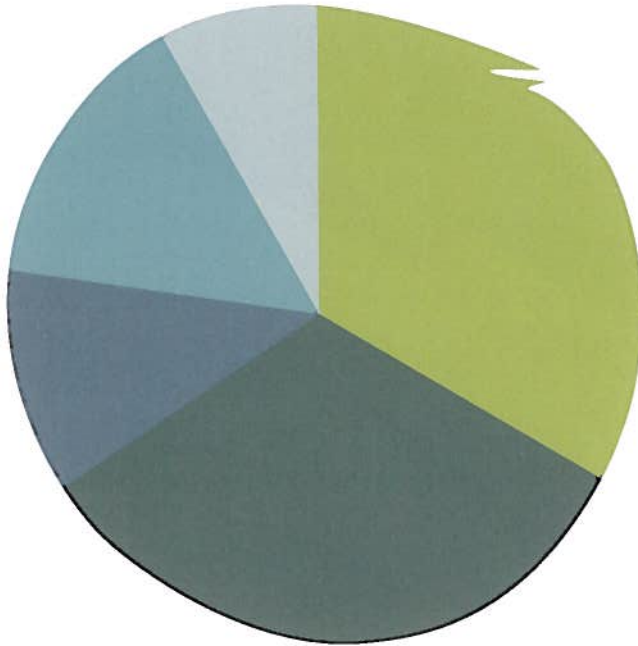
Whether you want to make small or big changes to your diet, it may take time to find healthy foods that you like, or a diet that works for you. It can help to try different foods. This can stop you getting bored and may help motivate you to continue a healthy diet in the long-term.

# A healthy eating guide

Before making changes to your diet, it can help to talk to a dietitian, your GP or cancer specialist. For most people, a daily balanced diet includes:

- lots of fruit and vegetables
- plenty of starchy (carbohydrate) foods 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, yoghurts and cream
- just a small amount of food high in fat, salt and sugar
- drinks should mainly be water, tea and coffee (without added sugar), or sugar-free drinks such as fizzy drinks, colas and squashes. See pages 17–18 for more information about alcoholic drinks.

This shows the proportion of each food group that make up a healthy diet:



**Fruit and vegetables**  
(page 11)



**Milk and dairy**  
(pages 13–15)



**Starches**  
(page 12)



**Fat/salt/sugar**  
(pages 14–16)



**Protein**  
(pages 12–14)



## Fruit and vegetables

Fruit 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.

Research suggests that people who eat diets high in fruit and vegetables may have a lower risk of heart disease. It also suggests that these diets may 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, and is roughly:

- three heaped tablespoons of vegetables
- a dessert bowl of salad
- one average-sized fruit, like an apple, pear or banana
- two smaller fruits, like apricots or plums
- a slice of larger fruits, such as melon or mango
- a handful of small fruits, like 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 of fruit and vegetables of different colours will help make sure you're getting a wide range of valuable nutrients.

## Starchy foods and fibre

Starchy foods such as bread, chapatti, cereals, rice, pasta, yams and potatoes are a very 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.

Foods rich in fibre are a healthy option, but most people don't eat enough. Try to include a variety of fibre-rich foods in your diet, such as wholegrain bread, brown rice, oats, beans, peas, lentils, grains, seeds, fruit and vegetables.

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

## Protein

The body needs protein to perform a wide range of functions, such as the repair and growth of body cells. Protein-rich foods are often also 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 (about 160g) a day. People who eat less than two portions a week (about 140g) 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 your palm. Try to avoid processed meats, and eat more fish, chicken, turkey, beans or lentils instead. Eating meat that's cooked at high temperatures, such as those used in frying and barbecuing, may also increase the risk of developing some cancers.

### **Other sources of protein**

Other sources of protein, often found in vegetarian and vegan diets, include pulses (peas, beans, and lentils) and nuts. Pulses can form the base of lots of meals. Nuts can be used in both sweet and savoury dishes and are high in energy. They contain good amounts of both protein and some of the healthier unsaturated fats (see page 14).

Some vegetarians include egg 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 and should be eaten in small amounts. Vegan cheese made from soya can be a healthier alternative to dairy cheese.

Soya is also available as mince, burgers, sausages, milk, and tofu. Myco-protein (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. If you are worried about this, 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** can raise cholesterol levels in the blood and increase the risk of heart disease. Foods that are 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. Try to use the nutrition label on foods as a guide. High-fat foods contain more than 20g of fat per 100g. Low-fat foods contain less than 3g of fat per 100g.

**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, there may be some potential health risks from eating too much oily fish. This is because chemicals,



pesticide residues, and metals like mercury may be found in the water the fish were caught in. These substances can end up in the water through industrial or farming processes. Mercury can occur naturally in the water. So the UK Food Standards Agency recommends that children, and women who may become pregnant, eat up to two portions a week, and that women past childbearing age and men don't eat more than four portions a week.

Other good sources of unsaturated fat include nuts and seeds, and 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 per 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 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.

- 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 alcohol intake and include 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 can find helpful advice in our booklets *The building-up diet* and *Recipes from Macmillan Cancer Support*.**

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 a healthy body weight is one of the best ways to reduce your risk of developing cancer. There's more information and advice about managing your weight in our booklet *Weight management after cancer treatment*.

Being overweight increases the risk of many types of cancer, including cancers of the bowel, kidney, womb, oesophagus (gullet) and breast cancer in women who have been through the menopause.

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.

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.

- Only eat as much food as you need according to how active you are. You may need to discuss your calorie needs with a dietitian.
- Eat a balanced 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 the 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. Socially, we often enjoy 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 with friends, but maybe try having a smaller portion than you'd normally have. 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 can eat whatever you want. You may quickly find that the healthier 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.'**



# Commonly-asked questions about diet and cancer

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

People often ask if what they eat can reduce their risk of the cancer returning. This is the subject of a lot of research. 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 page 8).

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 particular change.

Your healthcare team (this includes your GP, doctors and nurses) are the best people to advise you what, if 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?**

Make sure that eggs are well-cooked, and use shop-bought, not home-made mayonnaise. If your immunity is low, avoid pâté, raw eggs, live bacterial yoghurt and cheeses made from unpasteurised milk, such as Brie and blue-veined cheeses. These foods may contain harmful bacteria.

If you're on high-dose chemotherapy, your healthcare team may suggest that you avoid additional foods – ask them for advice.

## **Should I take dietary supplements?**

For most people, a balanced diet provides all the nutrients they need, and taking large doses of vitamins, minerals and other dietary supplements isn't recommended. But people who find it difficult to eat a balanced diet may benefit from taking a multivitamin or mineral supplement containing up to 100% of the recommended daily allowance.

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

Several studies have looked at whether taking supplements can reduce the risk of developing certain cancers. But the results have been disappointing, and 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.

One study found that people who smoke were more likely to develop lung cancer if they took supplements of beta-carotene (a substance the body uses to make vitamin A). And the results of other studies suggest that high doses of beta-carotene and vitamin A supplements may increase the risk of getting cancers of the gullet and stomach.

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.

### **What about 'superfoods'?**

There isn't any scientific evidence for any one particular 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.

There are many substances in fruits and vegetables that may potentially have anti-cancer properties. However, at the moment we don't know this for certain, and we don't understand which ones are most likely to help or how they work.

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.

## 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 leafy vegetables, such as spinach; or fortified foods, such as some types of soya 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 if they should follow an organic diet to prevent cancer from coming back. Studies that examined the nutritional benefits of organic fruit and vegetables had mixed outcomes. Some claim that organic fruit and vegetables have better flavour and stay fresh for longer. So far, no research has been done to find out if an organic diet is more effective at stopping the recurrence or occurrence of cancer, 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 seven years they've been grown. But some people might feel that the long-term effects are unknown.

Buying organic or non-organic food is ultimately a personal choice. The current advice is to wash all fruit and vegetables, non-organic as well as organic, thoroughly before use to remove any form of pesticide.

## 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 special diets, but others find them quite boring and even 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.

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

## Summary

We hope this information has answered some of your questions and has given you some ideas about how you can improve your health and follow a healthy diet.

If you're thinking of making changes to what you eat, you can get more advice from your doctor, dietitian or specialist nurse. They can offer you information and advice tailored to your particular situation. You may also find some of the organisations on pages 35–38 helpful.



# How we can help you

Cancer is the toughest fight most of us will ever face. But you don't have to go through it alone. The Macmillan team is with you every step of the way.

## Get in touch

### Macmillan Cancer Support

89 Albert Embankment,  
London SE1 7UQ

### Questions about cancer?

Call free on **0808 808 00 00**  
(Mon–Fri, 9am–8pm)

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

### Hard of hearing?

Use textphone  
0808 808 0121 or Text Relay.

### Non-English speaker?

Interpreters are available.

## Clear, reliable information about cancer

We can help you by phone, email, via our website and publications or in person. And our information is free to everyone affected by cancer.

### Macmillan Support Line

Our free, confidential phone line is open Monday–Friday, 9am–8pm. Our cancer support specialists provide clinical, financial, emotional and practical information and support to anyone affected by cancer. Call us on **0808 808 00 00** or email us via our website, **[macmillan.org.uk/talktous](http://macmillan.org.uk/talktous)**

### Information centres

Our information and support centres are based in hospitals, libraries and mobile centres, and offer you the opportunity to speak with someone face-to-face. Find your nearest one at **[macmillan.org.uk/informationcentres](http://macmillan.org.uk/informationcentres)**

## Publications

We provide expert, up-to-date information about different types of cancer, tests and treatments, and information about living with and after cancer. We can send you free information in a variety of formats, including booklets, leaflets, fact sheets, and audio CDs. We can also provide our information in Braille and large print.

You can find all of our information, along with several videos, online at **macmillan.org.uk/cancerinformation**

## Review our information

Help us make our resources even better for people affected by cancer. Being one of our reviewers gives you the chance to comment on a variety of information including booklets, fact sheets, leaflets, videos, illustrations and website text.

## Need out-of-hours support?

You can find a lot of information on our website, **macmillan.org.uk**. For medical attention out of hours, please contact your GP for their out-of-hours service.

## Someone to talk to

When you or someone you know has cancer, it can be difficult to talk about how you're feeling. You can call our cancer support specialists to talk about how you feel and what's worrying you.

We can also help you find support in your local area, so you can speak face-to-face with people who understand what you're going through.

## Professional help

Our Macmillan nurses, doctors and other healthcare and social care professionals offer expert treatment and care. They help individuals and families deal with cancer from diagnosis onwards, until they no longer need this help.

You can ask your GP, hospital consultant, district nurse or hospital ward sister if there are any Macmillan professionals available in your area, or call us.

## Support for each other

No one knows more about the impact cancer has on a person's life than those who have been affected by it themselves. That's why we help to bring people with cancer and carers together in their communities and online.

### Support groups

You can 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

You can also share your experiences, ask questions, get and give support to others in our online community at [macmillan.org.uk/community](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/community)

## Financial and work-related support

Having cancer can bring extra costs such as hospital parking, travel fares and higher heating bills. Some people may have to stop working.

If you've been affected in this way, we can help. Call the Macmillan Support Line and one of our cancer support specialists will tell you about the benefits and other financial help you may be entitled to.

We can also give you information about your rights at work as an employee, and help you find further support.

### Macmillan Grants

Money worries are the last thing you need when you have cancer. A Macmillan Grant is a one-off payment for people with cancer, to cover a variety of practical needs including heating bills, extra clothing, or a much-needed break.

Find out more about the financial and work-related support we can offer at **macmillan.org.uk/financialsupport**

## Learning about cancer

You may find it useful to learn more about cancer and how to manage the impact it can have on your life.

You can do this online on our Learn Zone – **macmillan.org.uk/learnzone** – which offers a variety of e-learning courses and workshops. There's also a section dedicated to supporting people with cancer – ideal for people who want to learn more about what their relative or friend is going through.

# Other useful organisations

## **Association for Nutrition**

28 Portland Place,  
London W1B 1LY  
**Tel** 020 7291 8385

**Email** info@

associationfornutrition.org

**www.associationfor  
nutrition.org**

Provides an online directory  
of local nutritional therapists.

## **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

**www.bda.uk.com**

Provides training and facilities  
for registered dietitians  
and has information on the  
difference between dietitians  
and nutritional therapists.

## **British Nutrition Foundation**

High Holborn House,  
52–54 High Holborn,  
London WC1V 6RQ

**Tel** 020 7404 6504

**Email**

postbox@nutrition.org.uk

**www.nutrition.org.uk**

Distributes information and  
advice on the relationship  
between diet, physical  
activity and health.

## **CORE**

3 St Andrews Place,  
London NW1 4LB

**Tel** 020 7486 0341

**Email** info@corecharity.org.uk

**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

**Careline** 0845 120 2960

(Mon–Fri, 9am–5pm)

**Tel** 020 7424 1000

#### **Email**

[careline@diabetes.org.uk](mailto:careline@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.

### **General cancer support organisations**

#### **Cancer Support Scotland (Tak Tent)**

Flat 5, 30 Shelley Court,  
Gartnavel Complex,  
Glasgow G12 0YN

**Tel** 0141 211 0122

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

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

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

Offers information and support for cancer patients, families, friends and healthcare professionals. Runs a network of monthly support groups across Scotland.

Also provides counselling and complementary therapies.

#### **Irish Cancer Society**

43–45 Northumberland Road,  
Dublin 4, Ireland

#### **Cancer Helpline**

1800 200 700 (Mon–Thurs,  
9am–7pm, Fri, 9am–5pm)

**Email** [helpline@irishcancer.ie](mailto:helpline@irishcancer.ie)

**[www.cancer.ie](http://www.cancer.ie)**

Operates Ireland's only freephone cancer helpline, which is staffed by nurses trained in cancer care.

#### **Maggie's Cancer Caring Centres**

8 Newton Place,  
Glasgow G3 7PR

**Tel** 0300 123 1801

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

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

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

Located throughout the country, Maggie's Centres offer free, comprehensive support for anyone affected by cancer. You can access information, benefits advice, and emotional or psychological support.

### **Tenovus**

9<sup>th</sup> Floor, Gleider House,  
Ty Glas Road, Llanishen,  
Cardiff CF14 5BD

#### **Freephone helpline**

0808 808 1010

**Tel** 029 2076 8850

**Email** [post@tenovus.com](mailto:post@tenovus.com)

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

Provides a variety of services to people with cancer and their families, including counselling and a freephone cancer helpline.

### **The Ulster**

#### **Cancer Foundation**

40–44 Eglantine Avenue,  
Belfast BT9 6DX

#### **Freephone helpline**

0800 783 3339

#### **Helpline email**

[infocis@ulstercancer.org](mailto:infocis@ulstercancer.org)

**Tel** 028 9066 3281

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

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

Provides a variety of services for people with cancer and their families, including a free telephone helpline, which is staffed by specially trained nurses with experience in cancer care.

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

**[www.bacp.co.uk](http://www.bacp.co.uk)** and

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

Promotes awareness and availability of counselling, and signposts people to appropriate services. Has a database on the website where you can search for a qualified counsellor.

#### **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](http://www.psychotherapy.org.uk)**

UKCP holds the national register of psychotherapists and psychotherapeutic counsellors, listing those

practitioner members who meet exacting standards and training requirements.

## Support for carers

### Carers UK

20 Great Dover Street,  
London SE1 4LX

**Tel** 020 7378 4999

**Advice line** 0808 808 7777  
(Wed and Thurs, 10am–12pm  
and 2–4pm)

**Email** from the website

**[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, Gwaelod-y-Garth,  
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)**



# Further resources

## Related Macmillan information

You may want to order some of the booklets mentioned in this booklet. These include:

- *Move more*
- *Physical activity and cancer*
- *Weight management after cancer treatment*

Other booklets in this series:

- *Eating problems and cancer*
- *Recipes from Macmillan Cancer Support*
- *The building-up diet*

To order, visit **be.macmillan.org.uk** All of our information is also available online at **macmillan.org.uk/cancerinformation**

## Audio resources

Our high-quality audio materials, based on our variety of booklets, include information about cancer types, different treatments and about living with cancer. To order your free CD, visit **be.macmillan.org.uk** or call **0808 808 00 00**.

## Useful websites

A lot of information about cancer is available on the internet. Some websites are excellent; others have misleading or out-of-date information. The sites listed here are considered by nurses and doctors to contain accurate information and are regularly updated.

**Macmillan Cancer Support**  
**www.macmillan.org.uk** Find out more about living with the practical, emotional and financial effects of cancer.

Our website contains expert, accurate, up-to-date information about cancer and its treatments, including:

- all the information from our 100+ booklets and 350+ fact sheets
- videos featuring real-life stories from people affected by cancer and information from medical professionals
- how Macmillan can help, the services we offer and where to get support
- how to contact our cancer support specialists, including an email form to send your questions
- local support groups search, links to other cancer organisations and a directory of information materials
- a huge online community of people affected by cancer sharing their experiences, advice and support.

**[www.cancer.gov](http://www.cancer.gov)  
(National Cancer Institute – National Institute of Health – USA)**

Gives comprehensive information on cancer and treatments.

**[www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org)  
(American Cancer Society)**

Nationwide community-based health organisation dedicated to eliminating cancer. It aims to do this through research, education and advocacy.

**[www.cancerequality.org.uk](http://www.cancerequality.org.uk)  
(Cancer Equality)**

Aims to reduce the inequalities experienced by people with cancer from black and minority ethnic and refugee communities. It produces resources for people from those groups about coping with eating difficulties.

**[www.cancerhelp.org.uk](http://www.cancerhelp.org.uk)  
(Cancer Research UK)**

Contains patient information on all types of cancer and has a cancer research clinical trials database.

**www.food.gov.uk**  
**(Food Standards Agency)**

An independent government department that aims to protect the public's health and consumer interests in relation to food.

**www.healthtalkonline.org**  
**www.youthhealthtalk.org**  
**(site for teens and young adults)**

Both websites contain information about some cancers and have video and audio clips of people talking about their experiences of cancer and its treatments.

**www.iarc.fr**  
**(International Agency for Research on Cancer)**

Has details of international dietary guidelines.

**www.library.nhs.uk**  
**(National Library of Health)**

National UK health information site covers all aspects of health, illness and treatments.

**www.nhs.uk**  
**(NHS Choices)**

NHS Choices is the online 'front door' to the NHS. It is the country's biggest health website and gives all the information you need to make choices about your health.

**www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk**  
**(NHS Direct Online)**

NHS health information site for England – covers all aspects of health, illness and treatments.

**www.nhs24.com**  
**(NHS 24 in Scotland)**

**www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk**  
**(NHS Direct Wales)**

**www.n-i.nhs.uk**  
**(Health and Social Care in Northern Ireland)**

**www.nutrition.org.uk**  
**(British Nutrition Foundation)**

Contains information on healthy eating.

**[www.patient.co.uk](http://www.patient.co.uk)**

**(Patient UK)**

Provides good quality information about health and disease. Includes evidence-based information leaflets on a wide range of medical and health topics. Also reviews and links to many health- and illness-related websites.

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

**(Riprap)**

Developed especially for teenagers who have a parent with cancer.

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

**(World Cancer Research Fund)**

An organisation committed to preventing cancer. It funds research and provides people with information about reducing their risk of cancer.

**[www.who.int](http://www.who.int)**

**(World Health Organisation)**

Has details of international dietary guidelines.

# Questions you might like to ask your doctor, nurse or dietitian

You can fill this in before you see the doctor, nurse or dietitian and then use it to remind yourself of the questions you want to ask, and the answers you receive.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

Answer \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

Answer \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Answer \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

Answer \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

Answer \_\_\_\_\_

6. \_\_\_\_\_

Answer \_\_\_\_\_

# Notes

## Disclaimer

We make every effort to ensure that the information we provide is accurate, but it should not be relied upon to reflect the current state of medical research, which is constantly changing. If you are concerned about your health, you should consult a doctor. Macmillan cannot accept liability for any loss or damage resulting from any inaccuracy in this information or third-party information, such as information on websites to which we link. We feature real-life stories in all of our articles. Some photographs 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 medical editor, Dr Terry Priestman, Consultant Clinical Oncologist.

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Patient quote sourced from Healthtalkonline – [www.healthtalkonline.org](http://www.healthtalkonline.org)

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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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Valid from

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Expiry date

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Issue no

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Security 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](http://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