

Wellbeing and Living Beyond Cancer

Helping you take control

Practical advice, information and support to help you to lead as normal and active life as possible, during and after your cancer treatment.





Introduction

This leaflet is for anyone living with and beyond skin and head & neck cancer.

The information in the leaflet is designed to look at ways to help people manage the day-to-day impact of living with cancer.

Details are provided about resources available to help you and your family to live as well as possible with cancer.

Information is provided about:

- Healthy eating
- Activity
- Lifestyle changes
- Money matters

- Work and Cancer
- Coping strategies
- Symptoms to look out for Healthy Eating

Healthy Eating

After a cancer diagnosis, many patients find making the decision to follow a healthy, balanced diet helps give them back a sense of control. This can also help you feel that you are doing the best for your health. Eating well and keeping to a healthy weight will help you keep up your strength, increase your energy levels and improve your sense of well-being.

After cancer treatment, patients have a higher risk of other health problems, including diabetes, heart disease or osteoporosis (bone thinning).

Before making changes to your diet, it can help to talk to a dietitian, your GP or specialist nurse. This may be especially useful if you have any special dietary requirements.

A dietitian can help you make changes and advise you about any other dietary problems you might have during or after your cancer treatment.

Staying Active

When you are living with cancer, becoming more active can be a positive change to make in your life, but it is important to get advice before you start doing this. Being active before, during and after treatment can:

- reduce tiredness (fatigue)
- improve your quality of life
- help look after your heart
- reduce anxiety and depression
- help you maintain a healthy weight

- strengthen your muscles, joints and bones
- improve your flexibility and help keep you supple
- increase your confidence.

Your consultant, GP or specialist nurse can tell you what type of exercise is most appropriate for you. You can also get support from a physiotherapist or an occupational therapist.

Lifestyle Changes

Living a healthy lifestyle can help your body recover after treatment. It can also help to reduce the risk of other illnesses, such as heart disease, diabetes and strokes.

After cancer treatment, some people choose to make some positive lifestyle changes.

You may have already followed a healthy lifestyle before your cancer treatment, but now you may be more focused on making the most of your health.

We can provide more information for you about well-being and signpost you to support groups in your local area to help with this.

Money Matters

Living with cancer can affect your income, whether you are working, unemployed or retired.

You may earn less if you stop working or reduce your hours.

You may spend more on everyday costs like heating or getting around.

If you are diagnosed with cancer there are a range of benefits you may be entitled to which could help you with your everyday living costs.

At QVH Macmillan Information Centre, we have a range of booklets about financial matters which are available for you to use. We can also refer you and your family to Citizens Advice Bureau and Macmillan Welfare Benefits Team with any financial concerns.

Work and Cancer

After your cancer treatment is over, you may have a number of different feelings. When you are ready to think about going back to work, talking to your employer can help. Deciding on a flexible return-to-work-plan can help both of you to understand:

- how your employer can help you
- what you are capable of
- when changes might be needed

The plan might include changes to your hours, your duties, or your workplace.

Depending on your condition, you may have to change parts of your job, for example driving or operating machinery.

Your employer must make reasonable adjustments to help you return. This could include changing the requirements of your role, making sure you have suitable access to the workplace, or providing you with different tools.

Coping Strategies

A diagnosis of cancer is life changing. The impact on individuals includes living with continuing uncertainty about prognosis or life expectancy. It includes changes in appearance or body image, chronic pain, altered abilities or limited mobility. Cancer can exacerbate existing mental health problems like anxiety or depression. It can also make practical worries or problems more acute such as relationship tensions, money worries, or difficulties with work or study. The impacts on those who love and care for people with cancer are many and varied, and individuals emphasise the need to recognise this is also of critical importance.

Psychological support matters at every stage of the cancer journey. Here at the Queen Victoria Hospital we have a team of counsellors and psychological therapists who you can be referred to during and after treatment.

Symptoms to look out for

When treatment has finished, it is common to worry that every ache and pain you have is linked to cancer. You will still be getting used to what now feels normal for you. You will also get the usual aches and pains that most people get. This means it can be hard to know what you need to pay attention to. If you know your body and what is normal for you, it will help you to be aware of any changes. At your follow-up appointments, ask about:

- any symptoms you should look out for
- possible late effects that may develop due to your treatment

Always make sure you get your symptoms checked, even if you think they are not serious. Inform your doctor or nurse specialist know if you have any new symptoms, or similar symptoms to those you had when you were diagnosed. You do not have to wait until your next follow-up (check-up) appointment to contact your CNS.

You can also see your GP if there is anything you are not sure about. Your GP can check your symptoms and refer you for advice if needed.

How can I find out further information?

Please contact: **QVH Macmillan Information Centre**

Monday to Friday 10am – 4pm

Telephone: 01342 414369

Other Useful Organisations

NHS

www.nhs.uk

Macmillan Cancer Support

Telephone: 0808 808 0000

www.macmillan.org.uk

Cancer Research UK

Telephone: 0808 800 4040

www.cancerresearchuk.org

Tenovus

Telephone: 0808 808 1010

www.tenovuscancercare.org.uk

Age UK

Helpline: 0800 678 1602

www.ageuk.org.uk

Look Good Feel Better

Telephone: 01372 747500

www.lookgoodfeelbetter.co.uk

One You East Sussex

www.oneyoueastsussex.org.uk

Citizens Advice Bureau

Advice Line: 08001448848

www.citizensadvice.org.uk

Citizens Advice in West Sussex (North, South, East)

Telephone: 08082787969

www.advicewestsussex.org.uk

Samaritans

Helpline: 116 123

www.samaritans.org

Time to Talk

Telephone: 01903 703540

www.sussexcommunity.nhs.uk

Headstart Head and Neck Cancer Support

Telephone: 01342 414493 Queen Victoria Hospital

01634 825389 Medway Hospital

www.headstartcancersupport.org.uk

Here are the pre-recorded video links, which are useful information.

Macmillan Cancer Support

Sex, relationships & cancer

<https://youtu.be/9x11z35Egr0>

Physical activity & cancer

<https://youtu.be/HCRkSKjLOzo>

Cancer in the workplace

<https://youtu.be/dBB8Fj4NkEq>

Caring for someone with cancer

<https://youtu.be/grd2ngrzt08>

Healthy eating

<https://youtu.be/G5DermDdjUY>

The Fountain Centre

Introduction to meditation

<https://youtu.be/E0NURlu9I2s>

Reframing negative thoughts

<https://youtu.be/ObqSNhYu4pQ>

Seated yoga

<https://youtu.be/MMTNZbNonZ8>

Balanced breathing

<https://youtu.be/dNmOhvxYHdl>

Royal Surrey NHS Foundation Trust

Losing your appetite

<https://youtu.be/N-70ISXF8y4>

The Olive Tree

Self Massage for Arm and Hand

<https://bit.ly/32IK6aT>

General coping strategies

https://youtu.be/Eqyoci_bhEU

Stress management

<https://youtu.be/flbbvG2qP9s>

Coping with fatigue

<https://youtu.be/DqMj8-naBrc>

Yoga Breathing Practice
https://youtu.be/wyApzxVt_y0

Deep Relaxation
<https://youtu.be/m2REhfwg8ZI>

Information and Support Centres in Sussex, Surrey and Kent

Macmillan Centre Information Service,
Queen Victoria Hospital NHS Foundation
Trust, Holtye Road BN2 5BD
East Grinstead RH19 3DZ
☎ 01342 414369
@ qvh.cancerinformation@nhs.net
www.qvh.nhs.uk/for-patients/pals-and-support

**St Richards Macmillan Information
and Support Service, Chichester**
Fernhurst Centre
St Richards Hospital, Spitalfields Lane
Chichester PO19 6SE
☎ 01243 831727
@ cancer.information@wsht.nhs.uk

**East Surrey Macmillan Cancer Support
Centre**
East Surrey Hospital Royal
Redhill, Surrey RH1 5RH
☎ 01737 304176
@ informationcentre.sash@nhs.net

Kent Oncology Macmillan Cancer
Information and Service Crawley
Hospital
Maidstone Hospital
Hermitage Lane
ME16 9QQ
☎ 01622 227064 (ext 27064)

The Macmillan Horizon Centre
Bristol Gate, Brighton
East Sussex BN2 5BD
☎ 01273 468770
@ horizoncentre@macmillan.org.uk
www.macmillan.org.uk/horizoncentre

Cancerwise, Chichester
Tavern House
4 City Business Centre, Basin Road
Chichester PO19 8DU
☎ 01243 778516
@ enquiries@cancerwise.org.uk
www.cancerwise.org.uk

The Fountain Centre, Guilford
St Luke's Cancer Centre
Royal Surrey County Hospital NHS
Foundation Trust, Egerton Road
Guildford, Surrey GU2 7XX
☎ 01483 4086618
@ psc-tr.fountaincentre@nhs.net

The Olive Tree, Crawley
Crawley Hospital
West Green Drive
Crawley RH11 7DH
☎ 01293 534465
@ office@olivetrecancersupport.org.uk
www.olivetrecancersupport.org.uk





If you'd like to find out how you can support QVH,
please visit www.supportqvh.org



Please ask if you
would like this leaflet
in larger print or an
alternative format.

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