

The person who I look after

If you have cancer and also look after someone, you may have many different feelings. These feelings might come and go. You may both have good days when you feel positive, and bad days when your fears and worries are worse.

You might feel scared and anxious about what is happening. You may feel unsure about how you are going to cope. Cancer can take away your feelings of control. Feeling uncertain about the future can be one of the hardest things to deal with.

You may feel like you are on your own and that other people do not understand what you are going through.

Tips for when you are looking after someone

- You may think you should ignore your own feelings and focus on looking after the other person. But it is not good for you to ignore your feelings for a long time. Dealing with your feelings can help you support them better.
- Try not to let feelings of anger and resentment build up. Try to understand how the other person feels. This may stop anger and irritation developing into an argument.
- Talk to them and explain how you feel. Choose a time when you are both having a good day. Or you may find it easier to talk about your feelings with someone else.
- Listening is just as important as talking. It can help you both understand what the other person is feeling. You may feel unsure about how to comfort them. Listening to them when they want to talk can make a real difference. Here are some tips for talking and listening:
 - Try not to talk when one of you is busy or tired.
 - Choose a time and place when you can talk without being interrupted.
 - Talking about feelings can be tiring. Set a limit on how long you will talk for.
 - Pay attention to what they are saying. Try to listen instead of thinking about what you are going to say next.
 - Try to repeat back what you have heard. This helps you check you have got it right and shows you are listening. You might say things like, 'So you mean that...?'.
- It can also help to talk about how you are feeling with someone else. Sharing your feelings can help you accept the situation and remember what is important to you. You may want to talk to someone you know well, or someone outside of your situation.
- Talking to a professional may help. You can ask your GP about how to get counselling or see a psychologist. A counsellor or psychologist helps you talk about your feelings.
- Writing about your feelings can help you express how you feel. If you are worried about things, writing them down may help you stop thinking about them. You could keep a diary or blog, or use social media. You could also join our Online Community – visit [macmillan.org.uk/community](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/community)

Local resources:

Resource	Contact details

National resources:

Resource	Contact details
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carers Direct 	<p>www.nhs.uk/carersdirect</p> <p>Tel 0300 123 1053 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 8pm, Saturday to Sunday, 11am to 4pm)</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carers Trust 	<p>www.carers.org</p> <p>Tel 0300 772 9600 (England)</p> <p>0300 772 7701 (Scotland)</p> <p>0300 772 9702 (Wales)</p> <p>07826 930508 (Northern Ireland)</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carers UK 	<p>www.carersuk.org</p> <p>Tel 0808 808 7777 (England, Scotland, Wales)</p> <p>028 9043 9843 (Northern Ireland)</p>

Further information

www.macmillan.org.uk/emotionaleffectsofcaring

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

- **Cancer and relationships**

More information and support

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

Deaf or hard of hearing? Call using NGT (Text Relay) on **18001 0808 808 00 00**, or use the NGT Lite app. Speak another language? Telephone interpreters are available. Please tell us, in English, the language you would like to use.

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

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