

Loss of interest in activities

This information is about coping with no longer feeling interested in activities that you used to enjoy. Feeling that we have some control over our lives makes us feel secure. This allows us to enjoy the things we do and make plans for the future. But being diagnosed with cancer can take away that feeling of security. It can make you uncertain about what will happen.

Most people who have been through cancer treatment live with some worry and uncertainty. This does not mean they are not coping with life after treatment. Some people find it hard to cope with these feelings of uncertainty. They may feel as if they have very little control over their lives. These feelings often get better over time.

Having cancer can also make you feel less confident. You may feel you lost some of your independence during your treatment. Your role in your family or at work may have changed. Your social life may have changed during and after treatment too. You may not be in contact with your friends as much as you were before treatment.

Or you may feel less comfortable or confident doing things that you found easy before. Physical changes caused by treatment can also affect your confidence.

Tips for coping with a loss of interest in activities

- Do not ignore your feelings after cancer treatment. They are a natural response to what has happened. Talking about them can help. You can share your feelings with someone close to you, or with a professional.
- You might want to take time to think about what you have been through. Or you may find it more helpful to think about the future. There is no right way or time to deal with what has happened.
- If you are finding uncertainty hard to live with, try taking control of the things you can do something about. Getting into a routine will help.
- The things you did before cancer will slowly start to fit back into your life. Going back to work if you can, or starting to do the things you did before, are important steps forward.
- Learning about the cancer and its treatment can give you back some feeling of control. This can help you feel more confident about the future.
- Building your confidence takes time. You may find things improve as you start to recover from treatment. You may learn new ways of doing things for yourself again.
- Take things one day at a time. Do not think too far ahead. Set yourself small goals that you know you can meet. Work towards larger goals by breaking them into smaller steps. Doing even the smallest tasks may help you feel better.
- Remember to notice every success, no matter how small it seems. You might want to celebrate or reward yourself somehow.
- Ask other people for help and accept offers of help. Staying in contact with your family and friends will make this easier.
- Some cancer centres and organisations run courses for people living with or after cancer. Your specialist nurse or cancer doctor may be able to give you information about courses in your area.

Local resources:

Resource	Contact details

National resources:

Resource	Contact details
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) • UK Council for Psychotherapy (UKCP) • Mind 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • www.bacp.co.uk Tel 0145 588 3300 • www.psychotherapy.org.uk Tel 0207 014 9955 • www.mind.org.uk Tel 0300 123 3393

Further information

www.macmillan.org.uk/information-and-support/treating/after-treatment

www.macmillan.org.uk/information-and-support/coping/your-emotions

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

- How are you feeling? The emotional effects of cancer
- Your feelings after cancer treatment
- Talking about cancer

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**, 7 days a week, 8am 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.