Person who looks after me

Being diagnosed with cancer is often a life-changing experience. It can have a huge effect on your emotions, as well as on the practical aspects of your life. For many people living with cancer, the practical and emotional support of family and friends is very important. You may worry about how your cancer diagnosis will affect the person who looks after you, especially if they need to give you a lot of support.

There is support available for people who look after others. Your local social services department may be able to help. They can assess practical and social help that you or the person looking after you may need. There are also some organisations that run local self-help groups where people can meet others in a similar situation.

Tips to help you manage the relationship with your carer

• Try to be open and honest with each other. You may both be trying to protect each other and find it hard to show your true feelings. There will be good days and bad days, but talking about how you feel could help.

• Patience and humour can be really important – do not be afraid to laugh.

• It is important for the person looking after you to have some time to themselves. This can help them relax and feel more able to cope. They may be able to arrange for some help in the home for a few hours, so they can have a break.

• If they feel like they do not have anyone to talk to, they could try contacting a local or online support group. Sharing their experiences with other people in a similar situation can really help them feel less alone.

• There are health and social care professionals who can support the person looking after you. Talk to your GP to see what services are available in your area.

• Some voluntary organisations also run local self-help and support groups. These are where the person looking after you can meet other carers in a similar situation. They may find they can talk with them more openly, because they understand what they are going through. Local support groups often provide information too, and some have newsletters.

• Many voluntary organisations and charities have helplines to call for information and support. This includes Macmillan. To find out what help is available in your area, call our cancer support specialists on 0808 808 00 00.

• Carers’ Centres provide a range of support for carers, including information, advice and training. Contact the Carers Trust to find your Carers’ Centre.
Local resources:

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National resources:

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Further information


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

- Looking after someone with cancer
- Supporting a loved one through cancer? We’re here for you

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.