

Person who looks after me

When you are diagnosed with cancer, getting practical and emotional support from your family and friends can be very important. You may worry how your cancer diagnosis will affect the person who looks after you.

If someone becomes your carer, it can affect your relationship with them. It may bring you closer together. But you may also feel that the balance of your relationship has changed. For example, if your adult child is now looking after you, it may feel like your roles have been reversed.

The demands of caring can sometimes put a strain on your relationship. But support is available for you and the person who looks after you.

Tips for managing your relationship with the person who looks after you

- Give yourself time to get used to changes in your roles and talk about them. It can be challenging to adjust, but you may discover new strengths and qualities in each other.
- Keeping to daily routines can give you a sense of structure while you adapt to change.
- Be open with each other about how you feel. Listen to each other's needs and try to find ways to meet them.
- Set boundaries to help you both keep your independence and feel in control.
- Try to find things that you enjoy doing together. Do not be afraid to be yourself. Doing something fun can help both of you feel less stressed.
- Your local social services department may be able to help you and the person who looks after you. They can assess the practical and social help that each of you may need. A carer's assessment looks at how the person caring for you is coping and the effects on their health, work and relationships.
- Different health and social care professionals can support the person looking after you. Ask your GP about services available in your area.
- It may be possible to arrange help in the home from care workers, family or friends for a few hours. This can give the person who looks after you a break.
- Macmillan offers online and face-to-face courses to support carers with their own well-being. The Help to Overcome Problems Effectively (HOPE) course for carers covers dealing with stress, managing tiredness and looking for solutions to problems. Find out more at [learnzone.org.uk](https://www.learnzone.org.uk)
- Encourage the person who looks after you to reach out to others. They can call the Macmillan Support Line free on **0808 808 00 00** for expert information and emotional support. There are also local support and self-help groups and a specific group for carers on Macmillan's Online Community. It can be helpful to share experiences with other people in a similar situation.
- If there are still tensions in your relationship, you could talk to a counsellor. Counselling can be offered to you individually or as a couple or family.

Local resources:

Resource	Contact details

National resources:

Resource	Contact details
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy • Carers Direct Helpline • Carers UK • Carers Trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • www.bacp.co.uk Tel 01455 883 300 • www.nhs.uk/carersdirect Tel 0300 123 1053 • www.carersuk.org Tel 0808 808 7777 (England, Scotland and Wales) 0289 043 9843 (Northern Ireland) • www.carers.org Tel 0300 772 9600

Further information

macmillan.org.uk/information-and-support/organising/practical-preparation-for-treatment/looking-after-someone
community.macmillan.org.uk/cancer_experiences/carers_only

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

- **Looking after someone with cancer**
- **Being there for someone facing 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.