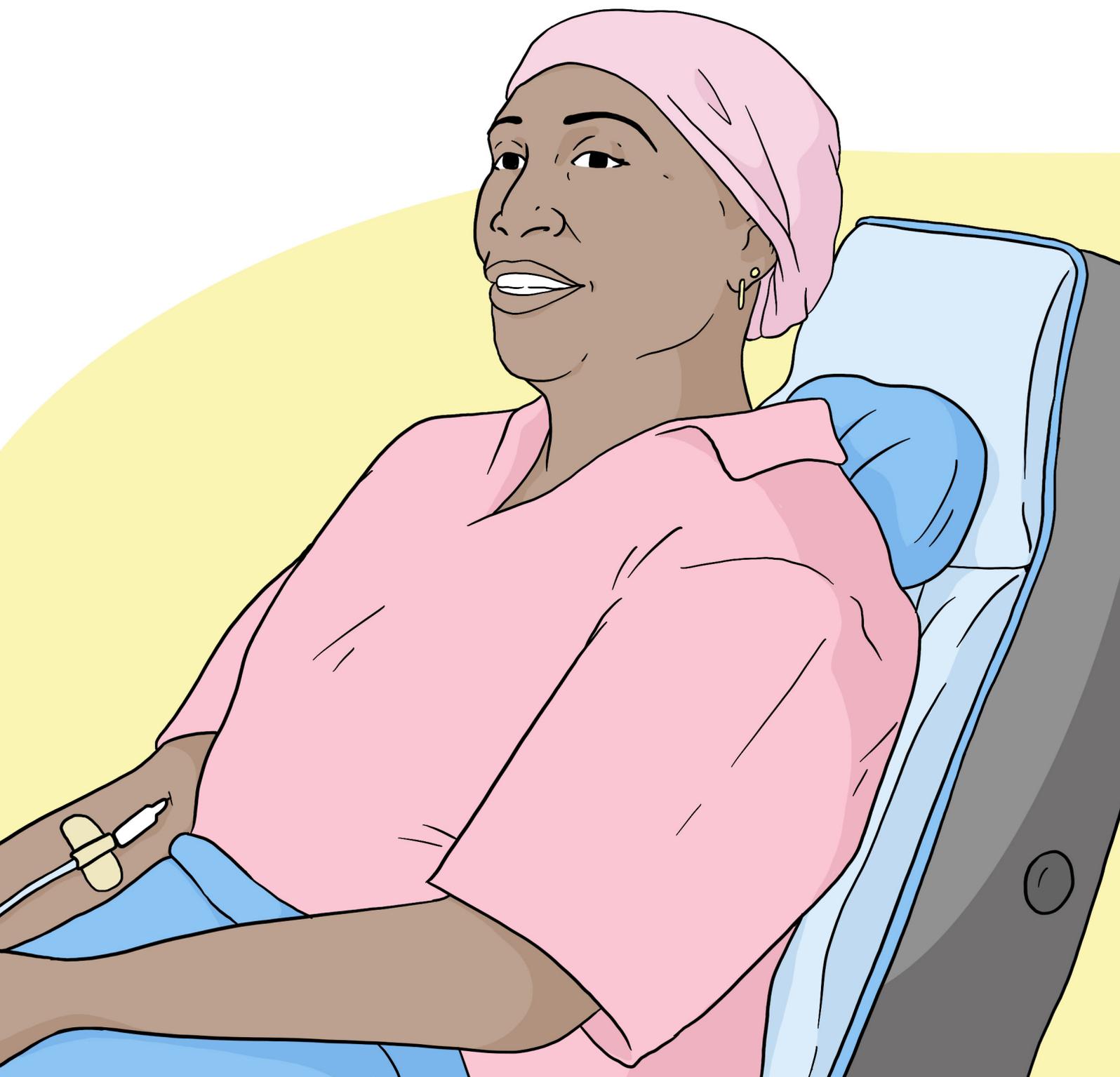


In partnership with

MACMILLAN
CANCER SUPPORT

easy
read

Changes that can happen at the end of life





About this easy read booklet



This booklet is about the changes that can happen at the end of your life.



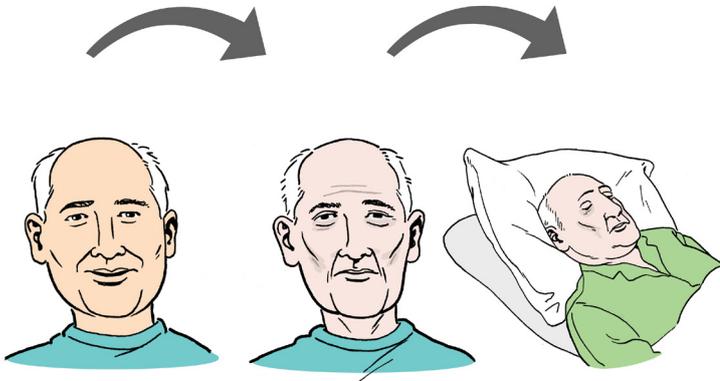
You can learn about what might happen at the end of your life.



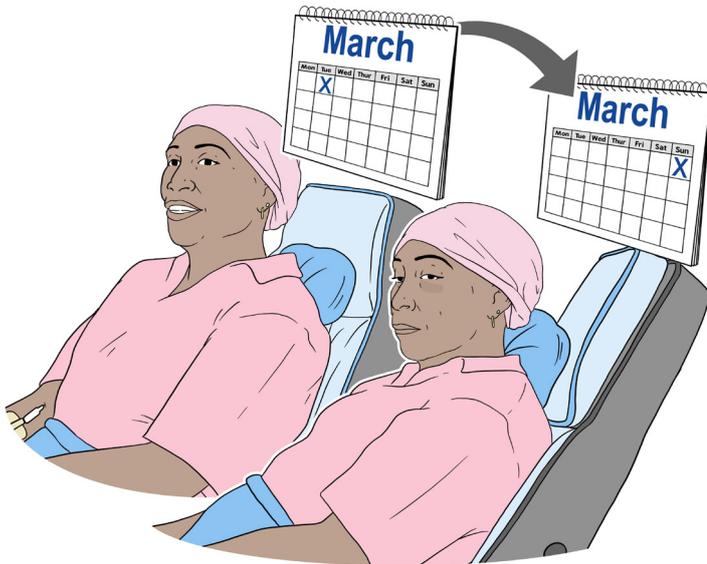
If you are worried about your health, you should talk to a doctor or nurse.



Changes that can happen at the end of life



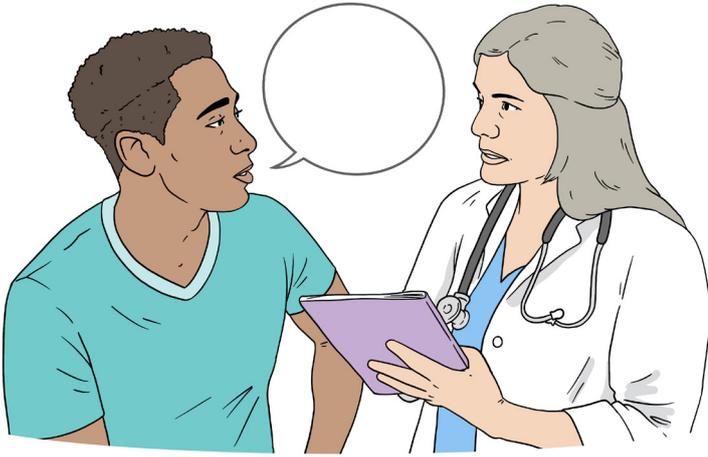
When you have an illness that is not going to get better, the illness becomes worse over time and causes changes in your body.



When you are dying, there are things that can happen to you in the last few weeks and days of life.



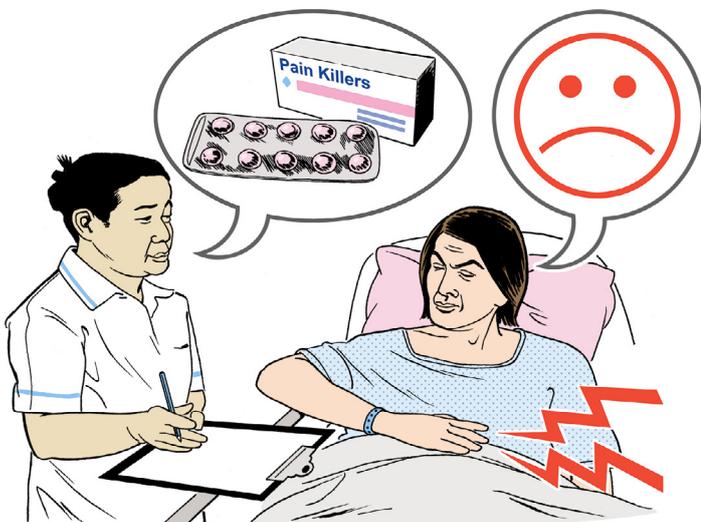
Doctors and nurses will try to make sure you are as comfortable as possible. This is called **palliative care**.



You can talk to the nurses or doctors about any worries you may have.



The illness may cause some problems. These problems are called **symptoms**.



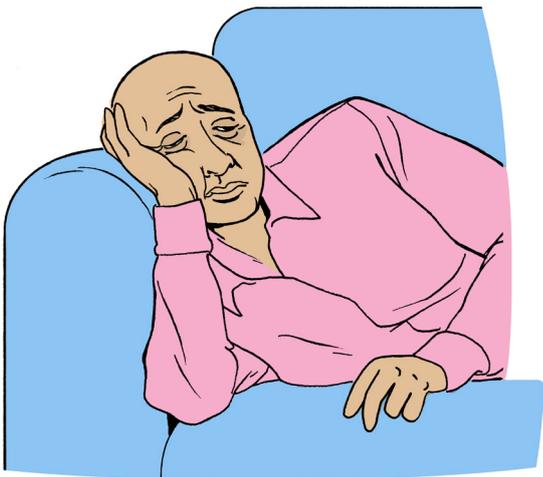
The doctors and nurses may give treatments, like medicines, to help with these problems.



These treatments will not cure the illness. But they can help you feel better.



Symptoms that you may have



Tiredness

You often lose energy and become tired and weak. Only do as much as you feel like doing. Rest as much as you need to.



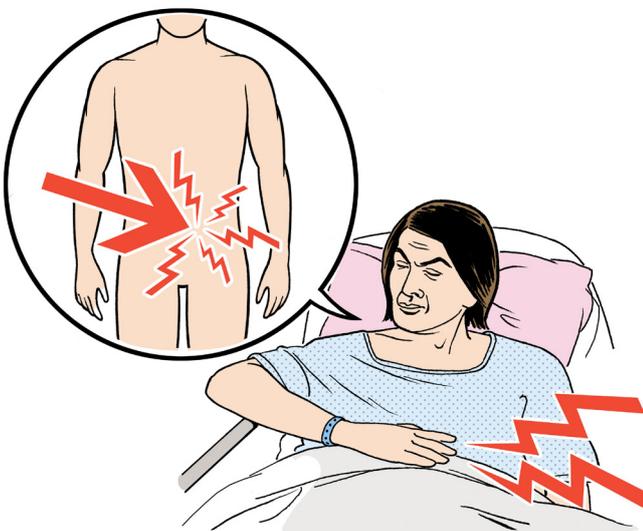
You may find there are times of the day when you feel less tired. You might want to use these times to do some of your favourite things.



As you get more ill, you may feel very tired and weak and want to sleep all the time. You will probably be in bed and may not be able to move around much.

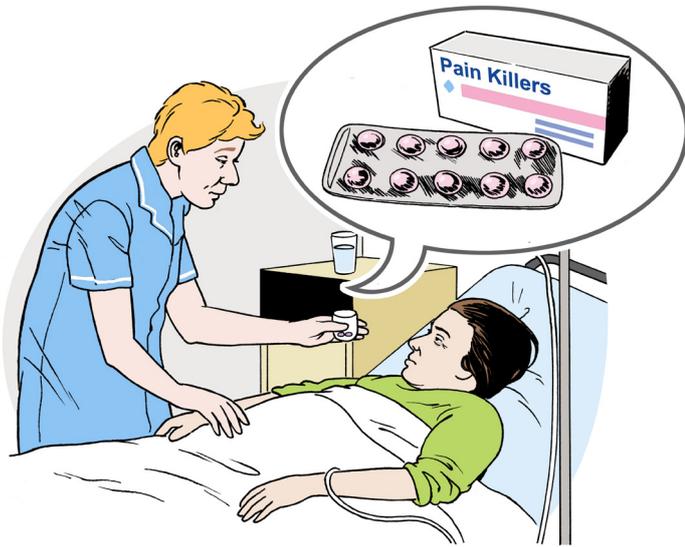


You can ask someone to sit with you. You might want them to just be there to hold your hand even if you do not want to talk.



Pain

If you are in pain it is important to try to explain where the pain is and how bad it is.



Then the nurse can give you the best medicine for your pain.

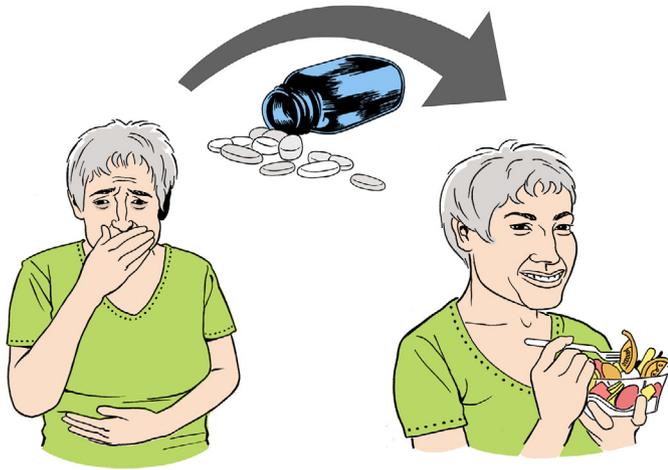


There may be some side effects from strong pain medicines. Your doctor or nurse can explain these to you.



Feeling sick

Your illness may be making you feel sick. Sometimes the medicines you are taking can make you feel sick.



If you are feeling sick or being sick, the doctor can give you some medicines to help.

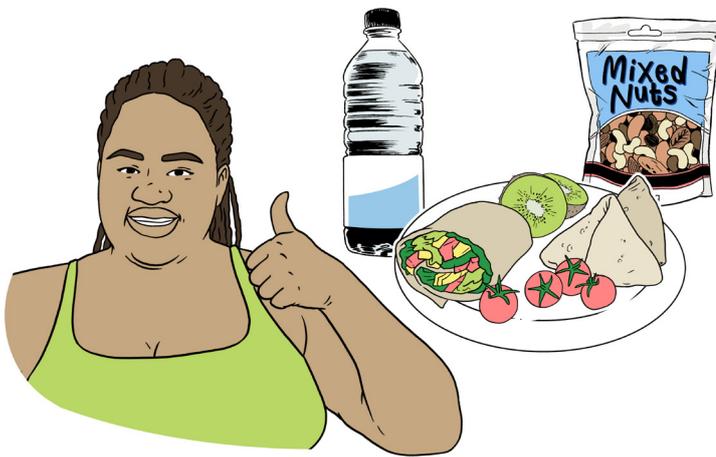


Losing your appetite

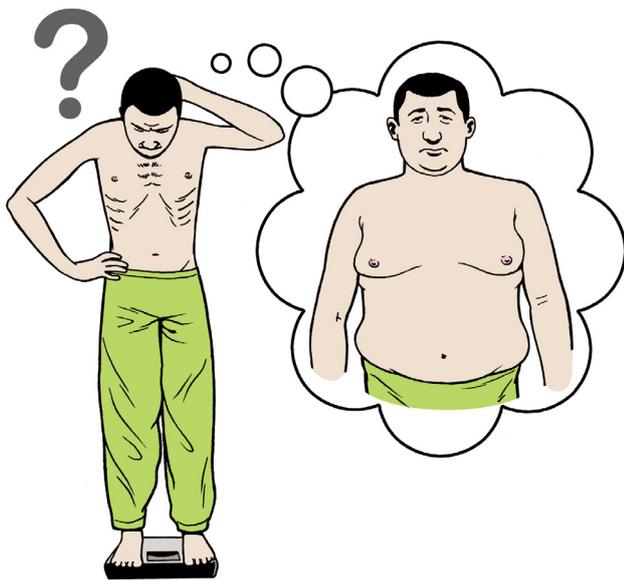
This means you may not feel as hungry as you used to.



This may be because of the illness or because of medicines you are taking.

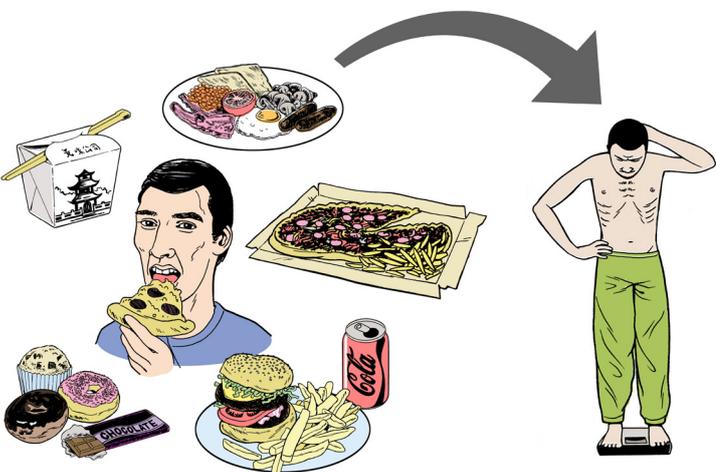


It can help to eat when you want, eat small amounts or snacks, and eat things you feel like eating.

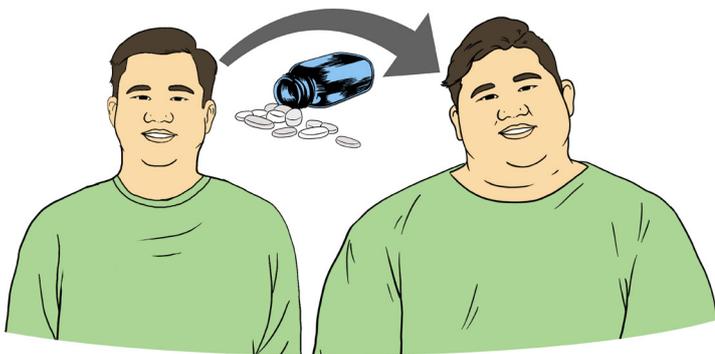


Changes in your weight

As you become more ill your body may lose weight and you can become thinner. This can be because of the cancer or because you are eating less.



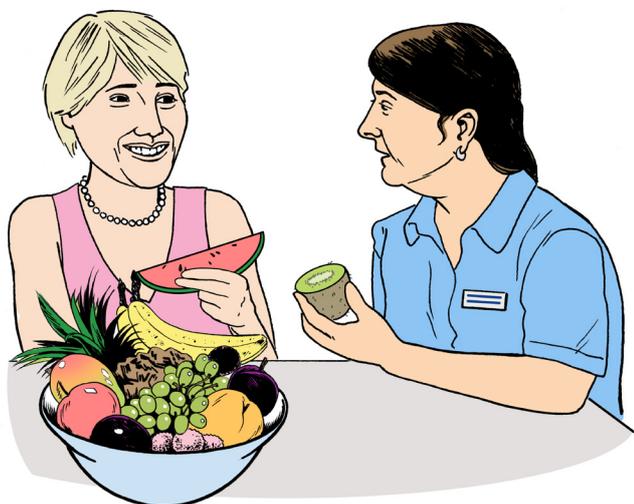
Sometimes people who are eating a lot of food can still lose weight. This is because of their illness.



Some people put on weight because of their illness. Some medicines can also make you put on weight.



A **dietitian** is a person who knows about food and eating. They will help you find the best foods to eat.



They will also help if you have problems with eating and drinking. Someone called a **speech and language therapist** can help with this too.



A **speech and language therapist** is a person who can help with any speech and communication problems. They can also help with chewing and swallowing problems.

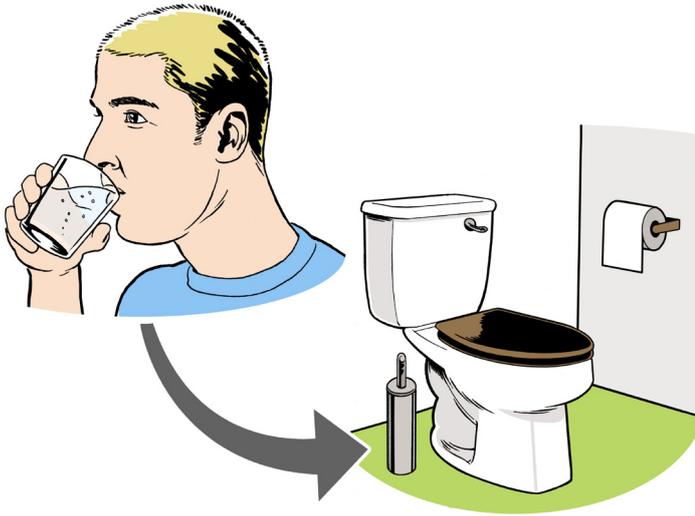


Constipation

Constipation means you may find it hard to poo. This can become a problem as you become more ill.



It can happen if you are not moving around as much anymore. Or it can be caused by pain medicines.



You may also not be eating or drinking much. The doctor or nurse can give you medicines called **laxatives** to help you go to the toilet more easily.



Dry mouth

if you have a dry mouth but do not feel like drinking, you can try sucking ice or ice lollies to keep your mouth wet. Pieces of fruit work too.



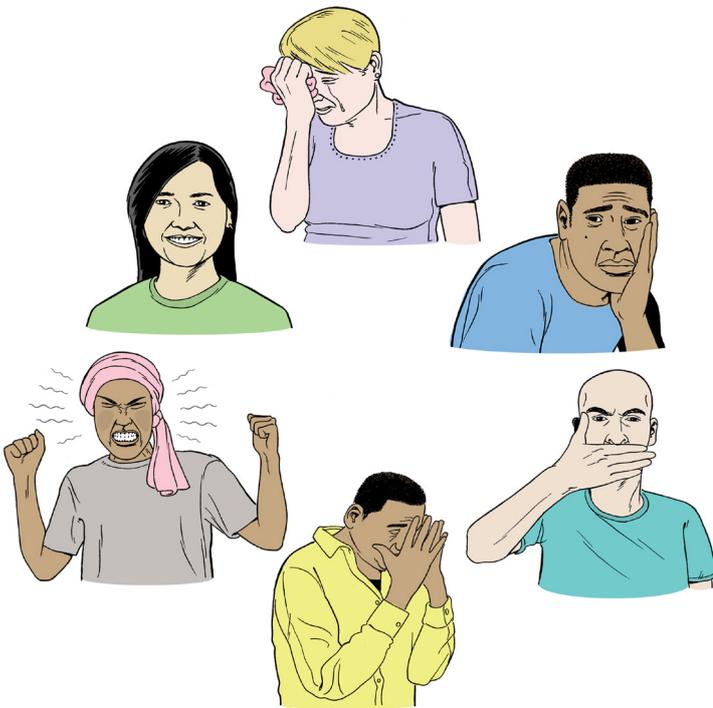
Try to keep your mouth as clean as you can. Rinsing regularly can help. Using water based lip balm helps to keep your lips moist.



Changes in how you feel



Becoming more ill can also affect how you feel. You may feel worried, angry or sad.



It is normal to have lots of different feelings.



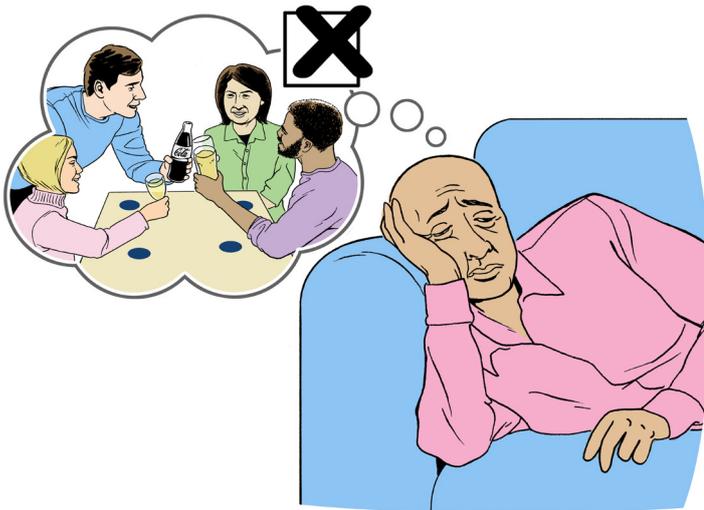
Talking to someone about your emotions and what is happening may help you feel better.



In the last few days of life



You might not want to eat or drink anything anymore .



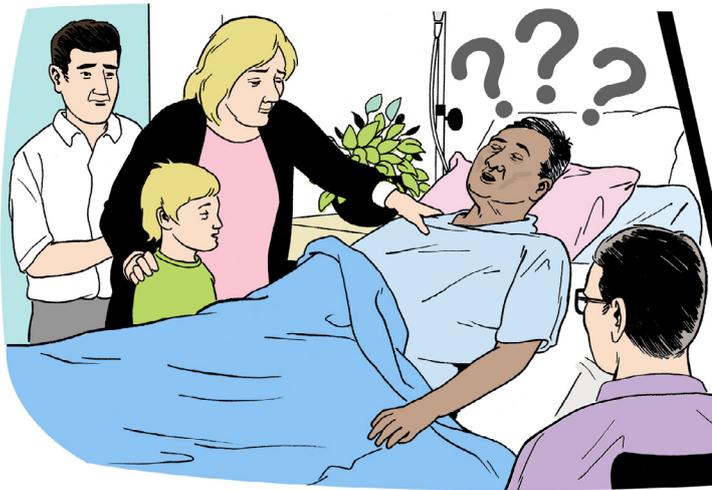
You might feel that you are not interested in anything anymore, even things that used to be important to you.



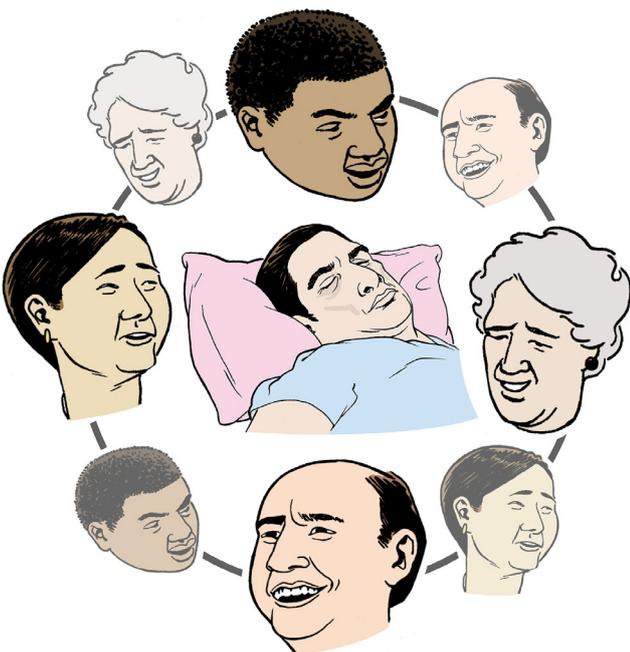
You may not want to do anything at all because you feel so tired. You may not even want to talk. This is OK.



But if you are feeling very sad, try talking to someone you trust. This can help.



You might feel confused and not know who your family are or the people around you. You may feel like you are in a dream.



You may feel like you are slowly going into a deep sleep. You can still hear people if they are talking to you. But you probably will not be able to talk to them.



For most people their last moments of life are very peaceful. Their breathing gets slower and then stops.



After you have died your family and friends will be sad. But they will have different happy memories to remember you by.



They will always remember you.

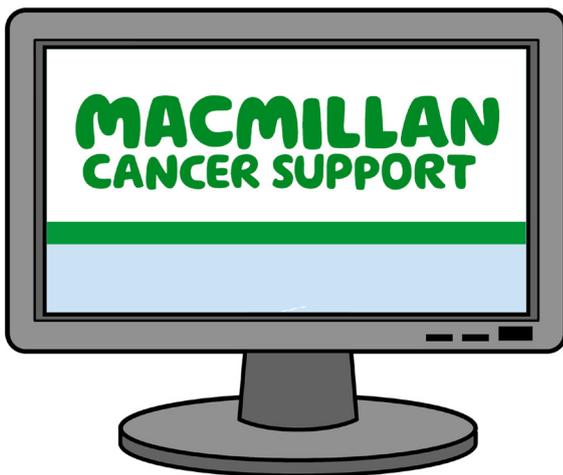


How Macmillan can help you

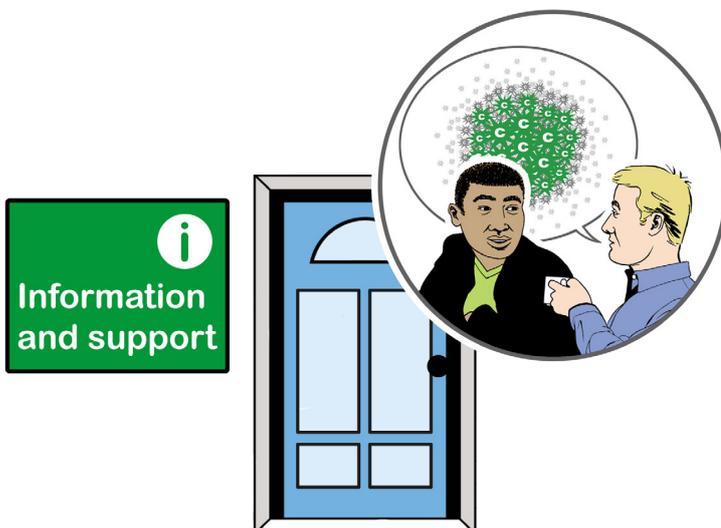


You can get support from:

- The Macmillan Support Line. Call **0808 808 00 00** 7 days a week, 8am to 8pm.



- The Macmillan website. Visit macmillan.org.uk for information about cancer. You can also use our web chat to ask questions at macmillan.org.uk/talktous



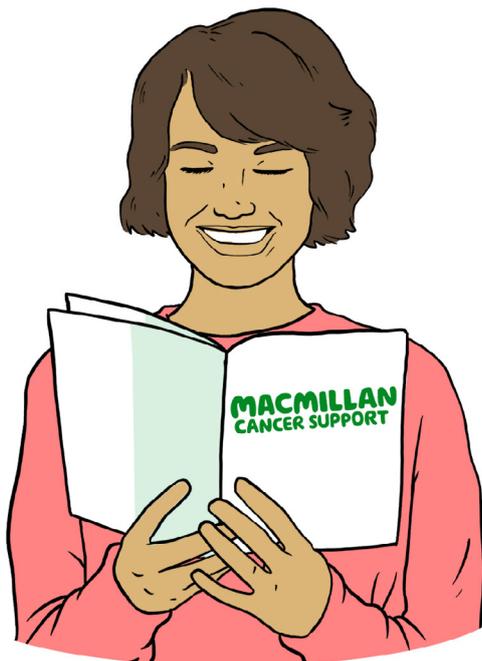
- Information centres. You can talk to a cancer support specialist and get written information. Find your nearest centre at macmillan.org.uk/informationcentres or call us.



- Local support groups. Find a group near you at [macmillan.org.uk/supportgroups](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/supportgroups) or call us.



- The Macmillan Online Community. You can talk to other people in similar situations at [macmillan.org.uk/community](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/community)



Macmillan can give you information in different ways:

Booklets about cancer

You can order booklets about cancer from

be.macmillan.org.uk



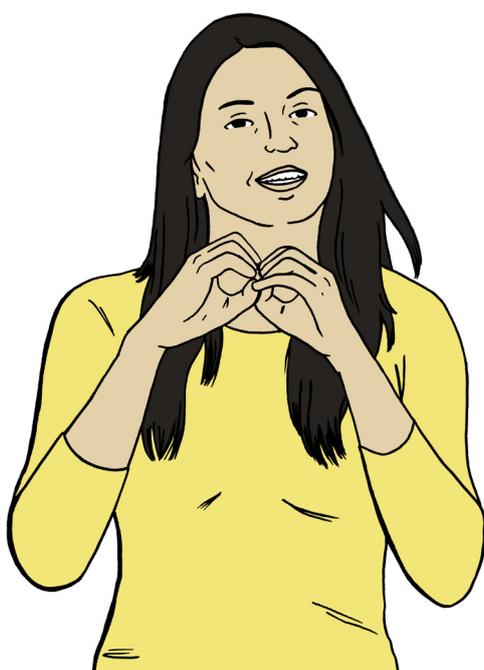
Videos

You can watch videos about cancer at [macmillan.org.uk/videos](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/videos)



Audio

You can listen to information about cancer and order CDs from [macmillan.org.uk/audio](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/audio)



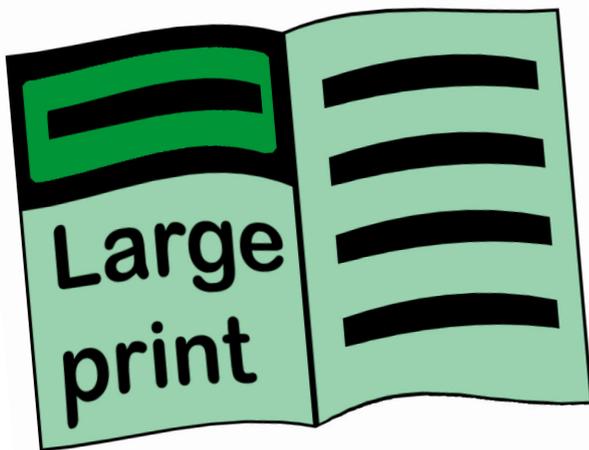
British Sign Language (BSL)

You can watch information in BSL at [macmillan.org.uk/bsl](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/bsl)



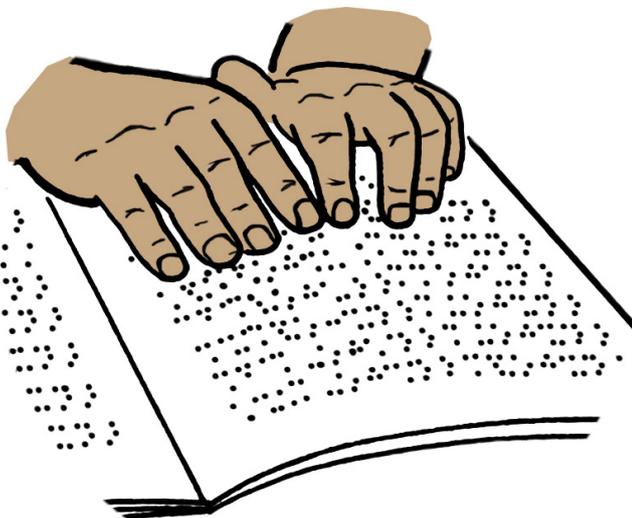
eBooks

You can get eBooks
about cancer from
be.macmillan.org.uk



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@macmillan.org.uk](mailto:cancerinformationteam@macmillan.org.uk)



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More easy read booklets



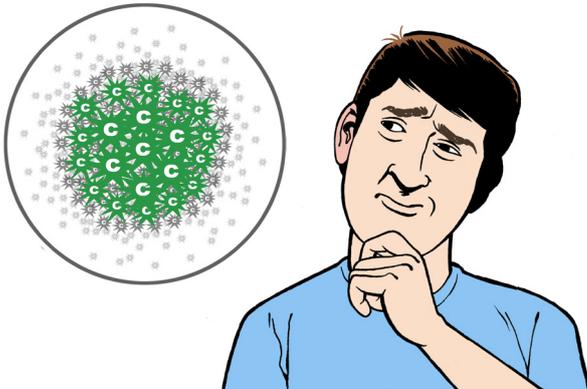
Order more easy read booklets from [macmillan.org.uk/easyread](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/easyread)

There are booklets on lots of topics:



About Macmillan

- How Macmillan Cancer Support can help you



About cancer

- Lung cancer
- What is cancer?



Signs and symptoms

- Breast care for women
- Cervical screening (smear test)
- How to check your balls (testicles)
- Signs of cancer
- Symptoms of cervical cancer
- Symptoms of prostate cancer



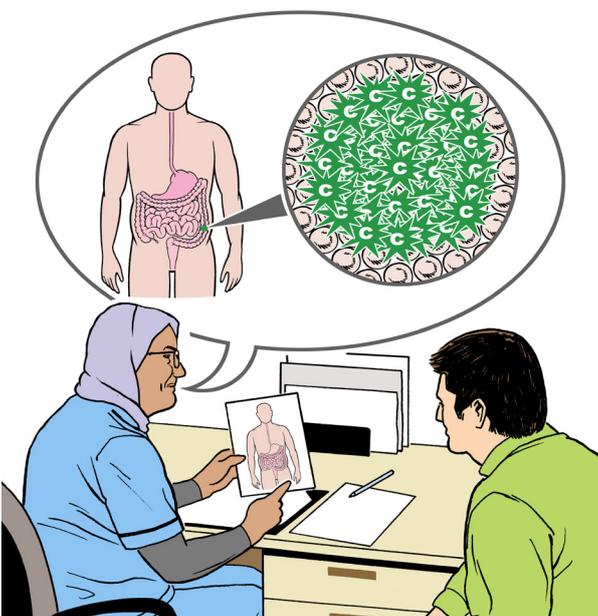
Living a healthy life

- Be safe in the sun
- Drink less alcohol
- Eat a healthy diet
- Exercise
- Have safer sex



Tests for cancer

- Having a biopsy
- Having a colonoscopy
- Having a CT scan
- Having an endoscopy
- Having examinations and blood tests
- Having an MRI scan
- Having an ultrasound
- Having an x-ray



Being told you have cancer

- Finding out you have cancer
- Getting your test results
- Seeing the doctor



Treatment for cancer

- Chemotherapy
- Giving your consent
- Having surgery
- Radiotherapy
- Side effects from chemotherapy
- Side effects from radiotherapy
- Treatments for prostate cancer

Living with cancer

- 7 steps to equal healthcare
- Cancer and coronavirus
- Claiming benefits when you have cancer
- Complementary therapies
- Help with costs when you have cancer
- Talking about cancer and your feelings
- Things that are important to me
- What happens after cancer treatment ends
- Work and cancer
- Your feelings and cancer
- Your sex life and cancer
- Your social life and cancer





End of life

- Changes that can happen at the end of life
- Choosing where to die
- Things you can do when getting ready to die
- Who can help if you are dying
- Your feelings if you are dying



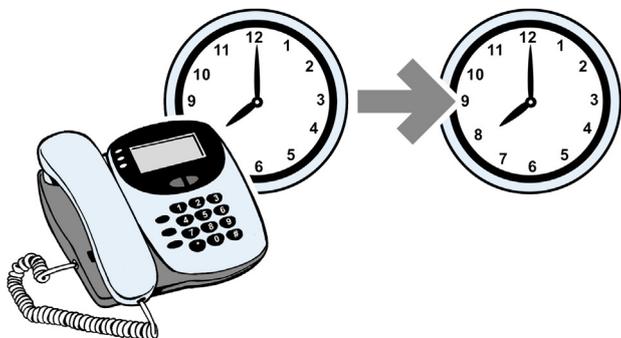
After someone dies

- Going to a funeral when someone dies
- Grief and loss when someone dies
- How you may feel when someone dies
- What can help you feel better when someone dies

To order easy read booklets like this one go to the website [macmillan.org.uk/easyread](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/easyread) or call us on **0808 808 00 00**

This booklet is about the changes that can happen at the end of life.

It is for anyone who finds easier words and pictures helpful. If you have more questions about cancer or would like to talk to us, call the Macmillan Support Line.



- Call us free on:

0808 808 00 00

7 days a week from 8am to 8pm.



- If you use a textphone, you can call:

18001 0808 808 00 00



- Or go to the website

macmillan.org.uk

This easy read booklet has been produced by Macmillan Cancer Support working with CHANGE.

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