

In partnership with

MACMILLAN
CANCER SUPPORT

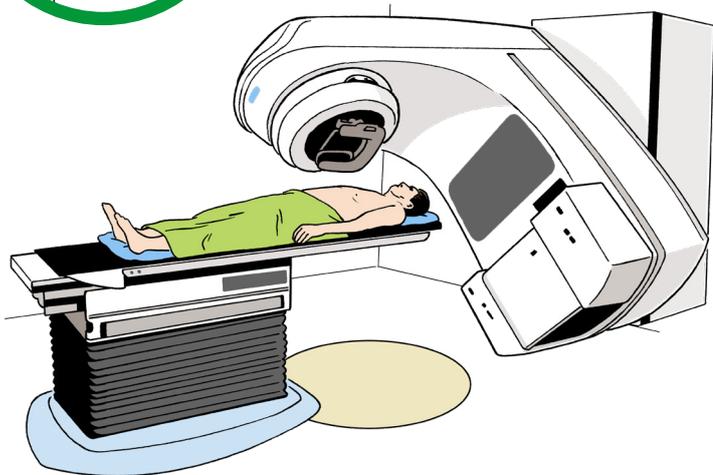
easy
read

Radiotherapy



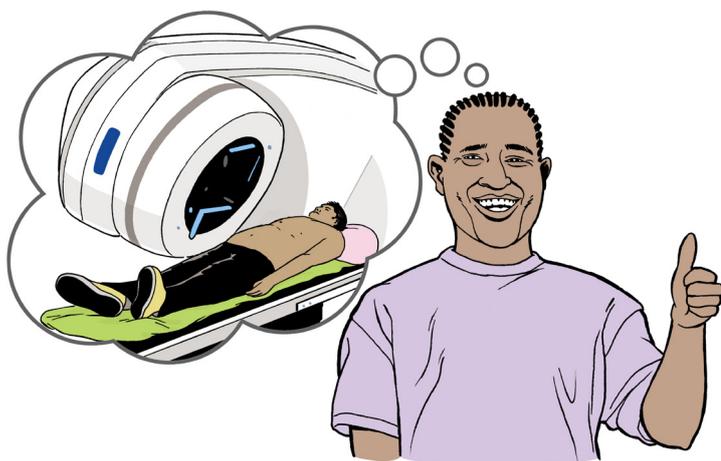


About this easy read booklet



This booklet is about having **external** radiotherapy.

External means that the radiotherapy is given by a machine outside of the body.



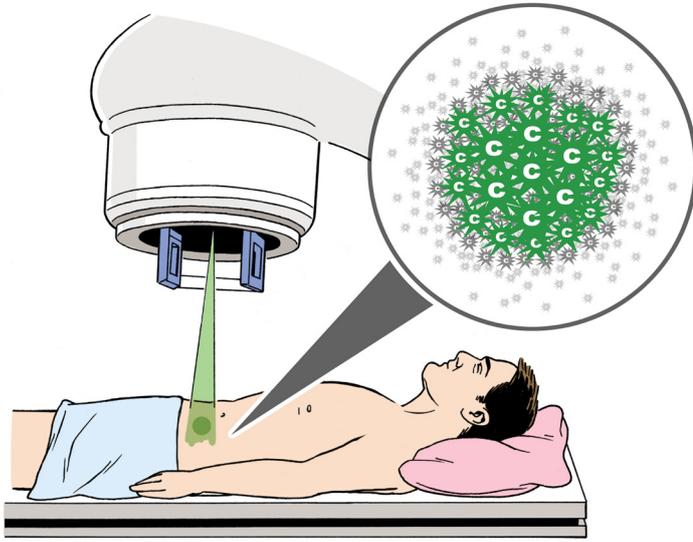
You can learn about what will happen when you go to hospital for radiotherapy.



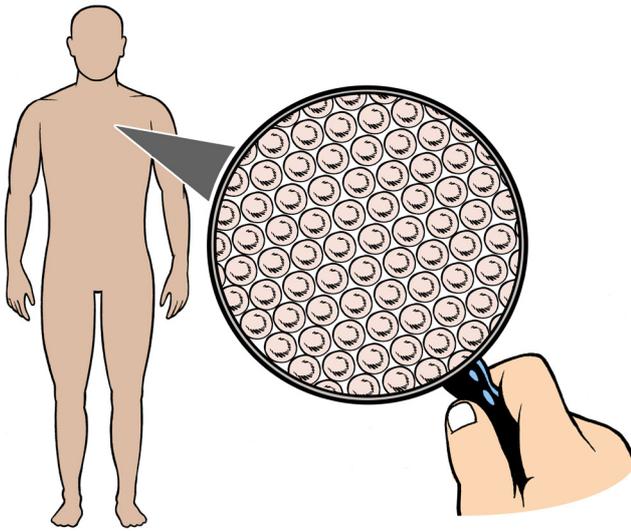
If you are worried about your health, you should talk to a doctor or nurse.



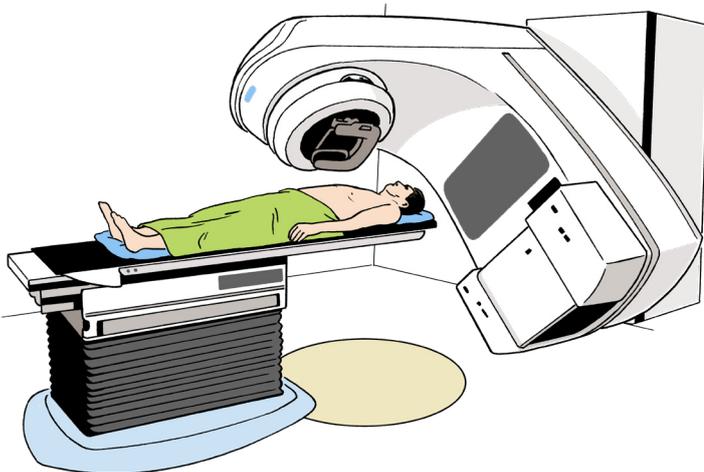
Radiotherapy



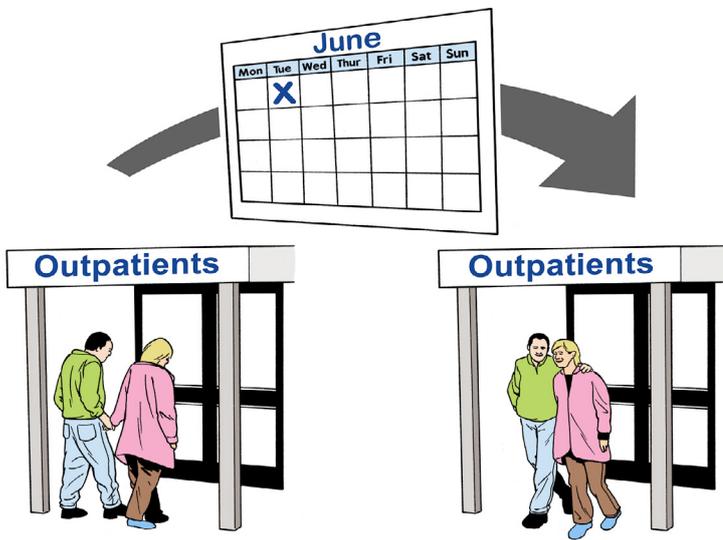
Radiotherapy uses high energy rays to treat cancer. It can be used on many types of cancer. The rays destroy cancer cells in the area where the radiotherapy is given.



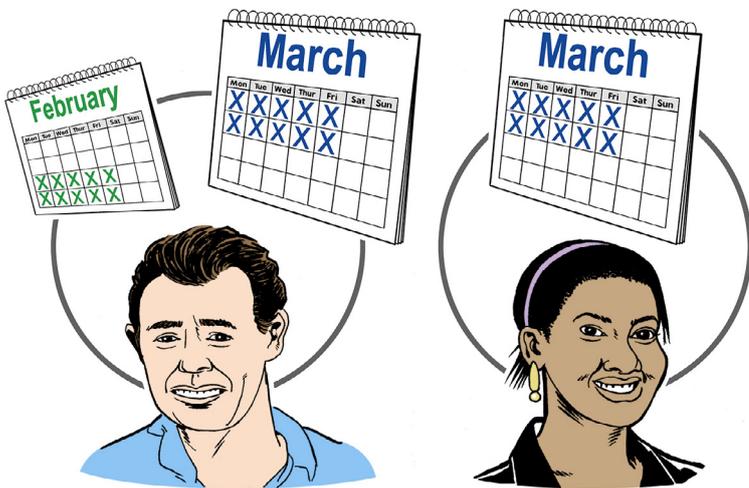
Cells are the tiny building blocks that make up people's bodies.



Radiotherapy is given by a machine. This sends rays to the part of your body where the cancer has been found.



Most people will have radiotherapy as a day patient. This means you can go home after your treatment. You do not stay in the hospital overnight.



The number of treatments you have will depend on what kind of cancer you have. Every person will be different.



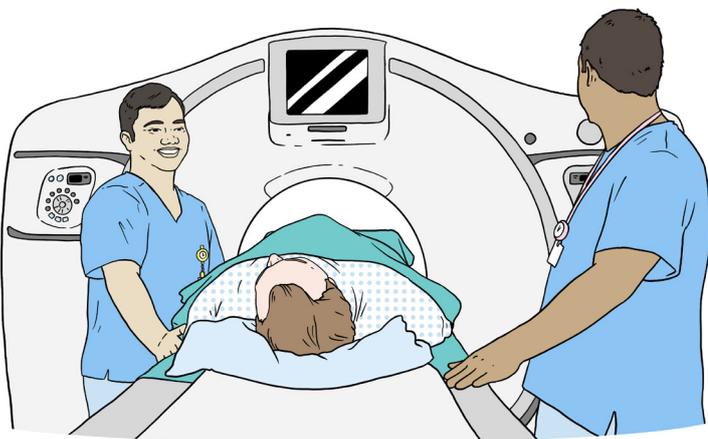
What happens



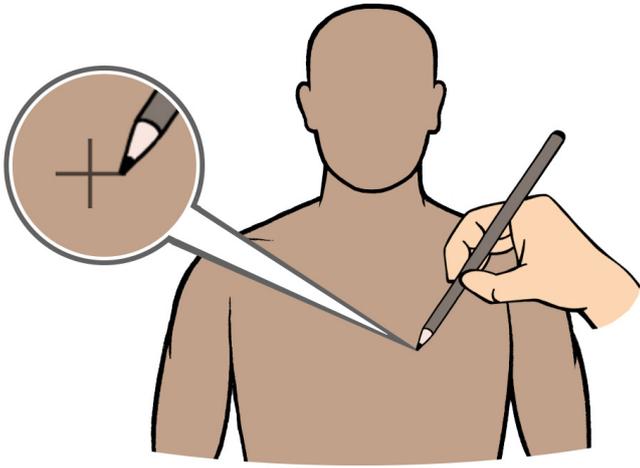
You will have your treatment in the radiotherapy department of the hospital. It will be done by a person called a **radiographer**.



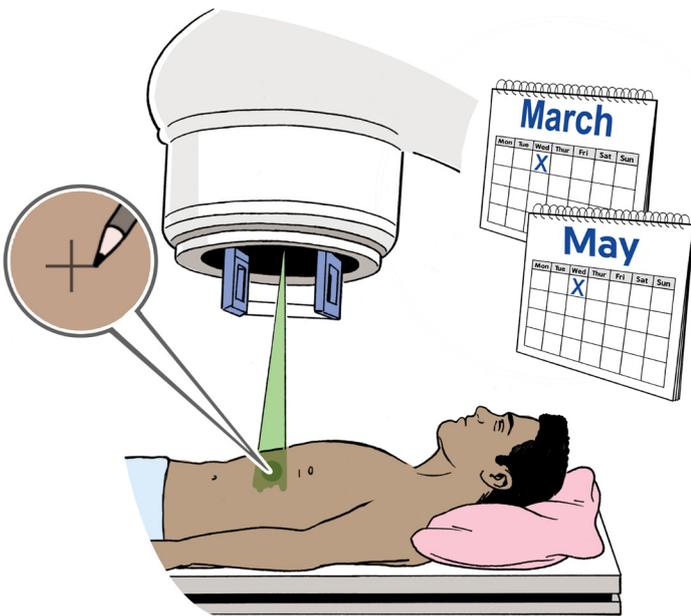
A **radiographer** is a person who takes **scans and x-rays** of people's bodies. They can also give people radiotherapy treatment. **Scans and x-rays** are ways of taking photos of the inside of the body.



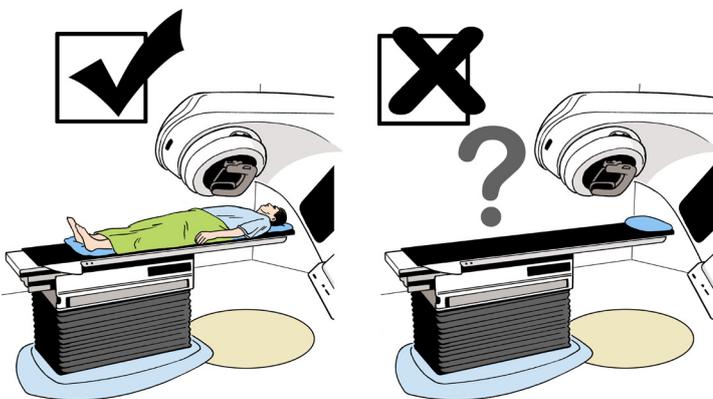
Before you have radiotherapy, you will need to come to the radiotherapy department for a scan. This is to plan where on your body you will have the radiotherapy.



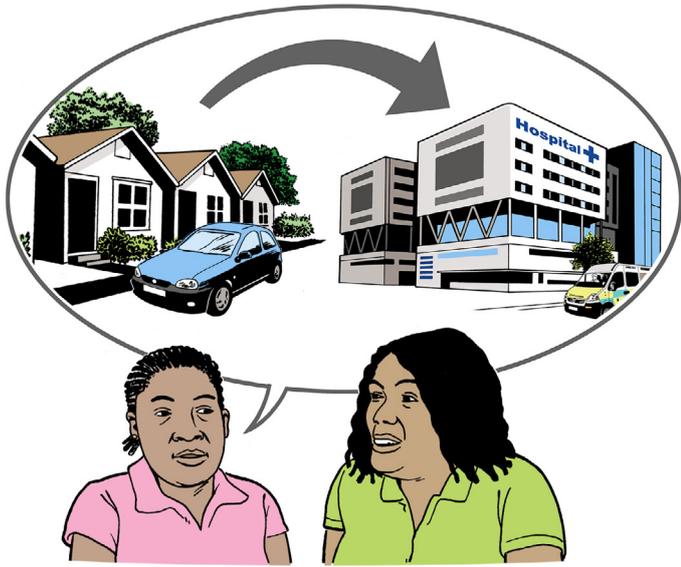
The radiographer may make small marks on your skin. These are **permanent**. This means that they will be there forever.



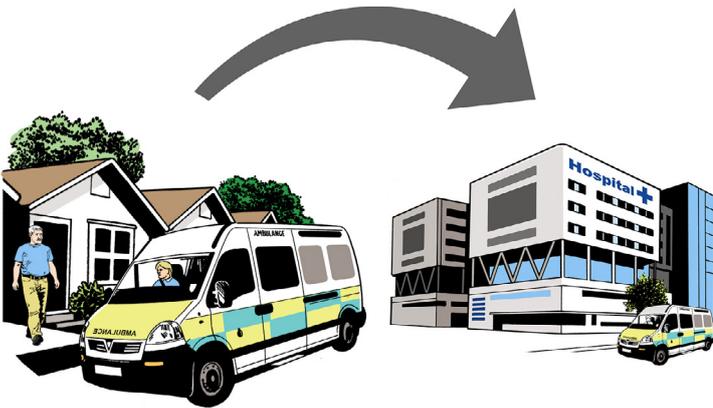
The marks help make sure you get treatment in the same place every time you have radiotherapy.



It is very important to go to every treatment. If you miss one, it may not work as well. If you do not feel well enough to go for your radiotherapy treatment, call the hospital for advice.



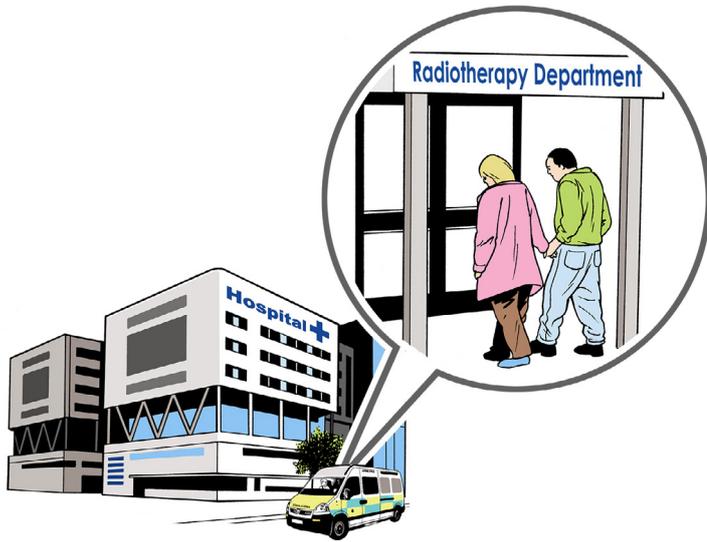
You may have a long way to travel for treatment every day. You can ask the person who gives you support if they can drive you to the hospital.



Some hospitals provide transport. Charities and support groups sometimes do this too.



You can ask the staff in the radiotherapy department about this.



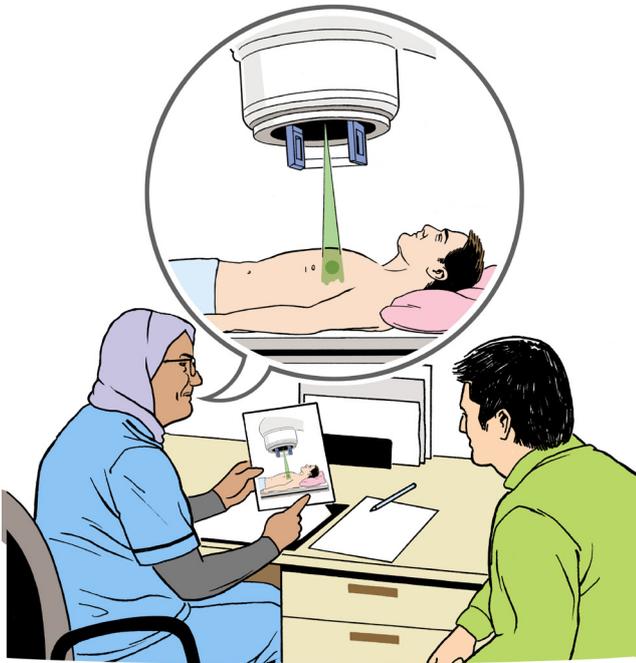
You may find it helps to take someone with you to your treatments.



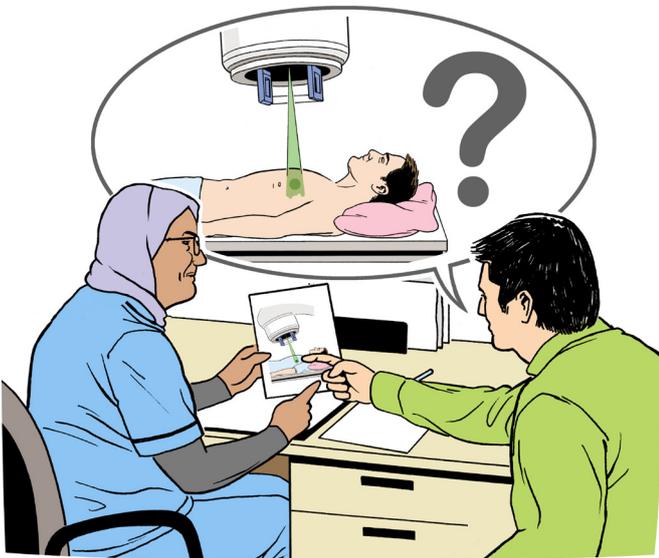
Before you start your treatment you will be asked to give your **consent**.



Giving your **consent** means that you understand why you need treatment and say it is OK to have it. You can also decide that you do not want to have treatment.



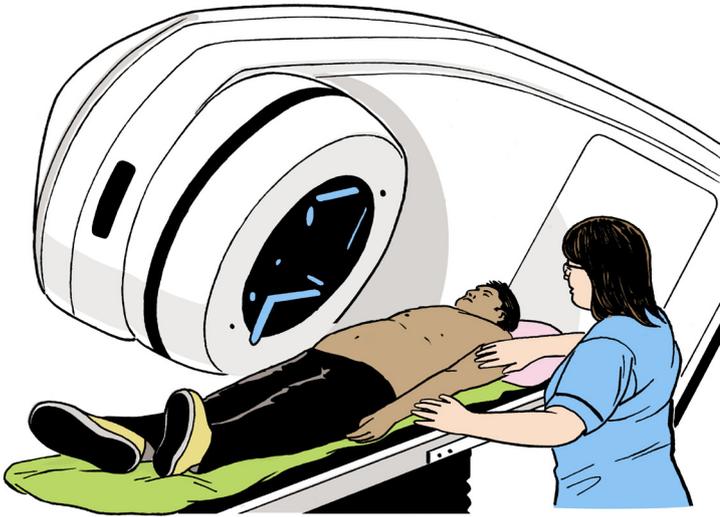
Before your first treatment, the radiographer will tell you what you will see and hear during the treatment.



It is good to ask any questions and talk about anything that is worrying you.



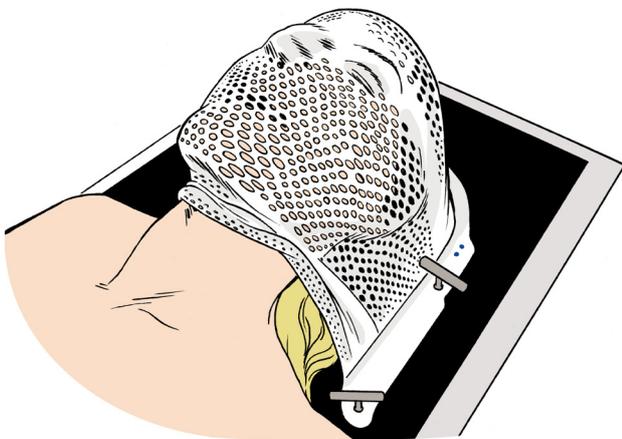
You may be able to go and see the radiotherapy department before your treatment, so that you know what will happen.



When you come for your treatment, the radiographer will help you to lie down in the right position.



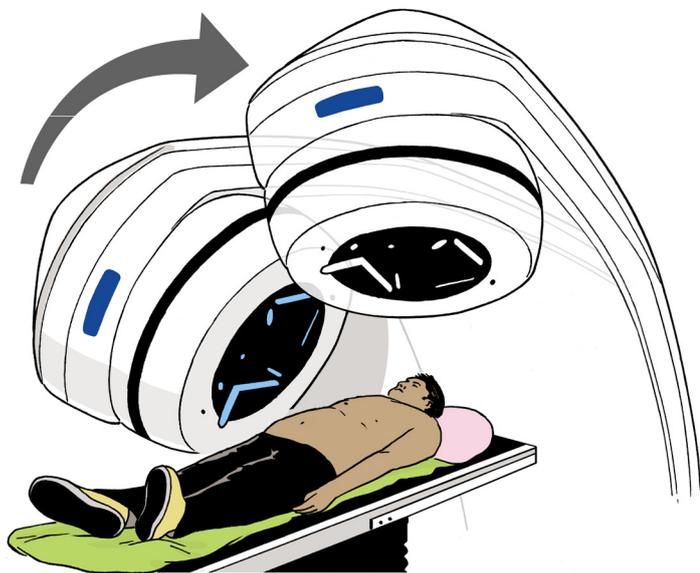
You will then have to keep very still while having the radiotherapy.



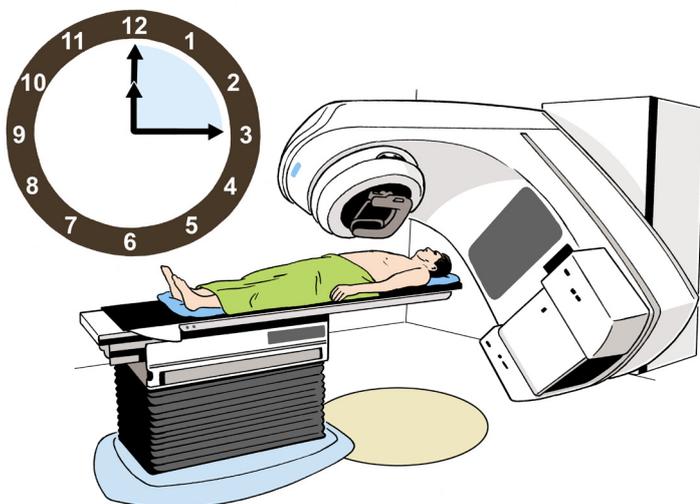
If you are having radiotherapy to your head or neck, you may have to wear a special mask. This helps to keep you still while you are having radiotherapy. You can breathe normally while you are wearing the mask.



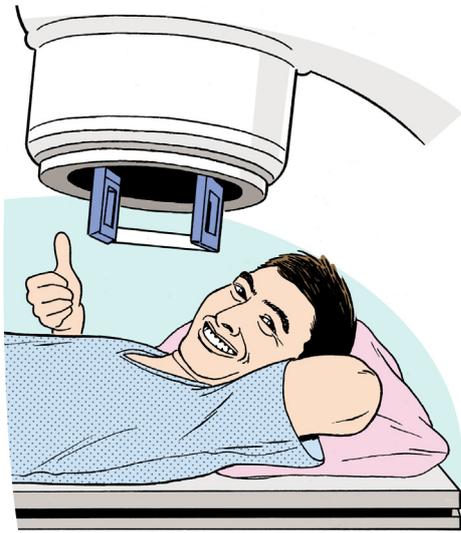
The radiographer will then leave the room. This protects them from the high energy rays. But you can still talk to them if you need to.



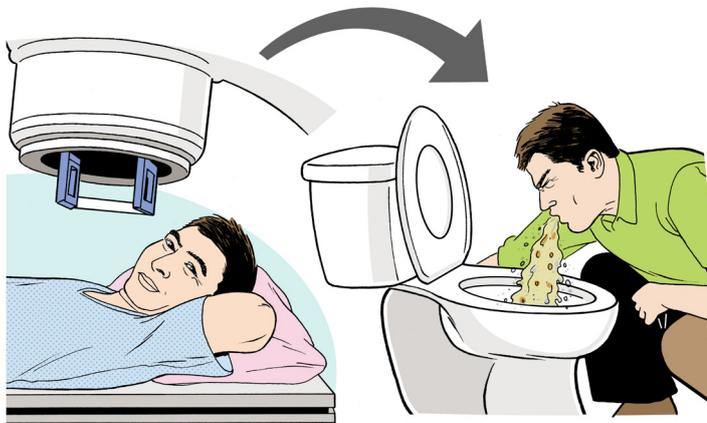
The radiotherapy machine might move around to give you treatment from different directions.



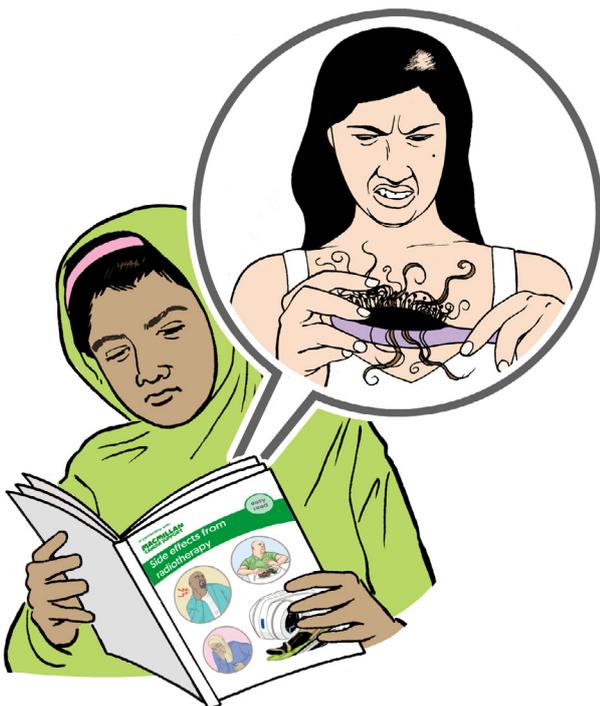
Try not to worry about the noise the machine makes. The whole treatment usually takes 10 to 15 minutes.



The treatment does not hurt.



But it can cause some **side effects**. These are unwanted effects like feeling tired or sick.



The side effects you have will depend on the part of your body being treated. There is more information about this in the **Side effects from radiotherapy** booklet. This booklet is listed on page 18.

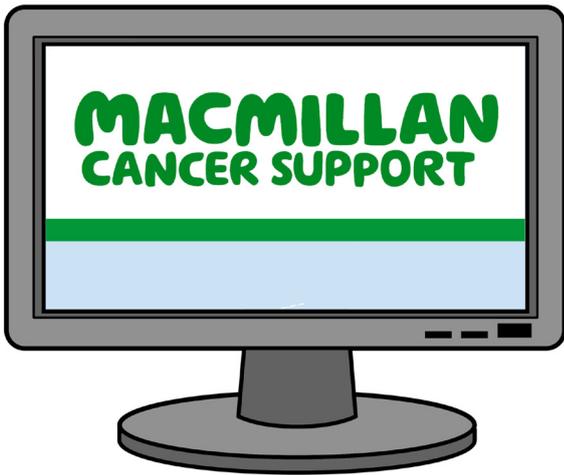


How Macmillan can help you

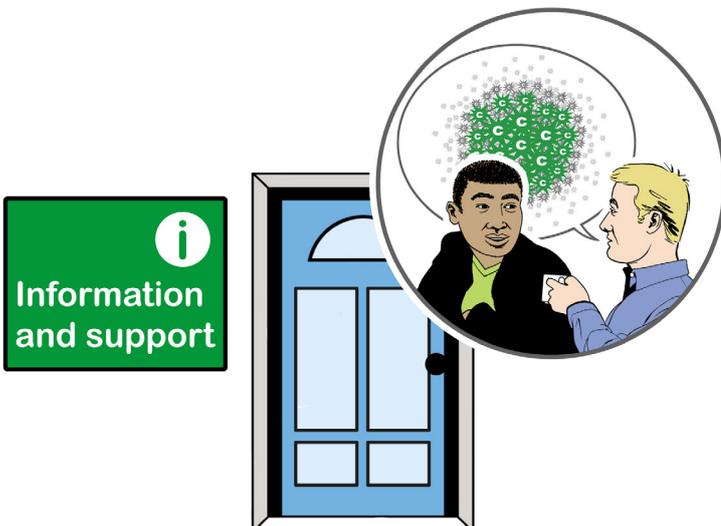


You can get support from:

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



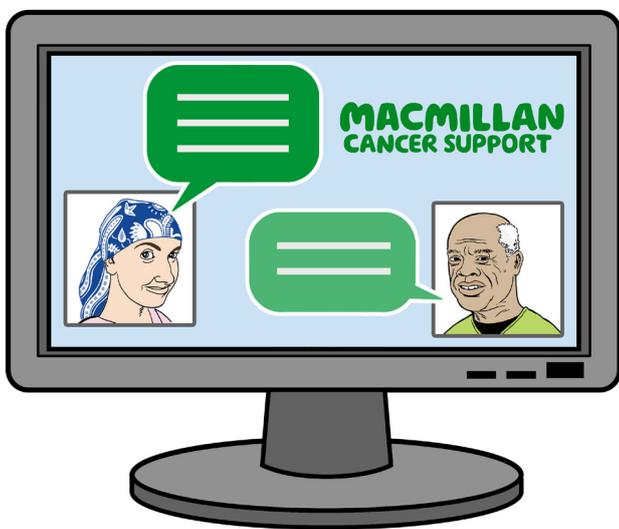
- The Macmillan website. Visit macmillan.org.uk for information about cancer. You can also use our web chat to ask questions at macmillan.org.uk/talktous



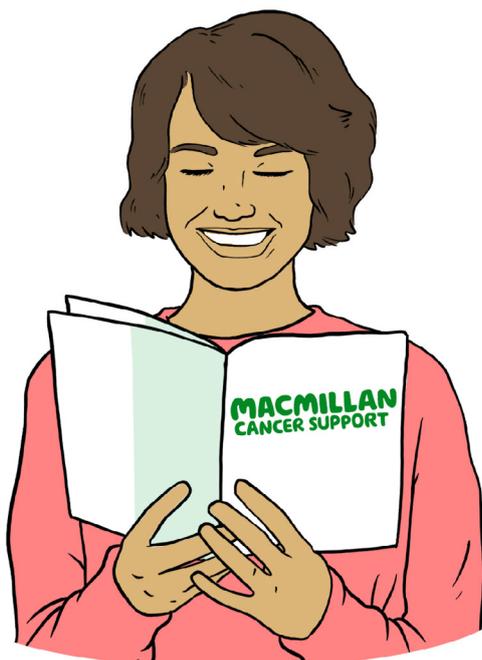
- Information centres. You can talk to a cancer support specialist and get written information. Find your nearest centre at macmillan.org.uk/informationcentres or call us.



- 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



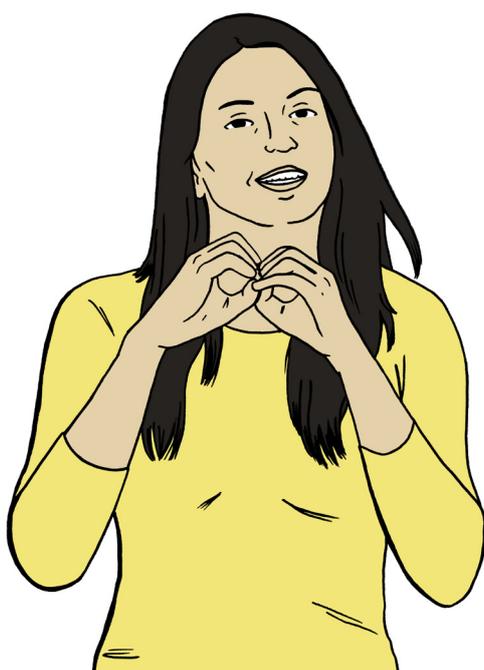
Videos

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)



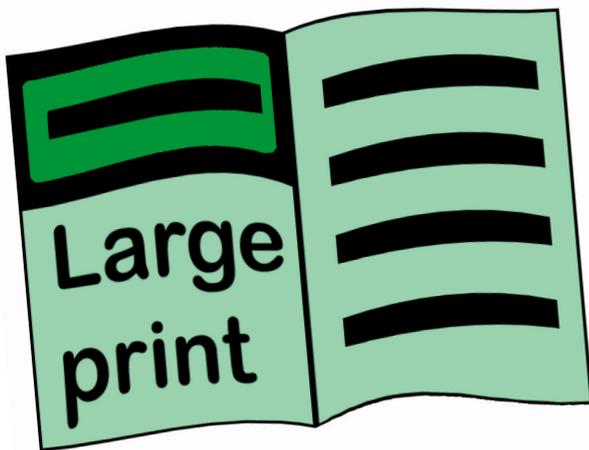
British Sign Language (BSL)

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



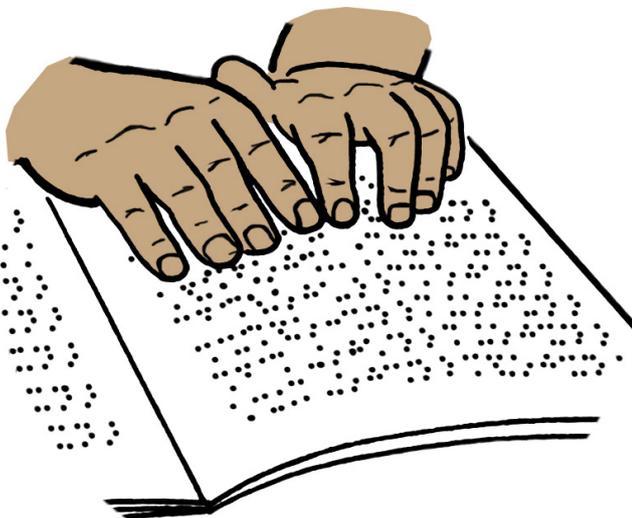
eBooks

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



Large print

Tell us if you need
information in large print.
Email: cancerinformationteam@macmillan.org.uk



Braille

Tell us if you need
information in Braille.
Email: cancerinformationteam@macmillan.org.uk



More easy read booklets



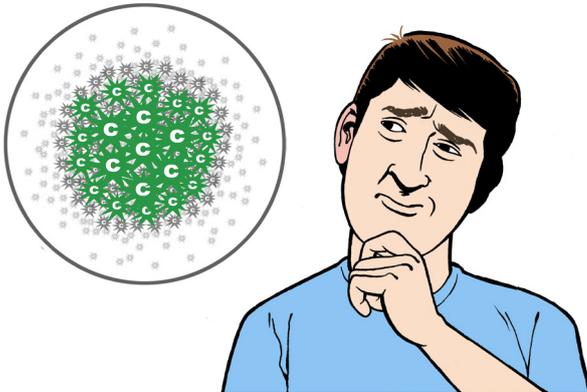
Order more easy read booklets from [macmillan.org.uk/easyread](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/easyread)

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



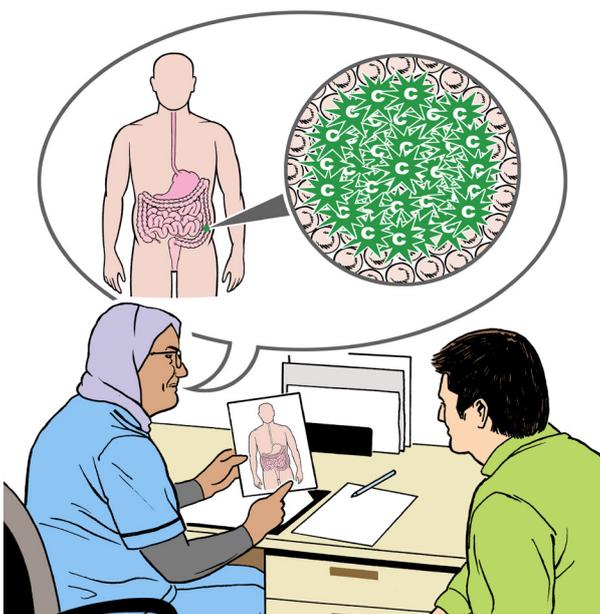
Living a healthy life

- 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 covid
- 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



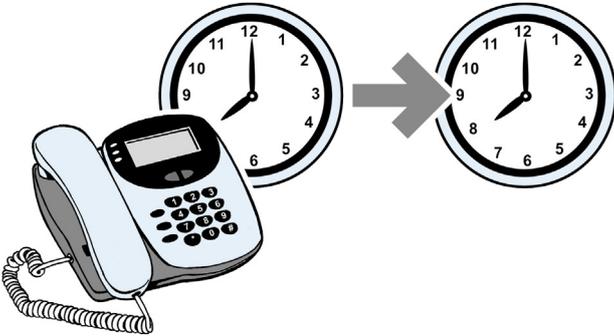
After someone dies

- 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 having radiotherapy.

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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Patient Information Forum



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