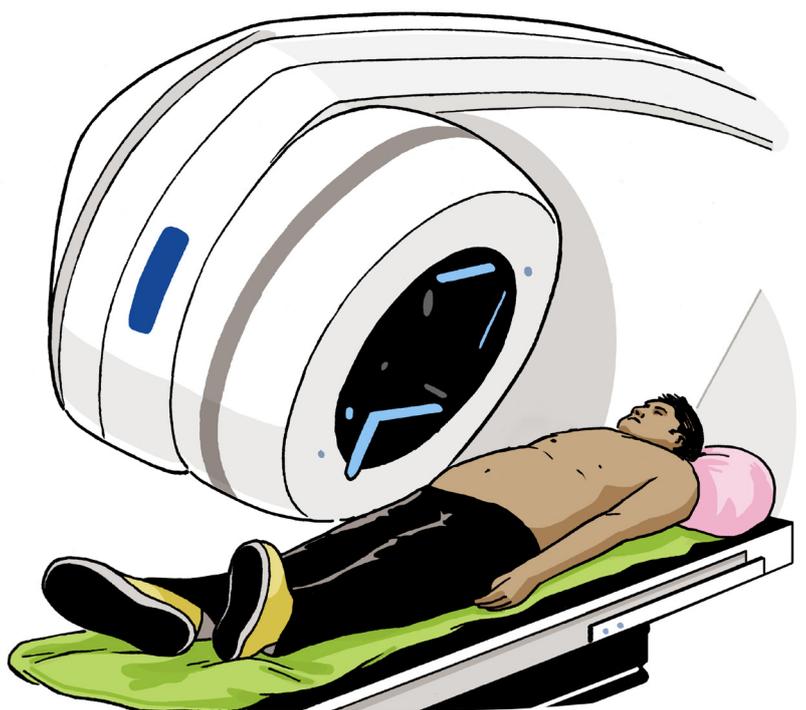


In partnership with

**MACMILLAN**  
CANCER SUPPORT

easy  
read

# Side effects from radiotherapy

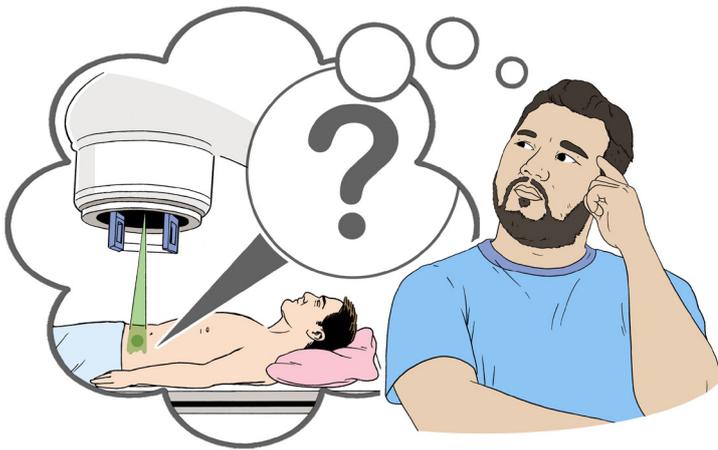




# About this easy read booklet



This booklet is about side effects from **external** radiotherapy. **External** means that the radiotherapy is given by a machine outside of the body.



You can learn about what may happen to your body when you have radiotherapy.



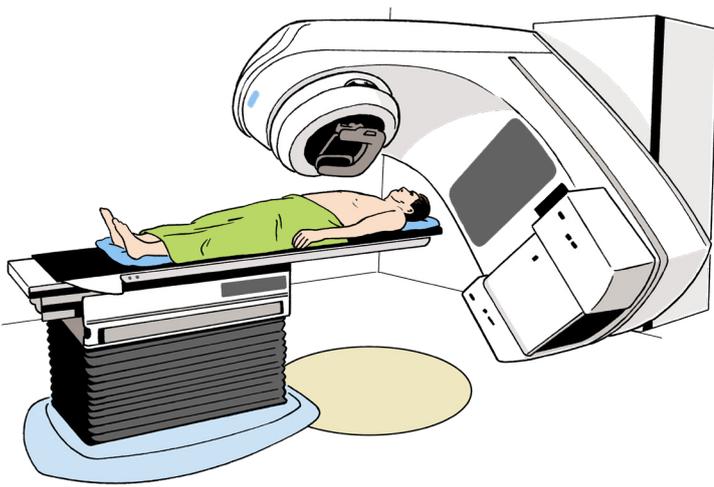
If you are worried about your health, you should talk to a doctor or nurse.



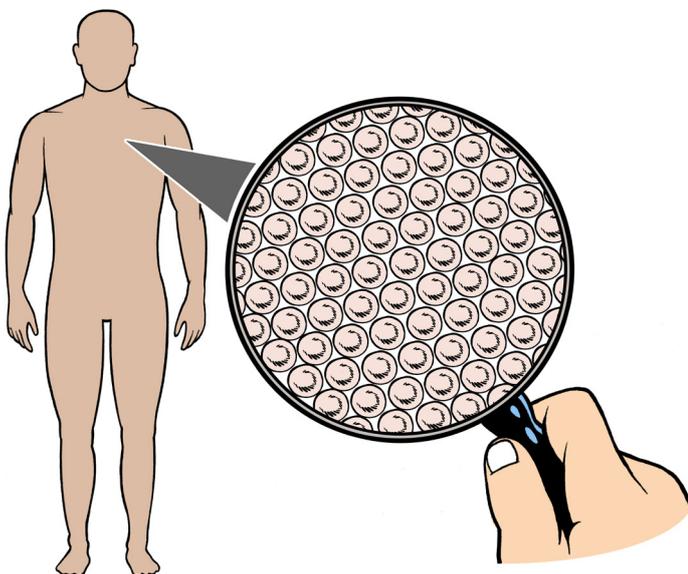
# Side effects of radiotherapy



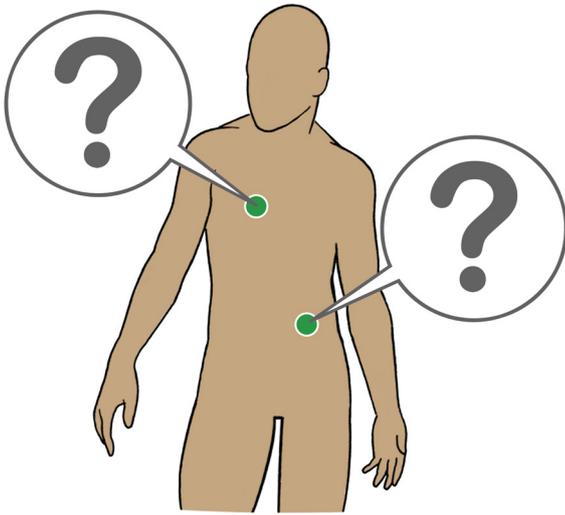
**Side effects** are unwanted effects caused by **radiotherapy**, like feeling tired or sick.



**Radiotherapy** is when high energy rays are used to treat cancer in your body. It destroys cancer **cells**.



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

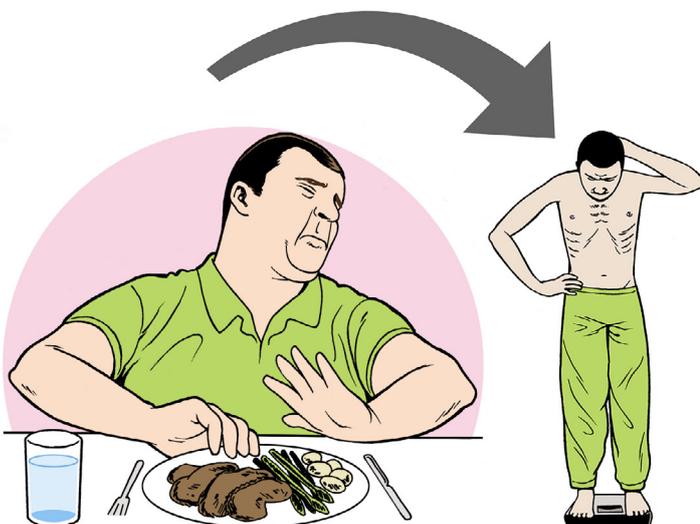


The side effects you get can depend on which part of the body is treated. Your doctor or nurse can tell you what to expect.



You may get some of these side effects:

- You may feel very tired.



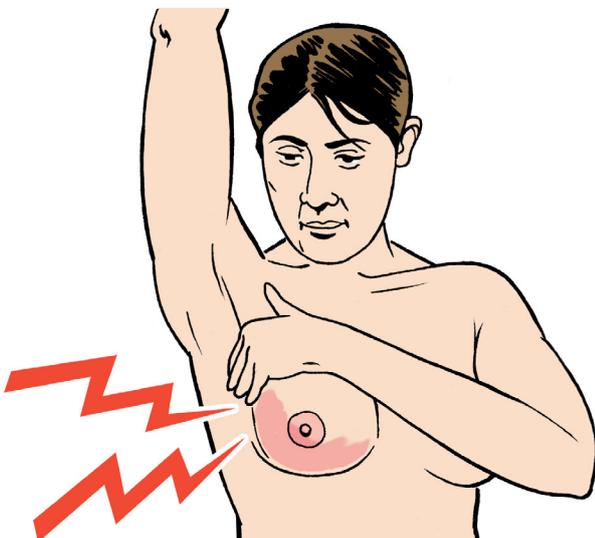
- You may **lose your appetite**. This is where you do not feel as hungry as you used to and you may lose weight.



- You may feel or be sick.



- You may have **diarrhoea**.  
This is where your poo is watery and runny and you have to go more than usual.



- The skin where you had the treatment may get red, itchy and sore.



- Your mouth can feel dry and you may find it hard to swallow.



- Your body can feel stiff and sore when you try to move.



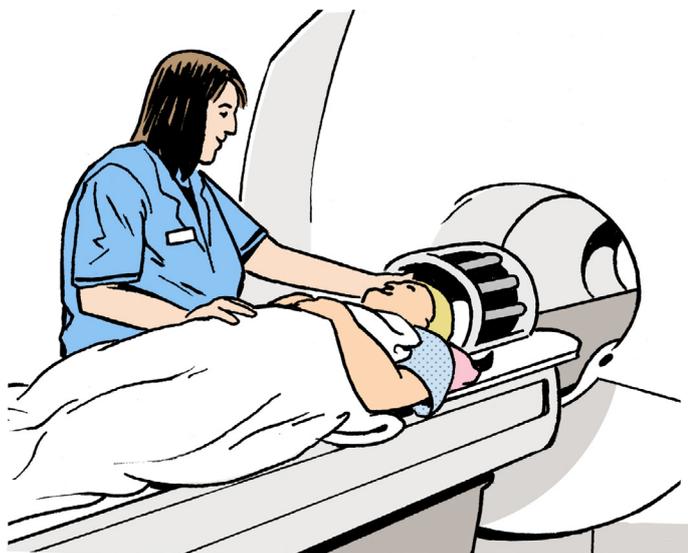
- Your hair may fall out on the part of your body that was treated.



Remember not all of these side effects may happen to you.



It is important to talk to the **radiographer** looking after you about any side effects you have. They should be able to help.



A **radiographer** is a person who takes scans and x-rays of people's bodies. They also give people radiotherapy treatment.



# How Macmillan can help you

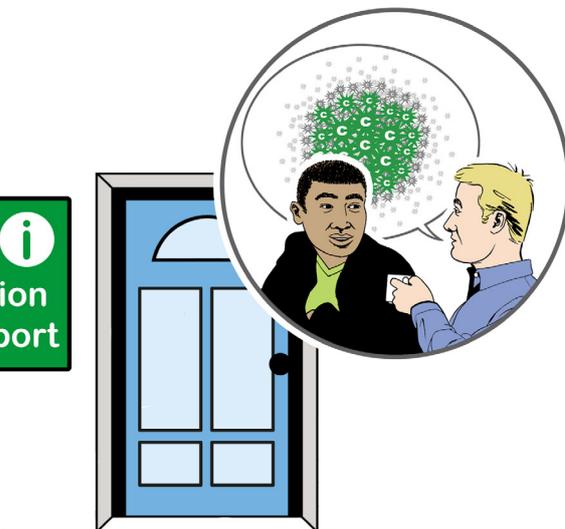


You can get support from:

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



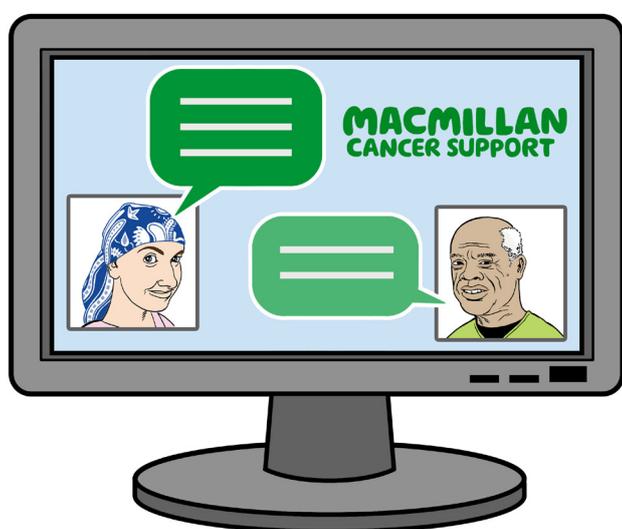
- The Macmillan website. Visit [macmillan.org.uk](http://macmillan.org.uk) for information about cancer. You can also use our web chat to ask questions at [macmillan.org.uk/talktous](http://macmillan.org.uk/talktous)



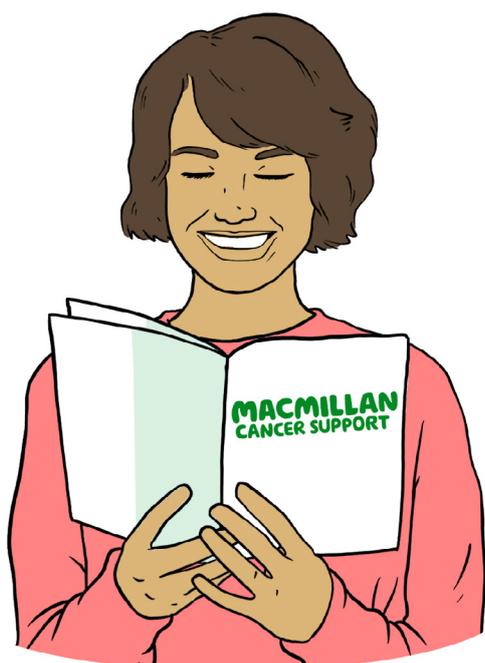
- Information centres. You can talk to a cancer support specialist and get written information. Find your nearest centre at [macmillan.org.uk/informationcentres](http://macmillan.org.uk/informationcentres) or call us.



- 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](https://www.be.macmillan.org.uk)



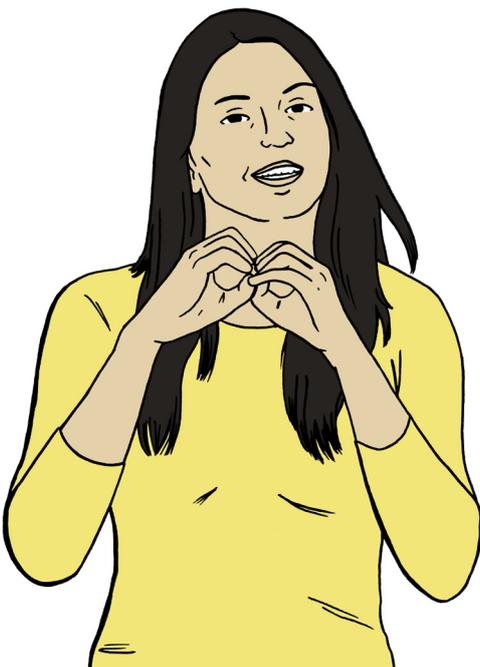
## Videos

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)



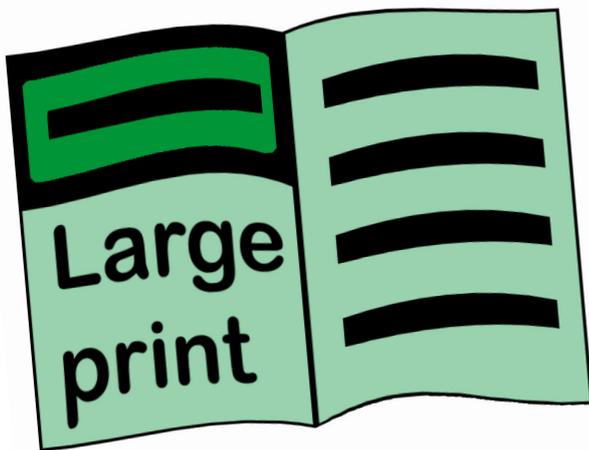
## British Sign Language (BSL)

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



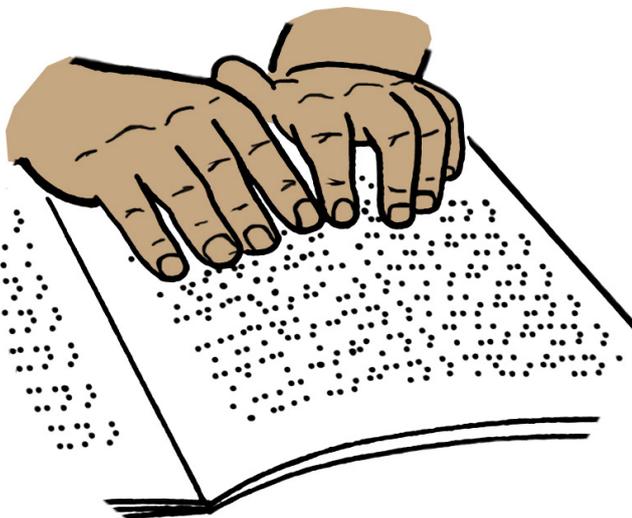
## eBooks

You can get eBooks  
about cancer from  
[be.macmillan.org.uk](https://be.macmillan.org.uk)



## Large print

Tell us if you need  
information in large print.  
Email: [cancerinformationteam@macmillan.org.uk](mailto:cancerinformationteam@macmillan.org.uk)



## Braille

Tell us if you need  
information in Braille.  
Email: [cancerinformationteam@macmillan.org.uk](mailto:cancerinformationteam@macmillan.org.uk)



# More easy read booklets



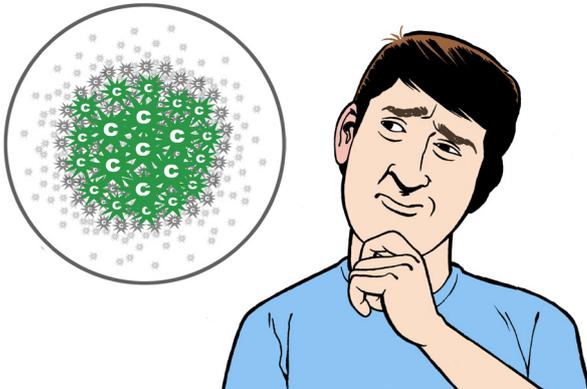
Order more easy read booklets from [macmillan.org.uk/easyread](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/easyread)

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



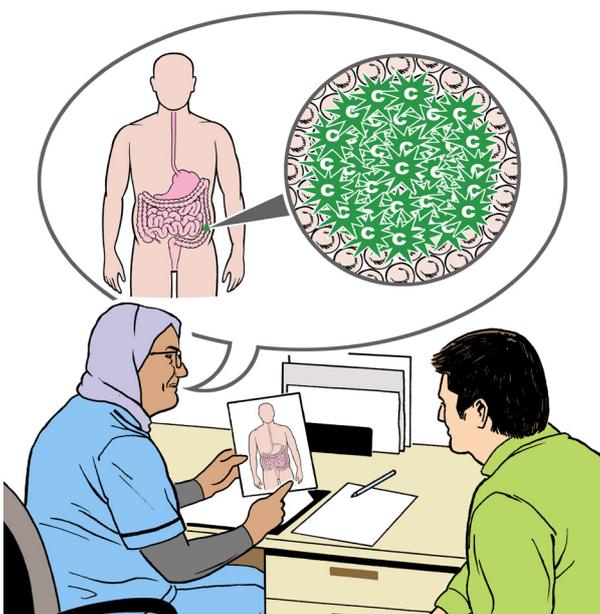
## Living a healthy life

- 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



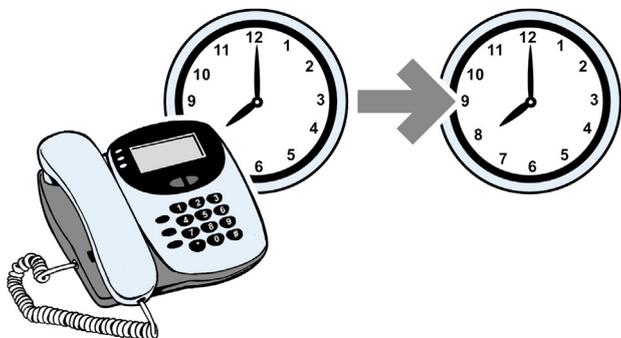
## After someone dies

- 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 side effects from 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](http://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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