

Surgery for lung cancer



About this booklet

This booklet is about surgery for lung cancer. It is for anyone who has been diagnosed with lung cancer and will have surgery to remove it. There is also information for carers, family members and friends.

The booklet explains how to prepare for surgery, the different operations for lung cancer, and what to expect immediately after surgery and as you recover.

We hope it helps you deal with some of the questions or feelings you may have.

It is best to read this booklet along with our booklet called **Understanding lung cancer**.

We also have other lung cancer treatment booklets:

- Chemotherapy for lung cancer
- Radiotherapy for lung cancer
- Targeted therapy and immunotherapy for non-small cell lung cancer.

You can order these booklets on our website **orders.macmillan.org.uk**

We cannot give advice about the best treatment for you. You should talk to your doctor, who knows your medical history.

How to use this booklet

This booklet is split into sections to help you find what you need. You do not have to read it from start to finish. You can use the contents list on page 3 to help you. It is fine to skip parts of the booklet. You can always come back to them when you feel ready.

On pages 64 to 75, there are details of other organisations that can help.

There is also space to write down questions and notes for your doctor or nurse (page 76).

Quotes

In this booklet, we have included quotes from people who have had lung cancer, which you may find helpful. These are from people who have chosen to share their story with us. To share your experience, visit **macmillan.org.uk/shareyourstory**

For more information

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**

If you would prefer to speak to us in another language, interpreters are available. Please tell us, in English, the language you want to use.

If you are deaf or hard of hearing, call us using Relay UK on **18001 0808 808 00 00**, or use the Relay UK app.

We have some information in different languages and formats, including audio, easy read, Braille, large print, interactive PDF and translations. To order these, visit **macmillan.org.uk/otherformats** or call **0808 808 00 00**.

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The lungs and lung cancer

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About lung cancer

Lung cancer is the third most common cancer in the UK. About 49,200 people are diagnosed with lung cancer each year. It is more common in older people but can also affect younger people.

The lungs are the parts of the body that we use to breathe. They supply oxygen to the organs and tissues of the body. The lungs are divided into areas called lobes. The right lung has 3 lobes, and the left lung has 2 lobes.

Nose Mouth Windpipe (trachea) Right lung Muscle

The lungs

Most lung cancers are caused by smoking. This is the biggest risk factor.

Some people who have never smoked can also get lung cancer. Around 15 in 100 people (15%) diagnosed with lung cancer are people who have never smoked. This is called non-smoking lung cancer. It is more common in younger people. The Ruth Strauss Foundation (page 65) has more information about non-smoking lung cancer.

Finding out you have lung cancer

Being diagnosed with lung cancer can cause many different emotions (page 46). There is no right or wrong way to feel. You may have been worrying about having cancer for a while. Or your diagnosis might have been unexpected.

This information is for people who have already been diagnosed with lung cancer and are going to have surgery to treat it. You might also be having other lung cancer treatments.

It is best to read this information with our general booklet about lung cancer. Our booklet **Understanding lung cancer** explains all the different treatments for lung cancer.

You can also find all our information about lung cancer on our website at macmillan.org.uk/lungcancer

If you need support, you can contact our cancer support specialists on **0808 808 00 00**. They will be able to talk to you about your diagnosis and help answer any questions you have.

Types of lung cancer

There are 2 main types of primary lung cancer:

- non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC), which is the most common type of lung cancer
- small cell lung cancer (SCLC), which is much less common than NSCLC about 10% to 15% of lung cancers are SCLC.

Primary lung cancer is cancer that starts in the lung.

The cancer cells are examined in a laboratory by a doctor called a pathologist, who is an expert in cell types. The cancer cells are named after:

- how the cancer cells look under a microscope
- the type of cells the cancer started in.

These cancers behave in different ways. Your treatment will depend on the type of lung cancer you have. Surgery is usually only possible if you have NSCLC. A small number of people with SCLC may be able to have surgery.

Non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC)

Non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC) is the most common lung cancer. There are 3 main types:

- Adenocarcinoma is the most common type of NSCLC. It develops from cells that make mucus. It is more often found in the outer area of the lung. Although the main cause is smoking, this type of NSCLC is more common in non-smokers.
- Squamous cell carcinoma develops in the cells that line the airways. It is more often found in the main airways in the centre of the lungs.
- Large cell lung cancer is a very uncommon type that usually starts in the centre of the lungs.

Sometimes doctors cannot say for certain what type of NSCLC it is. This is called NSCLC not otherwise specified.

Small cell lung cancer (SCLC)

Small cell lung cancer (SCLC) is much less common than NSCLC. About 10% to 15% of lung cancers are SCLC. It gets its name from how the cancer cells look under a microscope. It is usually found in the main airways called bronchi, in the centre of the lungs. It has often spread outside the lungs when it is diagnosed.

Within all these types of lung cancer there are different sub-types of lung cancer.



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Lung cancer surgery

Some people will be able to have surgery to remove the cancer. Whether surgery is possible will depend on:

- the type of lung cancer (pages 8 to 9)
- its stage
- your general health.

Your doctor will talk to you about whether surgery is possible in your situation. They will discuss the possible risks and benefits of surgery for you.

Lung cancer surgery is a big operation, and you need to be well enough to cope with it. Before you have surgery, your doctor will arrange tests to check how well your lungs and heart are working.

You should also be able to talk to a doctor or specialist nurse about your feelings and any worries you have. Knowing you need to have a big operation can be worrying. It can help to talk through your concerns with someone from your cancer team.

You might also find it helpful to read our booklet **How are you feeling? The emotional effects of cancer** (page 58).

A surgeon who is an expert in lung surgery will do the operation. As well as removing the cancer, the surgeon will remove an area of normal tissue around the cancer. They will also remove some of the lymph nodes in the chest.

You can find out more about the lungs and lymph nodes in our booklet **Understanding lung cancer** (page 58).

When is surgery used for lung cancer?

Your doctor may offer you surgery if you have a non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC) stage 1 or 2. Some people with a stage 3 non-small cell lung cancer may also be able to have surgery.

After the cancer has been removed, your doctor will be able to tell you more about the stage of the cancer. You can find out about stages of lung cancer on our website at **macmillan.org.uk/lung-cancer-staging**

You may have other treatment before or after surgery. This may be with chemotherapy, immunotherapy, targeted therapy or radiotherapy. Some people may be offered a combination of chemotherapy and immunotherapy before surgery.

If the cancer is a stage 3a, you may have combined chemotherapy and radiotherapy before surgery. This is called chemoradiation. In this case, you will have the operation 3 to 5 weeks after the chemoradiation, to allow you time to recover before surgery.

We have more information about these different treatments in our booklets:

- Radiotherapy for lung cancer
- Chemotherapy for lung cancer
- Targeted therapy and immunotherapy for non-small cell lung cancer.

You can order these booklets at orders.macmillan.org.uk

Small cell lung cancer (SCLC) and surgery

Surgery is rarely possible for small cell lung cancer (SCLC) because it has often spread outside the lung when it is diagnosed. If the cancer is very small, and it has not spread, surgery may be possible. You will have chemotherapy afterwards. "Everything felt like a giant plate of spaghetti that I couldn't unravel. The Macmillan nurse was amazing. She helped me make sense of it all and got my thinking straight. She also helped prepare me to ask all the right questions when I had my next clinic consultant appointment. "

Natasha, diagnosed with lung cancer

Your treatment plan

After a diagnosis of lung cancer, a team of specialists meet to talk about the best treatment for you. This is called a multi-disciplinary team (MDT). After the MDT meeting, you will usually meet your cancer team to talk about your treatment options.

This multi-disciplinary team (MDT) will include:

- a thoracic surgeon a doctor who does operations and specialises in lung surgery
- an oncologist a doctor who uses radiotherapy, chemotherapy, targeted and immunotherapy drugs to treat people with cancer
- a respiratory specialist a doctor who is an expert in chest and breathing conditions
- a clinical nurse specialist (CNS) a nurse who gives information about cancer, and support during treatment
- a radiologist a doctor who looks at scans and x-rays to diagnose problems
- a pathologist a doctor who looks at cells or body tissue under a microscope to diagnose cancer.

The team may also include other healthcare professionals, such as:

- a palliative care doctor or nurse someone who specialises in symptom control
- a physiotherapist someone who gives advice about exercise and mobility.

The MDT looks at different things to help decide which treatment options are likely to work best for you. This includes:

- the type of lung cancer you have (pages 8 to 9)
- the stage of the cancer
- the results of tests on the lung cancer cells
- your general health
- how able you are to do everyday things this is called your performance status (page 17)
- your treatment preferences
- lung cancer treatment guidelines.

Talking about your treatment plan

After the MDT meeting, you usually see your doctor and specialist nurse. They will talk to you about the aims of your treatment and tell you what your treatment options are. You can make decisions together with your team. This is called shared decision making.

You will need more information about different options for your treatment, and how it is likely to affect you. The aim is to reach a decision about your treatment or care that is right for you.

Before you meet with your doctor and nurse, it can help to write down your questions. You may want to ask a family member or friend to come with you. They can help remember what is said and talk with you about it afterwards.

It is important to understand how a treatment may affect you before giving permission (consent) to have treatment. Your doctor or nurse will explain what each treatment involves and how it may affect you. Your cancer team should explain:

- the aim of the treatment whether it is to cure the cancer or control it
- the benefits of the treatment
- the disadvantages of the treatment for example, the risks and side effects
- any other treatments that may be available
- what might happen if you do not have the treatment.

Your doctor or nurse might give you printed information or show you videos about your treatment options.

Your performance status

When deciding on the best treatment for you, your doctor needs to check your overall health. This includes measuring how well you can do ordinary daily activities. This is sometimes called your performance status. It helps you and your doctor think about how a treatment may affect your:

- ability to care for yourself
- quality of life
- ability to do the things that are important to you.

Doctors use different scales to help them to measure your performance status. They usually give a grade or performance score between 0 and 4.

A score of 0 means you are fully active and can do all the things you did before your cancer diagnosis. A score of 4 means you are spending most of your time in bed, needing full care. You and your doctor can make decisions about which treatments are best for you, based on your performance score.



Before your operation

Before surgery

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Before surgery

It will help your recovery if you are as fit as possible before your operation. Once you have met the surgeon, your healthcare team may suggest things you can do to improve your general health. This is sometimes called prehabilitation. It can reduce the risk of complications such as blood clots and slow-healing wounds. It can also help you to recover faster.

You can find out more about prehabilitation on our website at **macmillan.org.uk/prehab**

Diet

Eating a healthy and varied diet can improve your well-being. You may need to gain or lose weight before your surgery. You may be given specific advice by a dietitian. We have more information on diet and cancer in our booklet **Healthy eating and cancer** (page 58).

Physical activity

You may be asked to do exercises to improve your heart health and make your muscles stronger. Being fitter may help reduce the risk of complications after surgery. You can improve your fitness in a few weeks by doing regular exercise, such as walking. We have more information in our booklet **Physical activity and cancer** (page 58).

Stopping smoking

Try to stop smoking as soon as you can before your operation. Even stopping 2 to 3 weeks before surgery, and not smoking afterwards, reduces your risk of complications. Your wounds are likely to heal more quickly and your stay in hospital may be shorter. It can be difficult to stop smoking, especially when you are stressed. Your hospital will usually have a service to support you. Using the NHS Stop Smoking Services improves your chances of success. Your GP can also give you support and advice. They can provide nicotine replacement therapies on prescription. You can also find stop smoking organisations on pages 68 to 69. We have more information about stopping smoking. Visit **macmillan.org.uk/stop-smoking**

Alcohol

If you drink alcohol it can help to cut down or stop before your treatment. Try to make sure you stay within the recommended guidelines. The NHS has more information about this on its website at **nhs.uk/live-well/alcohol-advice/** calculating-alcohol-units/

Your emotional well-being

A diagnosis of cancer is often overwhelming. Getting support by talking about how you feel can make a difference.

Your cancer team will give you support. Let them know how you are feeling. There may be different ways they can help you. Talking to your family and friends can also be helpful.

Macmillan is here to support you. If you would like to talk, you can:

- call the Macmillan Support Line on **0808 808 00 00**
- chat to our specialists online
- visit our lung cancer forum to talk with people who have been affected by lung cancer, share your experience, and ask an expert your questions at community.macmillan.org.uk/ cancer_types/lung-cancer

Enhanced recovery programme

Most hospitals have an enhanced recovery programme for people having lung surgery. This is similar to prehabilitation (page 20). An enhanced recovery programme aims to reduce the time you spend in hospital after surgery and speed up your recovery. For example, you will be given information about diet and exercise before surgery. You may also be given nutritional supplement drinks to take before your operation.

Pre-assessment clinic

At a pre-assessment clinic, you will see a nurse who will prepare you for your operation and check you are well enough to have surgery. This usually happens 1 to 2 weeks before your operation. You may want to take someone with you.

You usually have tests to check how well your lungs are working and your general health. These may include:

- blood and urine tests
- lung function (breathing) tests
- a chest x-ray
- a recording of your heart (ECG).

Some people have more heart tests. Your doctor will explain if you need this.

At this appointment, you can ask questions and talk about any concerns you have about the operation. The nurse may show you some simple breathing exercises to help with your recovery after surgery. The nurse will ask you to list all the prescribed medicines you take, and any vitamins or herbal supplements. They may give you specific instructions about when to take certain medicines before your operation. This is important, especially if you take medicines to:

- thin your blood (anticoagulants)
- manage diabetes
- manage high blood pressure.

If you have other medical conditions, such as heart or lung problems, you may also need to meet an anaesthetist. This is a doctor trained to give general anaesthetic so that you are not awake during surgery. You may meet an anaesthetist at another clinic.

The nurse will also give you information about your hospital stay and the care you may need after the operation. Nurses on the ward will look after you when you have your operation. Other staff who may be involved in your care include:

- a pharmacist someone who gives out medicines and gives advice about taking medicines
- a dietitian someone who gives information and advice about food and food supplements
- an occupational therapist (OT) someone who gives information, support and aids to help people with tasks such as washing and dressing.

About your hospital stay

Your nurse will give you information about:

- when to come into hospital this is usually on the day of your operation, or the day before
- how long you are likely to stay in hospital
- when you can have visitors
- what to bring to hospital with you
- when to stop eating or drinking before surgery.

The nurse may give you an antiseptic body wash to use for a few days before your operation.

They will also talk to you about going home from hospital. If you live on your own or care for other people, it is important to tell your nurse. They can help you prepare for going home.

What to take to the hospital

It is helpful to make a list of all the things you might need in hospital. This may include:

- comfortable, loose-fitting clothing, underwear and footwear that is easy to put on
- personal toiletries
- something to read
- music to listen to
- a small amount of cash so you can buy things from the hospital shop or cafe

- your regular medication
- your glasses or contact lenses
- your mobile phone, if you have one
- your house keys (unless you leave them with someone else).

You may want to start packing a few days before the operation.

Going into hospital

You usually go into hospital on the day of your operation, or the day before. When you arrive, the nurses will explain what to expect and give you some instructions. They will give you elastic stockings to wear during and after surgery. These are called TED stockings. They help prevent blood clots.

Ask your hospital team if you are not sure about anything. You can also talk to a nurse if you have any concerns about coping when you go home from hospital.

You can also talk to our cancer support specialists on **0808 808 00 00**.



Having lung cancer surgery

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What operations are used for lung cancer?

The surgery you have will depend on the size of the cancer and exactly where it is in the lungs. There are 3 main types of operation used to remove lung cancer. These are:

- removing a lobe this is called a lobectomy
- removing a small part of the lung this is called a wedge resection or segmentectomy
- removing a whole lung this is called a pneumonectomy.

Removing a lobe of the lung (lobectomy)

Your lungs are divided into lobes. The left lung has 2 lobes and the right lung has 3 lobes.

During a lobectomy, the surgeon removes one of the lobes of the lung. It is the most common operation for lung cancer. After a lobe has been removed, the remaining lobes expand to fill the space.



Removing one of the lobes of the lung (lobectomy)

If the tumour has spread to 2 lobes next to each other, the surgeon may remove 2 lobes. This is sometimes called a bilobectomy.

Removing a small part of the lung (wedge resection or segmentectomy)

If the cancer is very small and positioned towards the edge of the lungs, the surgeon may be able to take out a smaller amount of lung tissue.

A wedge resection is where the surgeon removes the cancer and a wedge-shaped area of tissue that surrounds it.

Removing a small part of the lung (wedge resection)



A segmentectomy is where the surgeon removes a slighter larger area of the lobe. Both a wedge resection and a segmentectomy are also known as a sub-lobar resection.

A surgeon may also suggest this type of operation if there is too much damage to the lung for you to be able to have a lobectomy.

Another operation that removes part of a lung is called a sleeve resection. This type of surgery is less common. It may be done if the cancer is nearer the centre of the lungs or involves one of the bronchi, the main airways to the lungs. The surgeon can remove the cancer without needing to remove the whole lung.

Removing all the lung (pneumonectomy)

Some people may need to have a whole lung removed. This operation is called a pneumonectomy. It is less common than other types of lung surgery. It may be done when:

- the cancer is near where the airways enter the lung
- more than 1 lobe of the lung is affected.

You can still breathe normally with only 1 lung. But you might find some tasks harder to do. Your doctor will discuss the possible effects of having this type of surgery before you agree to have it.

Removing one of the lungs (pneumonectomy)



Removing the lymph nodes

During surgery to remove the cancer, the surgeon also removes some of the lymph nodes close to the cancer. These are examined under a microscope to check for cancer cells. This will give your doctor more detailed information about the stage of the cancer and will help them know if you need further treatment.

You can find out more about cancer stages on our website at macmillan.org.uk/lung-cancer-staging

Having lung cancer surgery

There are different ways of doing surgery to treat lung cancer. Your surgeon will explain which one is most suitable for you. Before the operation you will sign a consent form agreeing to the operation.

We have more information about giving your consent on our website. Visit **macmillan.org.uk/treatment-consent**

Keyhole surgery

With keyhole surgery, the surgeon makes several small cuts instead of a single large cut. This leaves much smaller wounds, so you usually recover faster.

Sometimes the surgeon needs to change from keyhole surgery to open surgery (page 34). They will only do this if it will be better for you. Your surgeon will discuss this with you before you sign the consent form for the operation.

Video-assisted thoracoscopic surgery (VATS)

Video-assisted thoracoscopic surgery (VATS) is a type of keyhole surgery. It is done by surgeons who are specially trained in this technique.

The surgeon makes 1 or more small cuts in the skin. They put a tube with a light and video camera attached into the chest through one of the cuts. This is called a thoracoscope. The camera sends images of the inside of the chest to a computer screen.

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The surgeon then passes small surgical instruments through the other cuts to remove the cancer.

After VATS you have much smaller scars than with open surgery. You may have less pain and recover faster than with open surgery. Your stay in hospital is usually shorter.

Your doctor and nurse will tell you what to expect after VATS surgery.

Robotic-assisted thoracic surgery (RATS)

With this procedure, instead of the surgeon holding the surgical instruments, they are attached to robotic arms. The surgeon controls the robotic arms. They can move very precisely.

People often recover more quickly from this type of surgery.

Surgeons need special training to do this type of surgery. It is not available in all hospitals. Your surgeon will tell you if it is suitable for you and where you may be able to have it done.

Open surgery

The surgeon usually makes a cut on the side of your chest. This operation is called a thoracotomy. They may move the ribs to get to the lungs. You will have a scar around the side of your chest afterwards. The scar will be 10cm to 20cm long.




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After surgery

After your operation, you will wake up in the recovery unit. From there, you usually go back to the ward. Some people may be looked after in an intensive-care or high-dependency unit for a few days.

Drips and drains

After your operation, you will probably have the following tubes in place:

- A drip (infusion) into a vein in the hand or arm to give you fluids. This is removed once you are eating and drinking normally again.
- A chest drain. This is a tube the surgeon puts into the chest during your surgery. This drains fluid and air into a bottle. Some people may have more than 1 chest drain. You can move around with the drain in place, carrying the bottle with you. They are usually removed after a few days.

Occasionally, people may have a small tube (catheter) put into the bladder to drain urine into a bag. This will be removed after a few days.

You may have other tubes or attachments, depending on the type of surgery you have had. These include a line going into an artery. This measures your blood pressure and oxygen levels. You may have a clip on the finger to measure your oxygen levels and monitor your pulse rate. These will be removed as soon as possible as you recover from surgery.

Getting up and moving around

The nurses and your physiotherapist will encourage you to start moving around as soon as possible. This will help you recover faster from the surgery. It will reduce the risk of complications from surgery, such as developing a blood clot or chest infection.

We have more information about blood clots on our website at macmillan.org.uk/blood-clots

The nurses and your physiotherapist will help you to sit in a chair. They will encourage and help you to go for short walks as soon as you can. If you have to stay in bed, it is important to move your legs regularly. This helps your circulation and prevents blood clots.

You will not be able to shower or have a bath while you have a chest drain in. The nurses will help you with washing if needed and will show you how to keep your wound dry when you are able to shower or bathe.

Your breathing

A nurse may give you oxygen through a mask over your mouth and nose, or thin, soft tubes in each nostril.

A physiotherapist or nurse will show you some breathing exercises to do. Your breathing may be shallow to start with. This is normal after lung surgery. The nurse or physiotherapist will encourage you to take deep breaths. This is to make sure all the lung is working properly. They will also encourage you to cough to bring up any mucus (phlegm). This helps prevent chest infections and other possible complications.

You will have x-rays to make sure your lung is working properly.

Pain

It is important that your pain is well-controlled to allow you to do your breathing exercises and move around. Tell your nurse or doctor if the pain is not under control. They can change or increase your painkillers so they work better.

You can find out more about managing cancer pain in our booklet **Managing cancer pain** (page 58).

There are different ways to help manage pain. Your doctors may discuss with you the best way to manage pain before the operation. How your pain is managed may depend on the operation you have.

For the first few days after surgery, you may have painkillers in any of the following ways:

- A nerve block. There are different types of nerve block that can be used to help with pain after lung cancer surgery. Your doctor can tell you more about nerve blocks.
- Into a vein (intravenously) in your hand or arm, through a drip (infusion) or a syringe connected to a small pump. This is set to give you a continuous dose of painkillers safely. You may be able to give yourself more painkiller when you need it by pressing a button. This is called patient-controlled analgesia (PCA). Your nurses will explain this to you.
- Into the space around your spinal cord through a thin tube the surgeon puts into your back during surgery. This is called epidural pain relief.

Your nurse will assess you to make sure your pain is well-controlled. As you get better and start to eat and drink, you will start to take painkiller tablets. You can continue to take these at home. You may have some discomfort or pain in your chest for several weeks or months after surgery.

Some people get new pain or an unusual sensation weeks or months after their operation. This is usually caused by nerves starting to repair after surgery. Tell your doctor or nurse about any new pain or sensations. They can check it and make sure you have the right painkillers.

Your wound

Your nurses and surgeon will check your wound regularly while you are in hospital. Tell them if:

- you have any pain or swelling
- the wound feels hot
- there is fluid leaking from the wound
- you are feeling unwell with a fever.

These are possible signs of a wound infection. Tell your nurse or doctor if you have any of these symptoms after you go home (pages 42 to 43).

You usually have your stitches, clips or staples removed about 7 to 10 days after your operation. A nurse can arrange for you to have these removed when you are at home. If you have dissolvable stitches, they disappear over a few weeks.

You can find out more about going home from hospital on our website at macmillan.org.uk/going-home-from-hospital

Going home

You will usually be ready to go home 3 to 7 days after your operation. You will need to arrange for someone to take you home from hospital. If you live on your own, it is a good idea to arrange to stay with someone or have someone stay with you. This could be for a few days, until you feel able to manage on your own.

A nurse or pharmacist will give you tablets to take at home, including painkillers. Always take them exactly as they explain. This is important to make sure they work as well as possible for you.

A nurse or physiotherapist will advise you about exercises for you to do at home. These are an important part of your recovery.

Before you go home, make sure you know who to contact if you have any problems.

Recovering

It may take some weeks or months to recover, depending on the operation you have had. How long it takes to recover varies. It is faster for some people than others. Try to pace yourself and do not do too much too soon.

Your doctor and nurse will give you advice on what you can do to help your recovery. You need to avoid any heavy lifting or straining your arm on the affected side. But it is important to keep doing the exercises the physiotherapist showed you. You can slowly build up your strength and fitness with light exercise, such as short walks.

Try to eat a healthy diet as this can help your recovery. Make sure you get enough rest. If you feel tired when doing any exercise, slow down and give yourself time to recover.

We have more information in our booklet **Healthy eating and cancer** (page 58).

You can have sex again when you feel comfortable doing so. You may need to try different positions so you are comfortable. We have more information in our booklet **Cancer and your sex life** (page 58).

Contact the hospital if you have pain that is not controlled, or if you have any problems with your wound.

Driving

Your doctor will tell you when it is safe to drive after your operation. It can take about 4 to 6 weeks for you to be fit enough. You need to be able to do an emergency stop easily. At first, you may find the seatbelt presses on your wound and makes it sore. You can buy padding for seatbelts to help with this.

Some car insurance policies give specific time limits for not driving after chest surgery. Check with your insurance company.

Follow-up

You usually see your surgeon or clinical nurse specialist (CNS) a few weeks after your surgery. They will check the scar and make sure everything is healing properly. They will also give you advice about how soon you can get back to work and travel again.

They will also be able to tell you if you need further treatment. This will be with an oncologist, a doctor who specialises in cancer treatments. You can also ask any questions you have.

We have more information about what happens after surgery on our website at **macmillan.org.uk/after-surgery**



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Your feelings

It is common to have many different feelings when you are told you have cancer. You may feel shocked, scared, depressed, guilty or angry. This can be difficult to cope with. Partners, family and friends may also have some of the same feelings.

We have more information about emotions on our website and in our booklet **How are you feeling? The emotional effects of cancer** (page 58).

Your healthcare team will usually give you support. But you may feel you need more help. Talk to your cancer doctor, GP or specialist nurse. They can refer you to a specialist doctor, psychologist or counsellor who can help.

You can also call the Macmillan Support Line on **0808 808 00 00** and talk to one of our cancer support specialists.

Talking to family, friends or other people affected by cancer may help. For more information or for help finding local support groups, visit **macmillan.org.uk/supportgroups** Or talk to other people on our Online Community at **macmillan.org.uk/community**

There is more information about other ways we can help you on pages 60 to 63.



Relationships

Cancer and its treatment are stressful and may affect your relationships. Your experience of cancer may strengthen your relationships with people close to you. Or it may put a strain on relationships. Any problems usually improve over time, especially if you talk openly with each other.

We have more information about relationships online and in our booklets **Talking about cancer** and **Cancer and relationships: support for partners, families and friends**.

If you are a family member or friend

If you know someone with cancer, you might find it hard to talk about the cancer or your feelings. You can support the person with cancer by listening and talking to them.

We have more information about supporting someone on our website and in our booklet **Talking with someone who has cancer**.

If you are looking after a family member or friend with cancer, you may be a carer. We have more information and practical tips for carers on our website and in our booklet **Looking after someone with cancer**.

Talking to children and teenagers

Deciding what to tell children or teenagers about cancer is difficult. It can be hard to know what to tell them, and you may be worried about upsetting them. It may be best to start by giving them small amounts of information, and then tell them more when they are ready. Use simple, straightforward language to explain what is happening. You can encourage them to talk to someone they trust, who can support them. They may also find support online.

We have more information in our booklet **Talking to children and teenagers when an adult has cancer**.

You can order our booklets and leaflets for free. Visit **orders.macmillan.org.uk** or call **0808 808 00 00**.

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Work and financial support

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You may not know how cancer will affect your work, now or in the future.

It is a good idea to talk to your manager or human resources (HR) department soon after you are diagnosed. This will help them to support you better.

Some people stop working during cancer treatment and for a while after, until they feel ready to go back. Others carry on working, sometimes with reduced hours or other changes to their job.

Your cancer doctor, GP or specialist nurse can help you decide whether you should stop working, and when and if you should go back to work.

Your cancer doctor, GP or specialist nurse can help you decide whether you should go back to work, and when.

Our booklets **Work and cancer**, **Working while caring for someone with cancer** and **Self-employment and cancer** have more information that may be helpful. You can also find out more about your employment rights in our booklet **Your rights at work when you are affected by cancer**. You can order these booklets from our website (page 58).

There is also lots more information online at **macmillan.org.uk/work**

Help with money and benefits

When you are affected by cancer, you may need help with extra costs. Or you may need support with money if you have to stop working. We have more information online about Statutory Sick Pay and benefits you may be entitled to. We also have information for carers (page 58).

Benefits are payments from the government to people who need help with money. You can find out more about benefits and apply for them online. Go to:

- gov.uk if you live in England or Wales
- socialsecurity.gov.scot if you live in Scotland
- nidirect.gov.uk if you live in Northern Ireland.

The benefits system and other types of financial support can be hard to understand. You can speak to our money advisers by calling the Macmillan Support Line for free, on **0808 808 00 00**. Please note the opening times may vary by service.

You can also get information about benefits and other types of financial help from Citizens Advice if you live in England, Scotland or Wales, or Advice NI if you live in Northern Ireland (pages 71 to 72).

Our booklet **Help with the cost of cancer** has lots more information (page 58).

Grants

You may be able to get some financial help from other charities, for example one-off grants. For further information, contact the Macmillan Support Line.

Insurance

If you have, or have had, cancer, you may find it hard to get certain types of insurance. We have information about insurance on our website. Visit **macmillan.org.uk/insurance-cancer**

If you are thinking about buying insurance or making a claim, one of our money advisers can help. You can call them on **0808 808 00 00**.

We have more information about travel insurance in our booklet **Travel and cancer**. Our Online Community forum on Travel insurance may also be helpful. Visit **macmillan.org.uk/community**





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About our information

We provide expert, up-to-date information about cancer. And all our information is free for everyone.

Our information has the PIF Tick quality mark for trusted health information. This means our information has been through a professional and strong production process.

Order what you need

You may want to order more booklets or leaflets like this one. Visit **orders.macmillan.org.uk** or call us on **0808 808 00 00**.

We have booklets about different cancer types, treatments and side effects. We also have information about work, financial issues, diet, life after cancer treatment and information for carers, family and friends.

Online information

All our information is also available online at **macmillan.org.uk/ information-and-support** You can also find videos featuring stories from people affected by cancer, and information from health and social care professionals.

Other formats

We also provide information in different languages and formats, including:

- audiobooks
- Braille

- interactive PDFs
- large print
- British Sign Language
- translations.

easy read booklets

Find out more at macmillan.org.uk/otherformats

If you would like us to produce information in a different format for you, email us at **informationproductionteam@macmillan.org.uk** or call us on **0808 808 00 00**.

The language we use

We want everyone affected by cancer to feel our information is written for them.

We want our information to be as clear as possible. To do this, we try to:

- use plain English
- explain medical words
- use short sentences
- use illustrations to explain text
- structure the information clearly
- make sure important points are clear.

We use gender-inclusive language and talk to our readers as 'you' so that everyone feels included. Where clinically necessary we use the terms 'men' and 'women' or 'male' and 'female'. For example, we do so when talking about parts of the body or mentioning statistics or research about who is affected.

To find out more about how we produce our information, visit **macmillan.org.uk/ourinfo**



Other ways we can help you

At Macmillan, we know how a cancer diagnosis can affect everything, and we are here to support you.

Talk to us

If you or someone you know is affected by cancer, talking about how you feel and sharing your concerns can really help.

Macmillan Support Line

Our support line is made up of specialist teams who can help you with:

- emotional and practical support if you or someone you know has been diagnosed with cancer
- clinical information from our specialist nurses about things like diagnosis and treatments
- welfare rights advice, for information about benefits and general money worries.

To contact any of our teams, call the Macmillan Support Line for free on **0808 808 00 00**. Or visit **macmillan.org.uk/support-line** to chat online and see the options and opening times.

Our trained cancer information advisers can listen and signpost you to further support.

Our cancer information nurse specialists can talk you through information about your diagnosis and treatment. They can help you understand what to expect from your diagnosis and provide information to help you manage symptoms and side effects.

If you are deaf or hard of hearing, call us using Relay UK on **18001 0808 808 00 00**, or use the Relay UK app.

You can also email us, or use the Macmillan Chat Service via our website. You can use the chat service to ask our advisers about anything that is worrying you. Tell them what you would like to talk about so they can direct your chat to the right person. Click on the 'Chat to us' button, which appears on pages across the website. Or go to

macmillan.org.uk/talktous

If you would like to talk to someone in a language other than English, we also offer an interpreter service for our Macmillan Support Line. Call **0808 808 00 00** and say, in English, the language you want to use. Or send us a web chat message saying you would like an interpreter. Let us know the language you need and we'll arrange for an interpreter to contact you.

Macmillan Information and Support Centres

Our Information and Support Centres are based in hospitals, libraries and mobile centres. Visit one to get the information you need and speak with someone face to face. If you would like a private chat, most centres have a room where you can speak with someone confidentially.

Find your nearest centre at **macmillan.org.uk/informationcentres** or call us on **0808 808 00 00**.

Help with money worries

Having cancer can bring extra costs such as hospital parking, travel fares and higher heating bills. If you have been affected in this way, we can help. Please note the opening times may vary by service.

Financial advice

Our expert money advisers on the Macmillan Support Line can help you deal with money worries and recommend other useful organisations that can help.

Help accessing benefits

You can speak to our money advisers for more information. Call us free on **0808 808 00 00**. Visit **macmillan.org.uk/financialsupport** for more information about benefits.

Help with work and cancer

Whether you are an employee, a carer, an employer or are self-employed, we can provide information to help you manage cancer at work. Visit **macmillan.org.uk/work**

Talk to others

No one knows more about the impact cancer can have on your life than those who have been through it themselves. That is why we help bring people together in their communities and online.

Support groups

Whether you are someone living with cancer or a carer, family member or friend, we can help you find support in your local area, so you can speak face to face with people who understand. Find out about support groups in your area by calling us or by visiting **macmillan.org.uk/** selfhelpandsupport

Online Community

Thousands of people use our Online Community to make friends, blog about their experiences and join groups to meet other people going through the same things. You can access it any time of day or night. Share your experiences, ask questions, or just read through people's posts at **macmillan.org.uk/community**

You can also use our Ask an Expert service on the Online Community. You can ask a money adviser, cancer information nurse or an information and support adviser any questions you have.

Macmillan healthcare professionals

Our nurses, doctors and other health and social care professionals give expert care and support to individuals and their families. Call us or ask your GP, consultant, district nurse or hospital ward sister if there are any Macmillan professionals near you.

Other useful organisations

There are lots of other organisations that can give you information or support. Details correct at time of printing.

Lung cancer support organisations

ALK Positive UK

www.alkpositive.org.uk

Provides support and advocacy and aims to improve the survival and quality of life of ALK positive lung cancer patients in the UK.

Asthma + Lung UK

Helpline **0300 222 5800 www.asthmaandlung.org.uk** Supports people affected by any type of lung disease.

EGFR Positive UK

www.egfrpositive.org.uk

Provides support and advocacy and aims to improve the overall survival and quality of life of EGFR positive lung cancer patients across the UK.

Roy Castle Lung Cancer Foundation

Helpline **0333 323 7200**

www.roycastle.org

Provides information and practical and emotional support for anyone affected by lung cancer.

The Ruth Strauss Foundation

www.ruthstraussfoundation.com

Provides emotional support for families to prepare for the death of a parent. Raises awareness of the need for more research and collaboration for non-smoking lung cancers.

General cancer support organisations

Black Women Rising

www.blackwomenrisinguk.org

Aims to educate, inspire and bring opportunities for women from the BAME community. Shares stories and supports Black cancer patients and survivors through treatment and remission.

Cancer Black Care

Tel 0734 047 1970

www.cancerblackcare.org.uk

Provides support for all those living with and affected by cancer, with an emphasis on Black people and people of colour.

Cancer Focus Northern Ireland

Helpline **0800 783 3339**

www.cancerfocusni.org

Offers a variety of services to people affected by cancer in Northern Ireland.

Cancer Research UK

Helpline **0808 800 4040**

www.cancerresearchuk.org

A UK-wide organisation that has patient information on all types of cancer. Also has a clinical trials database.

Macmillan Cancer Voices

www.macmillan.org.uk/cancervoices

A UK-wide network that enables people who have or have had cancer, and those close to them such as family and carers, to speak out about their experience of cancer.

Maggie's

Tel 0300 123 1801 www.maggies.org

Has a network of centres in many locations throughout the UK. Provides free information about cancer and financial benefits. Also offers emotional and social support to people with cancer, their family, and friends.

Penny Brohn UK

Helpline 0303 3000 118 www.pennybrohn.org.uk

Offers physical, emotional and spiritual support across the UK, using complementary therapies and self-help techniques.

Tenovus

Helpline **0808 808 1010**

www.tenovuscancercare.org.uk

Aims to help everyone in the UK get equal access to cancer treatment and support. Funds research and provides support such as mobile cancer support units, a free Helpline, benefits advice and an online 'Ask the nurse' service.

General health information

Health and Social Care in Northern Ireland

www.northerntrust.hscni.net

Provides information about health and social care services in Northern Ireland.

NHS.UK

www.nhs.uk

The UK's biggest health information website. Has service information for England.

NHS 111 Wales

111.wales.nhs.uk NHS health information site for Wales.

NHS Inform

Helpline 0800 22 44 88 www.nhsinform.scot

NHS health information site for Scotland.

Patient UK

www.patient.info

Provides people in the UK with information about health and disease. Includes evidence-based information leaflets on a wide variety of medical and health topics. Also reviews and links to many health-related and illness-related websites.

Stop smoking services

NHS Smokefree Helpline (England)

Tel 0300 123 1044

www.nhs.uk/better-health/quit-smoking

Offers information, advice and support to people who want to stop smoking or have already stopped and do not want to start again.

Quit Your Way (Scotland)

Tel 0800 84 84 84

www.nhsinform.scot/quit-your-way-scotland

Scotland's national stop smoking support service. Offers advice and information about how to stop smoking. You can also chat online to an adviser.

Help Me Quit (Wales)

Tel 0808 278 6119

Text 'HMQ' to 80818

www.helpmequit.wales

Offers information, advice and support on stopping smoking in English and Welsh.

Stop Smoking NI (Northern Ireland)

www.stopsmokingni.info

Has information and advice about stopping smoking. Also links to other support organisations for people in Northern Ireland who want to give up smoking.

Counselling

British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP)

Tel 0145 588 3300 www.bacp.co.uk

Promotes awareness of counselling and signposts people to appropriate services across the UK. You can also search for a qualified counsellor on the 'Therapist directory' page.

UK Council for Psychotherapy (UKCP)

Tel 0207 014 9955

www.psychotherapy.org.uk

Holds the national register of psychotherapists and psychotherapeutic counsellors, listing practitioners who meet exacting standards and training requirements.

Emotional and mental health support

Mind

Helpline 0300 123 3393 www.mind.ora.uk

Provides information, advice and support to anyone with a mental health problem through its Helpline and website.

Samaritans

Helpline **116 123** Email **jo@samaritans.org**

www.samaritans.org

Provides confidential and non-judgemental emotional support, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, for people experiencing feelings of distress or despair.

Financial support or legal advice and information

Advice NI

Helpline **0800 915 4604 adviceni.net** Provides advice on a variety of issues including financial, legal, housing and employment issues.

Carer's Allowance Unit

Tel 0800 731 0297 Textphone 0800 731 0317 www.gov.uk/carers-allowance

Manages state benefits in England, Scotland and Wales. You can apply for benefits and find information online or through its Helplines.

Citizens Advice

Provides advice on a variety of issues including financial, legal, housing and employment issues. Use its online webchat or find details for your local office by contacting:

England

Helpline 0800 144 8848 www.citizensadvice.org.uk

Scotland

Helpline 0800 028 1456 www.cas.org.uk

Wales

Helpline 0800 702 2020 www.citizensadvice.org.uk/wales

Civil Legal Advice

Helpline 0345 345 4345 Textphone 0345 609 6677 www.gov.uk/civil-legal-advice

Has a list of legal advice centres in England and Wales and solicitors that take legal aid cases. Offers a free translation service if English is not your first language.

Disability and Carers Service

Tel 0800 587 0912

Textphone **0800 012 1574**

nidirect.gov.uk/contacts/disability-and-carers-service

Manages Disability Living Allowance, Attendance Allowance, Carer's Allowance and Carer's Credit in Northern Ireland. You can apply for these benefits and find information online or through its Helplines.

DVA

Helpline 0300 200 7861

www.nidirect.gov.uk/contacts/driver-vehicle-agency-dva-northernireland

The official agency for licensing and testing vehicles and drivers in Northern Ireland.

DVLA

Helpline **0300 790 6809**

www.gov.uk/government/organisations/driver-and-vehicle-licensingagency

The government agency that deals with vehicle tax, registration, driving licences and medical condition.

GOV.UK

www.gov.uk

Has information about social security benefits and public services in England, Scotland and Wales.

NI Direct

Make the Call helpline **0800 232 1271** Text ADVICE to **0798 440 5248**

www.nidirect.gov.uk

www.nidirect.gov.uk/make-the-call

Has information about benefits and public services in Northern Ireland. You can also use the Make the Call service to check if you or someone you care for may be entitled to extra benefits.

Equipment and advice on living with a disability

British Red Cross

Tel 0344 871 11 11 www.redcross.org.uk

Offers a range of health and social care services across the UK, such as care in the home, a medical equipment loan service and a transport service.

Disability Rights UK

Tel 0330 995 0400 (not an advice line) www.disabilityrightsuk.org

Provides information on social security benefits and disability rights in the UK. Has a number of Helplines for specific support, including information on going back to work, direct payments, human rights issues, and advice for disabled students.

Support for older people

Age UK

Helpline **0800 678 1602**

www.ageuk.org.uk

Provides information and advice for older people across the UK via the website and advice line. Also publishes impartial and informative fact sheets and advice guides.

LGBT-specific support

LGBT Foundation

Tel 0345 330 3030 Igbt.foundation

Provides a range of services to the LGBT community, including a Helpline, email advice and counselling. The website has information on various topics including sexual health, relationships, mental health, community groups and events.

OUTpatients

www.outpatients.org.uk

A safe space for anybody who identifies as part of the queer spectrum and has had an experience with any kind of cancer at any stage. Also produces resources about LGBT cancer experiences. OUTpatients runs a peer support group with Maggie's Barts.

Support for carers

Carers Trust

Tel 0300 772 9600

www.carers.org

Provides support, information, advice and services for people caring at home for a family member or friend. You can find details for UK offices and search for local support on the website.

Carers UK

Helpline **0808 808 7777**

www.carersuk.org

Offers information and support to carers across the UK. Has an online forum and can put people in contact with local support groups for carers.

Your notes and questions

Disclaimer

We make every effort to ensure that the information we provide is accurate and up to date but it should not be relied upon as a substitute for specialist professional advice tailored to your situation. So far as is permitted by law, Macmillan does not accept liability in relation to the use of any information contained in this publication, or third-party information or websites included or referred to in it. Some photos are of models.

Thanks

This booklet has been written, revised and edited by Macmillan Cancer Support's Cancer Information Development team. It has been approved by our Senior Medical Editor, Dr David Gilligan, Consultant Oncologist.

With thanks to the following professionals who reviewed our lung cancer information:

Sarah Berwick, Macmillan Advanced Lung Cancer Clinical Nurse Specialist; Dr Joanna Coote, Consultant Clinical Oncologist; Dr Qamar Ghafoor, Clinical Oncology Consultant; Mr Alan Kirk, Consultant Cardiothoracic Surgeon; Mr David Lawrence, Consultant Thoracic Surgeon; Dr Tuck-Kay Loke, Consultant Respiratory Physician; Dr Ceri Powell, Consultant in Clinical Oncology; Dr Ian Woolhouse, Consultant Respiratory Physician; and Dr Kent Yip, Consultant in Clinical Oncology.

Thanks also to the people affected by cancer who reviewed this edition, and those who shared their stories.

We welcome feedback on our information. If you have any, please contact **informationproductionteam@macmillan.org.uk**

Sources

Below is a sample of the sources used in our lung cancer information. If you would like more information about the sources we use, please contact us at **informationproductionteam@macmillan.org.uk**

European Society for Medical Oncology (ESMO). Small-cell lung cancer: ESMO clinical practice guidelines for diagnosis, treatment and follow-up. 2021 (accessed Nov 2023). Available at: https://www.esmo.org/ guidelines/guidelines-by-topic/esmo-clinical-practice-guidelines-lungand-chest-tumours/small-cell-lung-cancer

National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE). Lung cancer – Diagnosis and management. Clinical guideline 2019. Last updated 2023 (accessed Nov 2023) Available at: https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ ng122

European Society for Medical Oncology (ESMO). Early and locally advanced non-small-cell lung cancer (NSCLC): ESMO clinical practice guidelines for diagnosis, treatment and follow-up. 2017. eUpdate 01 September 2021: New Locally Advanced NSCLC Treatment Recommendations (accessed Nov 2023) Available at: https://www.esmo. org/guidelines/guidelines-by-topic/esmo-clinical-practice-guidelineslung-and-chest-tumours/early-stage-and-locally-advanced-nonmetastatic-non-small-cell-lung-cancer-esmo-clinical-practice-guidelines

Can you do something to help?

We hope this booklet has been useful to you. It is just one of our many publications that are available free to anyone affected by cancer. They are produced by our cancer information specialists who, along with our nurses, money advisers, campaigners and volunteers, are part of the Macmillan team. When people are facing the toughest fight of their lives, we are here to support them every step of the way.

We want to make sure no one has to go through cancer alone, so we need more people to help us. When the time is right for you, here are some ways in which you can become a part of our team.

5 ways you can help someone with cancer

1. Share your cancer experience

Support people living with cancer by telling your story, online, in the media or face to face.

2. Campaign for change

We need your help to make sure everyone gets the right support. Take an action, big or small, for better cancer care.

3. Help someone in your community

A lift to an appointment. Help with the shopping. Or just a cup of tea and a chat. Could you lend a hand?

4. Raise money

Whatever you like doing you can raise money to help. Take part in one of our events or create your own.

5. Give money

Big or small, every penny helps. To make a one-off donation see over.

Please fill in your personal details

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Other

Name

Surname

Address

Postcode

Phone

Email

Please accept my gift of £ (Please delete as appropriate)

I enclose a cheque / postal order / Charity Voucher made payable to Macmillan Cancer Support OR debit my:

Visa / MasterCard / CAF Charity Card / Switch / Maestro

Card number



Do not let the taxman keep your money

Do you pay tax? If so, your gift will be worth 25% more to us – at no extra cost to you. All you have to do is tick the box below, and the tax office will give 25p for every pound you give.

I am a UK tax payer and I would like Macmillan Cancer Support to treat all donations I make or have made to Macmillan Cancer Support in the last 4 years as Gift Aid donations, until I notify you otherwise.

I understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference. I understand Macmillan Cancer Support will reclaim 25p of tax on every £1 that I give.

Macmillan Cancer Support and our trading companies would like to hold your details in order to contact you about our fundraising, campaigning and services for people affected by cancer. If you would prefer us not to use your details in this way please tick this box.

In order to carry out our work we may need to pass your details to agents or partners who act on our behalf.

If you would rather donate online go to **macmillan.org.uk/donate**

Date / /



Please cut out this form and return it in an envelope (no stamp required) to: Supporter Donations, Freepost RUCY-XGCA-XTHU, Macmillan Cancer Support, PO Box 791, York House, York YO1 0NJ

This booklet is about surgery for lung cancer. It is for anyone who has been diagnosed with lung cancer who is having surgery to treat it. There is also information for carers, family members and friends.

This booklet talks about how to prepare for surgery, the different operations for lung cancer, and what to expect immediately after surgery and as you recover. It also has information about feelings, practical issues and money.

At Macmillan we know cancer can disrupt your whole life. We'll do whatever it takes to help everyone living with cancer in the UK get the support they need right now, and transform cancer care for the future.

For information, support or just someone to talk to, call **0808 808 00 00** or visit **macmillan.org.uk** Would you prefer to speak to us in another language? Interpreters are available. Please tell us in English the language you would like to use. Are you deaf or hard of hearing? Call us using Relay UK on **18001 0808 808 00 00**, or use the Relay UK app.

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