Signs of cancer

Symptoms, Screening and Staying Healthy
This booklet uses easy words and pictures to help you get information about cancer.

You might want someone to help you look at the booklet so you can talk about it.

There is a Word Bank at the back of the booklet to help with hard words. Any words in **bold** you can find in the Word Bank.

This booklet can help you learn about cancer. But this is not the same as talking to your doctor. If you are worried about your health, you should talk to a doctor or nurse.
Cancer can cause signs and symptoms in your body. You can look out for these.

Sometimes these signs and symptoms are caused by other illnesses. But it is important to have them checked.

If you have any of the following symptoms see your doctor as quickly as possible.
Signs of cancer

See your doctor:
If you start to feel tired all the time.

If you lose weight but do not know why.

If you have a nasty cough or sore throat that does not go away.
See your doctor:
If you have a lump under your skin anywhere on your body. Even if it does not hurt.

If you have moles on your skin which have changed shape or colour, or started to bleed.

If you have an ache or pain that does not go away and you do not know why.
Signs of cancer

See your doctor:
If you find it hard to swallow food or drink.

If there is blood in your wee or poo.

If you find it hard to do a poo (constipation).
Signs of cancer

See your doctor:
If you have runny poos (diarrhoea).

If you do not feel hungry (lose your appetite).

If you get bruises for no reason.
Signs of cancer

Some people who have cancer do not show any of these signs or symptoms.

See your doctor:
If you have a headache all the time.

Some cancers like breast cancer and cervical cancer may not cause any pain or symptoms.
Signs of cancer

Sometimes these cancers are found because the person goes to their doctor about something else.

It is very important to go for screening. Screening means having tests that can find cancer early.

Older people are more likely to get certain cancers.
Bowel cancer is more common in people over the age of 60.

If you are over 60 you will get a bowel cancer test sent to you through the post. This is called an F.O.B test.

It is very important to do this test. It asks you to take 6 samples of your poo and send them back.
They will test for blood in your poo. This can sometimes be a sign of cancer.

If any blood is found in your poo, you will be asked to go for more tests.
**Word Bank**

**Bowel cancer**
When a person has cancer in their bowel. The bowel is a long tube inside your body. It helps to digest food.

**Breast cancer**
When a person has cancer in their breast.

**Cervical cancer**
When a person has cancer in their cervix. The cervix is inside your body at the top of your vagina.
Constipation
Finding it hard to have a poo.

Diarrhoea
When your poo is watery and runny and you have to go more than usual.

F.O.B. test
This stands for Faecal Occult Blood test. It is a test to check if your poo has blood in it.
Screening
These are special tests that can sometimes find cancer early.

Symptoms
Signs in your body that tell you something is wrong, like feeling tired all the time.
Useful contacts

Drawing by Tracey Harrison
Volunteer and Illustrator with learning disabilities
Breast Cancer Care
Gives information and support to women with breast cancer, and their family and friends.
**Phone:** 0808 800 6000
**Web:** [www.breastcancercare.org.uk](http://www.breastcancercare.org.uk)

Brook
Brook gives young people free, confidential information about health, sex and relationships. Find your local Brook centre on their website.
**Web:** [www.brook.org.uk](http://www.brook.org.uk)

Cancer Research UK
A charity that is researching treatments for cancer. Its website has lots of information about cancer.
**Phone:** 0808 800 4040
**Web:** [www.cancerresearchuk.org](http://www.cancerresearchuk.org)

Macmillan Cancer Support
A charity that helps people who have cancer. They give practical, medical and financial support. They try to make cancer care in the UK better.
**Phone:** 0808 808 00 00
**Web:** [www.macmillan.org.uk](http://www.macmillan.org.uk)
Useful contacts

NHS Contacts
These contacts give you information about your health and health services:
England and Scotland Phone: 111
Wales Phone: 0845 46 47
Northern Ireland Web: www.hscni.net

Paul’s Cancer Support Centre
Gives help, information and complementary therapies to people with cancer.
Phone: 0207 924 3924
Web: www.paulscancersupportcentre.org.uk

RESPOND
Gives therapy to people with learning disabilities after trauma or abuse. They also offer training and support to carers.
Phone: 0808 808 07 00
Web: www.respond.org.uk
Books Beyond Words
A series of picture books for people with learning disabilities. The books talk about cancer, health and bereavement.

Web: www.booksbeyondwords.co.uk
Phone: 020 8877 9799
Email: admin@booksbeyondwords.co.uk

Cervical Screening - Information for Women with Learning Disabilities
An information folder for women with learning disabilities about going for cervical screening. Produced by Elfrida Rathbone Camden.

Phone: 020 7424 1601
Web: www.elfridacamden.org.uk

FAIR Multimedia
Publishes a range of health leaflets, audio discs and CDs for people with learning disabilities. This includes a series on cancer.

Email: fair@fairadvice.org.uk
Phone: 0131 662 1962
Web: www.fairadvice.org.uk/health-publications.php
Useful contacts

Taking Good Care - supporting people with learning disabilities to be breast aware.
Easy read booklet about looking after your breasts for women with learning disabilities. Also includes a guide for carers. Produced by Breast Cancer Care and Cardiff People First.

Breast Cancer Care
Web: www.breastcancercare.org.uk
Phone: 0808 800 6000

Cardiff People First
Phone: 029 2023 1555

Online help

www.easyhealth.org.uk
Has lots of online health information that is easy to understand.

www.macmillan.org.uk
Has lots of information about cancer and where to get help. You can also talk to other people with cancer in the online community.
Useful contacts

Videos and DVDs

**Leeds Animation Workshop**
Has animated films on social issues for people with learning disabilities. There is one called ‘Getting Better’ about going to the doctor and the health clinic.

**Phone:** 0113 248 4997
**Web:** [www.leedsanimation.org.uk/index.html](http://www.leedsanimation.org.uk/index.html)

**Speak Up Self Advocacy**
Has DVDs and booklets for people with learning disabilities about health and illness.

**Web:** [www.speakup.org.uk](http://www.speakup.org.uk)
**WE ARE MACMILLAN.**

**CANCER SUPPORT**

Macmillan Cancer Support has reviewed the information in this booklet and paid for it to be produced. They are a charity who help people with cancer. They have nurses and other health workers. They try to make cancer care in the UK better. They have experts who can answer your questions about cancer and how it affects your life. You can call Macmillan on 0808 808 00 00 or textphone 0808 808 0121 (Mon–Fri, 9am–8pm). Or go to macmillan.org.uk