The Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen University Hospitals NHS Trust

Should I be feeling like this?

Understanding your reactions to cancer - PIF1440/V1

Liverpool

Better together

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The Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen University Hospitals NHS Trust

Merseyside and Cheshire Cancer Network NHS

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Introduction

What is this booklet about?

In this booklet, we describe feelings and experiences that people often report as they go through diagnosis and treatment. We suggest how to seek support, and we describe some of the support available. It's important to point out that, while some experiences are common, adjusting to cancer is a very personal process. Different people can have very different thoughts and feelings.

You may want to read through all of the sections, or dip into the bits that seem relevant just now. We hope you find the booklet helpful.

Who has written it?

We are clinical psychologists with experience of working with people affected by cancer. The contributions and suggestions from our colleagues have shaped the booklet. We have included some information from James Brennan's 'managing the stress of cancer' booklet and adapted it for use here. We have also had invaluable feedback from patients attending clinics at The Royal Liverpool University Hospital, and from people who attend the local support groups.

Common thoughts and feelings after a diagnosis of cancer

We live our lives making assumptions about what is likely to happen each day, each week and generally what we expect in the future. Cancer is therefore often a traumatic and life-changing experience that takes time to adjust to. Here are some thoughts and feelings that many people with cancer describe.

Feelings

"Should I be feeling like this?"

Everyone is different and people feel different things at different times – there is no right or wrong way to feel. Some people describe shock, fear, anger and sadness. You may be more tearful, irritable, tired, or restless than usual. You may feel emotionally 'numb' at times. Some people find things do not feel real - it is like being in a dream. All of these feelings can be entirely natural reactions. So they do not mean you are not coping. The feelings can be very strong and might be frightening. They can have unpleasant effects on you. For example, you may notice changes in your sleep pattern, appetite, and have less interest in your usual activities and other people. It is important to realise you will not always feel like this.

> "Sometimes I can't believe that this is happening to me...it doesn't seem real."
>
> Anne 54

"I feel anxious and I worry all the time"

Feeling anxious is very common. It can even help by mentally preparing you for challenges to come. However, it might feel like your worries are taking over. When this happens, you find yourself worrying about the same things, and this type of worry is less helpful. We can learn to limit how much we worry. Some people might find the suggestions below helpful.

Managing anxiety and worries

1. It can sometimes be helpful to write down the worries you have in a 'worry diary'. Sometimes it can be easier to think through what might be helpful once worries are written down. Some people find writing down what they are worried about and how they feel is helpful in itself.
2. Some people find it helpful to have a 'worry time' each day (approx 5 minutes) and allow themselves to worry freely during that time. This might sound strange! But for some people this helps to contain otherwise unmanageable worry.
3. Plan time each day to relax.
4. Relaxation techniques can help (there are some on the website mentioned below).
5. Talking to someone else about your worries can often help.
6. You can find a useful self help booklet on 'stress and anxiety' at the following website
   http://www.ntw.nhs.uk/pic/leaflet.php?s=selfhelp

"I don't feel like doing the things I normally would"

When unhappy, people often stop doing many of the things they would usually do. They may avoid going out or seeing friends. Even though this seems to make sense at the time, doing very little and seeing people less often means the unhappiness lasts longer. We all need activities in our day which bring us a sense of pleasure or achievement. It's worth trying to do some things you tend to enjoy or get a sense of achievement from, even if at first you don't feel like it. Also, make sure you have some contact with other people. It's OK if the things you used to do are not the things you want to do now. You may want to try new activities. You might find the following suggestions helpful.

If you have been feeling low...

1. Plan something nice to do each week.
2. Be kind to yourself and give yourself treats on difficult days.
3. On difficult days, remind yourself they will pass.
4. Try to build up your activities in very small steps, so you can achieve them easily.
5. Start with activities you like the most and try them on your better days.
6. You may feel better if you go out. A short walk can often help.
7. Tell other people how to best to support you; e.g. by having a regular time to meet up each week.

"I can't get the appointment when I was diagnosed out of my mind"

For some people, parts of the diagnosis or treatment were particularly frightening or traumatic and they find unpleasant thoughts or vivid pictures go through their mind over and over again. It can also be in the form of nightmares or upsetting thoughts or memories frequently coming to mind. Some people feel they are re-living the experience. This can be very frightening. People often try to push the memories out of their mind in order to feel better. However, this usually does not work in the long run. If this is something which is happening to you, it can be helpful to talk to someone you trust about the memories you are having. A booklet available on the internet describes 'post traumatic stress' and gives helpful information and advice about how to deal with these problems (http://www.ntw.nhs.uk/pic/leaflet.php?s=selfhelp).

If things don't improve over time with the support of people close to you, you may want to tell a health professional. Perhaps you already know someone you can talk to, such as your family doctor (GP). If you don't, tell staff at hospital - for example, a specialist nurse. They may discuss things with you themselves. Or they might put you in touch with someone else, such as a clinical psychologist or counsellor, who is used to helping people with these difficulties.

> "I keep seeing the doctor's face when he told me... it's like a video clip that plays in my mind over and over."
>
> Paul 42

"Why do some people struggle more than others with how they feel after cancer?"

First, it is important to say it is very difficult to tell how other people are feeling. We say a bit more about this on page 8 ('Other patients are coping better than I am'). However, people do vary in how they feel after being diagnosed with cancer. People who have had anxiety or depression before might find these problems return.

Some people might notice unpleasant or difficult experiences from a long time ago come into their minds more. If this happens, you can find yourself trying to deal with past events as well as cancer. Even difficulties going back to childhood can sometimes re-surface. We find some people who have been abused as children feel very unhappy or anxious after being diagnosed with cancer. They can find it harder to trust the doctors and nurses caring for them, too.

It is certainly not the case, if you have had these problems before, that you will automatically have difficulties after being diagnosed with cancer. But you might be a bit more likely to than people who have not had those problems.

If you are feeling unhappy or anxious in the way described above it may feel very confusing or frightening and you might need extra support. Often the most helpful thing is to find someone to talk to. Some ideas to help find the right sort of help are on pages 17 to 29.

Ways of coping

"People ask how I am, and I say 'fine', but I'm not fine"
People sometimes don't want to tell their family and friends about the worries and feelings they are having. When someone asks 'How are you?', many people find themselves saying 'fine' when actually they aren't. This is often because they think talking truthfully about how they feel will burden those close to them. While this is understandable, it can leave the person who has cancer feeling very alone.

Sometimes, within a family, even though each member is feeling upset and worried, they don't tell each other. They do this because they care about each other. However, not talking can make things worse because it leaves each person dealing with their own distress alone.

If you think that this is happening in your family, it might be helpful to begin talking about how you feel. This might encourage others to do the same and increase the support you can give each other.

> "I put a front on so that everyone thinks I'm ok, but deep down I'm not."
>
> Tom 59

"My usual ways of coping don't seem to be working"

Some people cope with difficult times in their life by 'getting on with things' and not stopping to think about how they feel. This can work well for sorting out practical problems, but often doesn't work so well when dealing with cancer. Talking openly about how you feel can be difficult because it may be different from the way you usually cope. However, it can often be the most helpful thing to do. If you prefer not to talk, you could write down your thoughts and feelings in a private diary. This can help you make sense of what you are going through.

"Other patients are coping better than I am"

People often believe other patients are 'coping better' than they are. Some describe sitting in the waiting room, looking at other patients and assuming they are coping better than they are. It's important to realise they may well be thinking the same about you! You are probably coping better than you think. Remember, it's very difficult to tell how others are coping. People often put on a 'brave face' which can make it difficult to know how they really feel.

The labels of 'strong' and 'weak' which people often use can be unhelpful. People sometimes think they are 'weak' or 'not coping' because they feel upset. It is important to remember these emotions are natural and not a sign that someone is 'weak' or 'not coping'. Sometimes the 'strong' thing to do is to let yourself cry, or to tell someone else you'd like their help.

"How can I get the right support?"

People who care about you may feel unsure about what to say or do for the best. They often want to be able to make things better for you. It's important to let them know you don't expect them to 'fix things' and you just want them to be there for you and listen when you want to talk.

Sometimes people are not there for you in the way you want them to be. You may not have the support you expected from a person close to you and this can be disappointing. However, some people can be really supportive and you may find going through such a hard time strengthens some of your relationships.

It may be that the person you can trust to talk to about how you feel turns out not to be a partner or family member but a friend or colleague. If you do not have anyone you can talk to in this way, tell someone involved in your care, for example a specialist nurse, so they can help you. They can give you support and also make suggestions about how to access other forms of support.

> "People believe you when you say you're fine and then you can feel they don't understand."
>
> Brenda 70

Advice for families, partners and friends

1. If people are able to face the stress of cancer together, they are less likely to remain anxious or unhappy. Remember the person with cancer can support those close to them, as well as the other way round.
2. Try to be clear with each other about how you are feeling and what you are thinking and don't assume you know.
3. Do your best not to interrupt each other when you are speaking; try to listen as well as talk.
4. Fear is often expressed as anger, so think carefully if you find yourself criticising each other. Remember this is difficult for both of you and both of you need support, especially from each other.
5. Words may not always be as comforting as giving or receiving a hug.
6. Being overly positive, giving advice or finding a solution is not always what is needed. Try instead to find out what the person would find most helpful.
7. Don't worry about saying the 'wrong thing' – the important thing is to do your best to stay involved.
8. If possible, find another person to talk to and get support from on a regular basis. Depending only on each other for support can be wearing for both of you.
9. Above all, remember you and those close to you may have different ways of dealing with the situation you face. It helps, though, to notice and talk about these differences. You may each have different needs and priorities at any one time.

"Do I need to fight or accept cancer?"

Having cancer is often compared to being invaded by an outside force. People can feel they need to "fight" in order to recover and be "normal" again. For some people, fighting can help keeping going with life at difficult times. However, too much fighting can be exhausting. It can mean hiding difficult feelings, which can leave you feeling worse in the long run. And fighting isn't right for everyone.

As time goes on, people tend to find having cancer becomes part of their general life experience. Some even say they have been able to use the experience to re-assess their lives and make changes for the better.

The ‘cancer journey’

People describe a series of experiences after diagnosis of cancer. Being diagnosed, having treatment and the end of treatment can be especially difficult times when you can benefit from support from family, friends and professionals.

Around the time of diagnosis

Many people describe feeling shocked and numb. Some people feel so well they can’t believe they have cancer. This sense that the diagnosis isn’t real can help protect you from its emotional impact for a while. Some people are very frightened and worry a lot about what will happen. Anxiety and worry, although unpleasant, can help you prepare for the changes to your life. Other people withdraw from life because they feel overwhelmed. These are all common reactions. The ‘Feelings’ section has some suggestions about how to manage anxiety, worry and unhappiness (pages 2 - 6).

Having treatment

Focussing on treatment

Some people find, when they try to think ahead, they can't see anything but treatment and hospital appointments. Radiotherapy and chemotherapy can leave you feeling very tired and run down. You are likely to be busy with treatment and it can feel like it is dominating your life. However, it can be helpful to plan some enjoyable activities to fit in with treatment. People often find this can help them feel better. See the 'Feelings' section for other ideas.

Talking to other patients

Some people find it helpful to talk to other patients in the waiting room about treatments and appointments and some go to support groups and other places where patients get together to discuss their experiences. However, other people don't want this type of conversation – or find it difficult at particular stages of the cancer journey. Some have told us having a book to read or something else to focus on while they wait for appointments helps avoid conversations they don't want to have.

A changing body

Treatment for cancer often leads to changes in the body. Surgery may lead to changes in your appearance or changes in the way you are able to do things; chemotherapy can result in losing hair; and some medication can lead to changes too. For some people, these changes can be very distressing. Some people liken it to bereavement. It can take time to adjust to changes in your body.

Gradually confronting these changes and talking them through with someone can help you adjust. For some people, changes in appearance can affect sexual relationships for a time. Talking to your partner about this usually helps. When couples don't talk about these things, each person can assume they know why the other does not want to be intimate. Often though, these assumptions aren't quite right. Some of the websites listed in the last section of this booklet have information and advice on many issues, including sexuality and intimacy after cancer.

Losing control of life

Some people say the period of intensive treatment is a bit like being in a dream; the life they have known has been replaced by one which is strange and uncertain. The treatment some people need can seem to stretch ahead endlessly. Some people long to feel in control of their life again. Finding out about what you can do to help yourself through treatment can be a start to having more control. Sometimes people gain a sense of control through things which are already in their lives, for example hobbies, work or maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Other people find they need to give up some control until the treatment has finished. Ask a doctor or nurse what might be helpful, such as resting or taking gentle exercise.

Getting the information you want

People often find they come away from appointments with a doctor and realise they have forgotten to ask about something. It can help to prepare for appointments by writing down questions you want to ask. Someone recently told us that they keep a diary of how they feel (emotionally and physically) so they have this ready to talk about with their doctor or nurse as it's easy to forget. Often people find taking someone with them can be helpful. If you feel confused about something which was discussed, telephone a specialist nurse so they can clarify information for you.

Finishing treatment and beyond

Some people have a period of intensive treatment and look forward to treatment finishing and life returning to normal as much as possible. So they can be surprised if they have difficulties at this time.

Around this time people are often as anxious as they were at the beginning. Concerns about cancer coming back are common and these worries may increase as contact with medical staff reduces. Once the focus on getting through medical treatment is gone, people have more time to think about what they have just been through. They can experience stronger emotions, as they think more about the effect of cancer on their lives. People who are close to them may expect them to move on now. There can be a pressure for life to go back to "how it was", when for some people life has changed for ever.

At this stage, some people find themselves reviewing their lives and thinking about what's most important to them. In this way people are able to fit the experience of having cancer into their lives and can even use it to make some positive changes. Some people find that they want to change jobs or spend more time with their family and friends.

Moving on beyond treatment often means learning to live with the fact that cancer has happened and the changes it has brought. For some, treatment might be ongoing for a long time and they might have different phases of treatment to control the cancer. Worry about cancer progressing, or coming back are common. For some people, it seems possible to 'get back to normal' in life – but for many, their sense of what is 'normal' is now different.

Research shows that over time, many people find that cancer leads to changes in their lives, sometimes even positive changes. Some describe growing closer to people and feeling they have more to offer others. Some people say they have changed how they see their lives and don't take life for granted as much as they did. Others change how they live their lives – doing more of what they 'always wanted to do' and less of what they don't. Many find going through diagnosis and treatment strengthens them for managing other problems which arise in life.

How to get the help you need

There is a range of support available. So it can be confusing to decide what is right for you. Here are the main types of support and some examples of how they can help.

Talking to someone....

Family and friends

Family and friends can offer practical and emotional support. But they rely on you to tell them exactly what you need, whether that's advice, help with the shopping or a listening ear. We know it's not always easy to be open with the people close to you, and there is more on p.10 about support from family and friends.

When Joan was diagnosed with lung cancer it came 'out of the blue' for her and was a terrible shock. She was often very upset, but only when there was no-one else around. Joan made sure her family did not see her upset because she worried this would cause them to be upset too; she 'put on a front' as if she was ok. In reality her husband and daughters were all very upset and frightened already.

Cont...

One day when out shopping with her husband, Joan saw a friend who asked how she and the family were. Joan explained she had cancer and started to cry. Her husband gave her a hug and they went out to the car and cried together. They then talked for a long time about what was going through their minds and what they were confused about. From that day, Joan did not hide how she was feeling quite so much and spoke to her husband about what was on her mind. She found it really helpful for him to listen and sometimes just give her a hug. The support they could give each other increased a lot.

Family Doctor (GP)

Some people find it helpful to talk to their family doctor (GP) about how they are feeling. The doctor can arrange for you to see someone else, too, like a counsellor.

Janet had always found appointments with her GP helpful. When she found out that she had breast cancer, she felt able to talk to him about what it was like having the treatment and the things she was finding difficult. She felt very supported because he listened to her, and he knew her. He would sometimes suggest things which might help as well.

Specialist nurses

Generally, specialist nurses work alongside doctors and have time with patients to go through important information about their diagnosis and treatment. They are trained to help patients understand the information about their diagnosis and care. They are used to talking to people about worries and fears, and talking to people who are unhappy or finding it hard to cope.

If you feel confused about any part of your diagnosis or treatment, it is often a good idea to contact your nurse. They might help you directly or arrange for you to see someone else. Specialist nurses also provide a lot of emotional support to patients. There are times when the nurses feel someone needs additional support and they may suggest a referral to another service, for example psychology.

John had prostate cancer and felt confused by the diagnosis and treatment. He felt very worried and had problems sleeping. He remembered a specialist nurse had said he could phone for advice at any time after diagnosis. At first, John was not keen to do this. He thought he should sort things out for himself, and the nurse would not be able to do anything to help. But his wife said John should phone her. Once John had plucked up the courage to phone, and had told her how he had been feeling, he felt relieved. They arranged a longer phone call where they talked things through, and then they met after his next clinic appointment. These conversations left John feeling much clearer about what was going to happen. His sleep improved and he felt better able to face the future.

Counsellors

GPs can refer patients to counsellors. These counsellors do not specialise in working with cancer patients, but work with people with a range of emotional difficulties. They can help if you want someone to talk things over with.

Jack, who had lung cancer, went to his GP for a check up. The GP asked how he was, and Jack mentioned he was feeling depressed. Jack had felt depressed for a number of years. It had started a long time before he was told he had cancer. Several years earlier, Jack was in a very difficult relationship with his now ex-wife and had been made redundant at work. He felt depressed, and was not going out or seeing people much at all. His GP suggested seeing a counsellor at the GP practice. Jack was very unsure but decided to give it a try. He had six sessions of counselling which gave him the chance to talk about the difficult times he had had, and make sense of how he was feeling. He felt more able to move forward with life afterwards. He made sure he went out at least once every day, and started to see friends more.

Specialist Psychologists

Psychologists are trained to use a range of techniques to help people understand their difficulties, to talk about them and to find a way forward. Psychologists who specialise in cancer understand how people can feel after a diagnosis of cancer, and the ways in which people can come to feel overwhelmed or unable to cope. Seeing a psychologist means talking about what has been happening so as to understand why you are feeling as you do. It might mean talking about your fears and hopes, about experiences from the past or about the relationships you have with people around you. You might work together on changing the way you see things, or changing how you relate to people around you, so you feel more able to cope. Your doctor or nurse will be able to tell you whether there are specialist psychologists in your area. Unfortunately, this type of service is not yet available everywhere.

Pauline had just finished months of chemotherapy and radiotherapy for her breast cancer. She had been looking forward to life getting back to normal again. She was very anxious about cancer coming back – which the nurses had explained was natural and very common at that stage. Pauline was also feeling very depressed though. She was very confused by the fact that as well as cancer and the future being in her mind, she kept thinking a lot about things that had happened when she was growing up. She was remembering the arguments which used to happen at home – her parents had had an unhappy marriage – and some of the feelings of sadness and fear she had felt as a child she was also feeling now.

Cont...

Pauline was finding it very hard to cope and things were getting worse rather than better. Her specialist nurse noticed she was feeling low and suggested talking to a psychologist. Pauline and the psychologist talked and together they began to understand why the feelings from a long time ago were affecting her now. Pauline was able to understand the way she was feeling in the context of her life which gave her a feeling of control again. She started to feel much happier and able to plan ahead.

Psychiatrists

Psychiatrists are medical doctors who can prescribe drugs to help people with problems such as depression or anxiety. Some psychiatrists also use psychological therapy.

Mark had been admitted to hospital for investigations when he was diagnosed with lung cancer. He found the diagnosis very difficult to accept and felt very frightened. The feelings he was having were difficult for him to cope with. The ward sister asked a psychiatrist to come to see Mark. The psychiatrist gave him time to talk thorough his fears which Mark found helpful. The psychiatrist also prescribed Mark some antidepressants to help him feel less depressed, and arranged an out-patient appointment to see him after he was discharged from hospital.

Learning from other people who are affected by cancer...

You may have found it good to talk to other patients on a ward, or in waiting rooms. Sometimes patients get to know each other this way and find it helps them. Going to a support group is another way to meet with other patients. Some people don't want to join groups like this, and others do. Specialist nurses or the Macmillan Cancer Information Centre can tell you about support groups in your area, and they can help you decide whether they are right for you.

Mary had felt very alone and unhappy since finding out she had breast cancer. She worried a lot about the future and felt no one understood what she was going through – not even her family. Chatting with other patients in the waiting room, she realised they felt the same. The specialist nurse told Mary about a support group not far from where she lived, so Mary went along. She found it helpful to hear others talk about their experiences, including treatments, side effects, and how they were feeling day to day. She started going each week and it helped her to realise other people were struggling with similar things and she felt less alone.

Learning from the internet....

Some people find looking at information which available on the internet is helpful.

David had prostate cancer and had a lot of questions when he went for appointments. His specialist nurse and doctor were very helpful and gave him the information he asked for. David wondered if there were any websites they would recommend, as his usual way of approaching problems was to research them on the internet. They suggested a couple of websites to look at which David found very helpful as he could browse through the information about prostate cancer in his own time at home. He read about treatments, research and the experiences of different patients and even joined an online forum where he could chat to other patients.

You might choose to look at some of the information and advice on the following websites:

Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust
http://www.ntw.nhs.uk/pic/leaflet.php?s=selfhelp

This NHS Trust has produced several self help booklets which can be downloaded. These booklets are not specifically about cancer, but they cover issues such as sleep problems, bereavement, low mood, post traumatic stress, and anxiety.

The following websites have a lot of information about the emotional effects of dealing with cancer and treatment. They also have information about treatment and practical advice. The specialist nurses can advise you of other helpful websites.

Breast Cancer Care
www.breastcancercare.org.uk

Breakthrough Breast Cancer
www.breakthrough.org.uk

The Prostate Cancer Charity
www.prostate-cancer.org.uk

The Roy Castle Lung Cancer Foundation
www.roycastle.org

Macmillan
www.macmillan.org.uk

Marie Curie Cancer Care
www.mariecurie.org.uk

Learning from voluntary groups and charities…

Macmillan Cancer Information Centre
Ground floor Linda McCartney Centre
Tel: 0151 706 3720
Main entrance Broadgreen hospital
Tel: 0151 600 1798

They provide information on all aspects of cancer and practical and emotional support for anyone affected by cancer. People who have a cancer diagnosis, have survived cancer, or their family, friends and carers are welcome to visit. No appointment is necessary and they are open 9am to 4pm Monday to Friday. The service is free and confidential and can offer friendly advice on a range of issues including a weekly Benefits clinic and an opportunity to discuss worries and concerns about anything cancer related.

Charles had support from family and friends and was really pleased with the support he had from his specialist nurse in the lung cancer team. At times, he wanted to talk to someone and ask questions when he didn't have an appointment very soon. He found out about the Macmillan Cancer Information Centre where you can drop in for a chat or advice without making an appointment. He found this really helpful as the people there knew a lot about cancer and the services he could use. They had a lot of advice for him about benefits he might be entitled to and other practical things. Although they couldn't advise him on this particular diagnosis and treatment (which is what the specialist nurse was able to do), they had a lot of information he found very helpful.

Telephone support and advice

Breast Cancer Care
Telephone Helpline: 0808 800 6000
Peer Support: 0845 077 1893

Breakthrough Breast Cancer
Telephone: 08080 100 200

The Prostate Cancer Charity
Telephone Helpline: 0800 074 8383

The Roy Castle Lung Cancer Foundation
Telephone Helpline: 0800 358 7200

Liverpool Lung Cancer Support Group
Telephone: 0151 334 1155

Macmillan
Telephone: 0808 808 0000
(General Enquiries and you will then be re-directed to the department you need)

Marie Curie Cancer Care
Telephone: 0207 599 7777

These charities all have websites as well – which are listed in the section above.

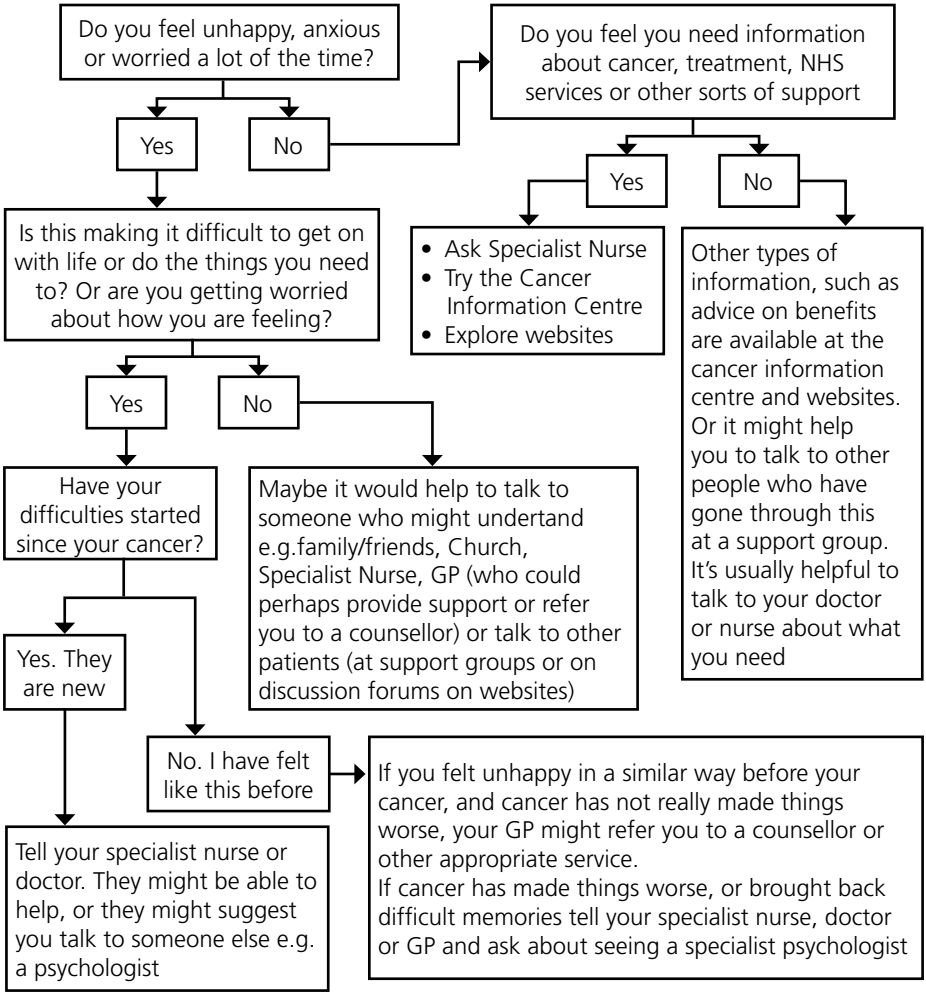
You might be looking for something to help you relax ...

Complementary therapies

Aromatherapy, massage and reflexology are available at the Linda McCartney Centre and at Marie Curie Hospice. The specialist nurses can refer you for this. Complementary therapies are also available at some support groups.

Julie was always very busy with work, family and running the house. She never really stopped. This was something she felt comfortable with until she was having treatment for breast cancer, when she found she couldn't keep up that pace. The tiredness and stress she felt made her stop and think about what she needed. She was talking to another patient in the waiting room and they mentioned that they were having complementary therapies at a local support group. Julie decided to try it. She went to the group and met the complementary therapist. They decided reflexology would be something they would try first. Julie didn't think it would help much and was really suprised at how relaxed she felt after the first session. It felt good that she was doing something to look after herself and relax.

If you're finding it hard to work out what help you need, try using this diagram.



Closing comments

We hope you have found something in this booklet to help you. In writing it, we aimed to help people understand dealing with cancer and its treatment is a very individual process. It's normal to experience a range of emotions and reactions, and it's important to remember there is no right or wrong way to feel. We hope that whatever your own experience, this booklet has helped you understand what you are going through. We also hope it has helped you think about how to find the help you might need.

Authors:
Helen Beesley, Macmillan Principal Clinical Psychologist
Julia Boot, Clinical Psychologist
Peter Salmon, Professor of Clinical Psychology

With contributions and advice from:
Janice Ablett, Macmillan Consultant Clinical Psychologist
Rob Dinwoodie, Assistant Psychologist
Gill Hamblin, Lead Cancer Nurse
Chris Holcombe, Consultant Surgeon and Lead Cancer Clinician
Helen Ullmer, Assistant Psychologist

The Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen University Hospital
NHS Trust
Prescot Street
Liverpool
L7 8XP

Tel: 0151 706 2000
Website: www.rlbuht.nhs.uk