

Living with Lung Cancer

A Quick Guide

Contents

This is a brief summary on 'Living with lung cancer' from our website. You will find more detailed information on there. In this information there are sections on

- Coping with lung cancer
- Coping with breathlessness
- Questions for your doctor
- Lung cancer organisations

You can view this information in a larger print on our website.

Coping with lung cancer

It can be very difficult to cope with a diagnosis of cancer, both practically and emotionally. You may feel very upset and confused at first. As well as coping with the fear and anxiety that a diagnosis of cancer brings, you have to work out how to manage practically. There may be money matters to sort out. Who do you tell you have cancer? There may also be children to consider.

Just try to remember that you don't have to sort everything out at once. It may take some time to deal with each issue. Do ask for help if you need it though. Your doctor or specialist nurse will know who you can contact to get some help. They can put you in touch with people specially trained in supporting people with cancer.

Lung cancer organisations can help you to find sources of emotional support and counselling in your area. There are also now web based forums where you can get in touch with other people who've been diagnosed with lung cancer.

Coping with breathlessness

Being breathless can be hard to live with and can make you feel very tired. Some days may seem harder than others. But there are things that can help you to cope. If you are more breathless than usual, coughing up phlegm, or have a temperature, you may have a chest infection. Contact your GP or specialist nurse as you may need a course of antibiotics.

Feeling anxious

This can make you more breathless. Try to slow your breathing and concentrate on breathing in and out slowly. It may help to learn a relaxation technique. There are lots of books and CDs available about relaxation that you can get from your local library.

Changing how you breathe

Breathing faster and tensing your shoulders make it harder for you to breathe. Try to control your breathing. Think about breathing in slowly through your nose, and breathing out through your mouth. This is almost like doing relaxation exercises. We have a video on the Cancer Research UK website that shows you how to do breathing exercises.

Tips to help you live with breathlessness

- Make sure the things you need during the day are easy to get to
- Use a trolley or bag on wheels to carry things and save your energy
- Pace yourself and allow rest times
- Don't try to take on too much at once
- When going upstairs match your breath to the steps you take and take it slowly
- Have lots of small meals instead of a few large ones
- Take small mouthfuls
- Avoid foods that are difficult to chew
- Drink plenty of fluids to stop saliva becoming sticky
- Position a fan to blow a stream of cool air across your face or use a hand held portable fan

What to ask your doctor about living with lung cancer

- How long will it take me to get over my treatment?
- Will I be able to go back to work?
- Can I take up my usual sports, hobbies and activities again?
- Where can I get help dealing with my feelings?
- Do I have to pay for counselling?
- How can I learn to cope with my breathlessness?
- Is there a breathlessness clinic I could go to?
- Is there a specialist nurse I could see?
- How do I get practical help at home?
- Who can advise me on money matters or help with benefit claims?
- Is there transport to take me to hospital appointments?

Lung cancer organisations

Cancer Research UK

Angel Building
407 St John Street
London
EC1V 4AD
Helpline: 0808 800 40 40
www.cancerresearchuk.org

Cancer Research UK is the largest cancer research organisation in the world, outside the USA. We are the European leader in the development of new anti cancer drugs. We fund research into all aspects of the disease from its causes, to treatment and prevention.

We are also committed to producing high quality information for people affected by cancer, health professionals and the general public.

If you have a question about cancer, you can contact our team of specialist cancer information nurses by telephoning freephone 0808 800 40 40.

If you would like to talk to someone affected by cancer, share experiences or find information, you can visit our Cancer Chat forum (www.cancerchat.cancerresearchuk.org)

British Lung Foundation

Helpline: 03000 030 555 (Mon to Fri, 10am to 6pm)
Website: www.blf.org.uk

The British Lung Foundation provides information on all forms of lung conditions. They run support groups across the country. They produce a newsletter and publications and raise funds for research into lung disease.

The Roy Castle Lung Cancer Foundation

Lung Cancer Helpline: 0333 323 7200 (9am to 5pm,
Monday to Friday)
Website: <http://www.roycastle.org/>

The Roy Castle Lung Cancer Foundation is a UK charity dedicated to defeating lung cancer. It funds research into early diagnosis and provides support to patients and their families. It also helps people to stop smoking and provides anti smoking education materials for children and young people. People affected by lung cancer can share experiences through the foundation's network of support groups and the online discussion forum – Talk and Share.

For more information, visit our website <http://www.cruk.org/cancerhelp>

You will find a wide range of detailed, up to date information for people affected by cancer, including a clinical trials database that you can search for trials in the UK. Our information is based on the best current scientific evidence and reviewed regularly by leading clinicians and experts in health and social care.

For answers to your questions about cancer call our Cancer Information Nurses on 0808 800 4040 9am till 5pm Monday to Friday.

Adapted from Cancer Research UK's Patient Information Website CancerHelp UK in July 2014. CancerHelp UK is not designed to provide medical advice or professional services and is intended to be for educational use only. The information provided through CancerHelp UK and our nurse team is not a substitute for professional care and should not be used for diagnosing or treating a health problem or disease. If you have, or suspect you may have, a health problem you should consult your doctor. Copyright Cancer Research UK 2014. Cancer Research UK is a registered charity in England and Wales (1089464), Scotland (SC041666) and in the Isle of Man (1103)