

FEEL MORE LIKE YOU

Expert advice on caring for your skin,
nails and hair during cancer treatment



I got on the train feeling much more glamorous, a little bit more positive and a little bit more confident.

Gill, diagnosed with breast cancer



About this booklet

This booklet explains how certain cancer treatments can cause changes to your appearance. It is for people who have had changes to their skin, nails and hair because of cancer treatment.

It gives advice on how to manage these changes to help you feel more like you again.

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

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 5 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 56 to 59, there are details of other organisations that can help.

If you find this booklet helpful, you could pass it on to your family and friends. They may also want information to help them support you.

Quotes

In this booklet, we have included quotes from people affected by changes to their appearance. Some are from our Online Community ([macmillan.org.uk/community](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/community)). Others are from people who have chosen to share their story with us. To share your experience, visit [macmillan.org.uk/shareyourstory](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/shareyourstory). We have also included quotes from Boots Macmillan Beauty Advisors.

Boots Macmillan Beauty Advisors

As well as reading this booklet, you can speak to a Boots Macmillan Beauty Advisor. These are No7 Advisors who are based in some Boots stores. They are trained by Macmillan and Boots to give face-to-face advice to help people cope with visible side effects of cancer and treatment. They can help with sparse brows and lashes, brittle nails, dry skin and covering up scars, as well as helping people to improve their confidence and self-esteem. Their role is about helping people look and feel like themselves again. Visit [boots.com/storelocator](https://www.boots.com/storelocator) to find your nearest Boots Macmillan Beauty Advisor.

'The Boots Macmillan Beauty Advisor was really helpful - very kind, compassionate and supportive.'

Gill

Local support

If there are no Boots Macmillan Beauty Advisors in your area, you can usually find other support locally. Some hospitals and support groups run hair and beauty workshops for people affected by cancer. Look Good Feel Better (page 57) runs these workshops. It offers specific workshops for men and also has a booklet for men.

You can ask your cancer nurse specialist about the services available in your area, or call the Macmillan Support Line on **0808 808 00 00**.

For more information

We have another booklet called **Body image and cancer** (page 52). It has more information about coping with changes to your body and concerns about your body image.

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, interactive PDFs, easy read, Braille, large print and translations. To order these, visit **macmillan.org.uk/otherformats** or call **0808 808 00 00**.



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HOW CANCER TREATMENTS MAY AFFECT YOUR APPEARANCE

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Changes caused by cancer treatments

This section explains how some cancer treatments may affect your skin, nails and hair. Their condition and appearance may change, depending on the drug or treatment you are having.

Your cancer team may give you advice on looking after your skin. They may tell you if there are products you should use or avoid. It is very important to follow their advice and to let them know about any changes to your skin, nails and hair.

We have more information about the side effects of different drugs and treatments (page 52).

Chemotherapy drugs

Chemotherapy is the most common cause of skin, nail and hair changes. There are different chemotherapy drugs and you may have a combination of them. The side effects will depend on the drugs that you have. We have more information in our booklet **Understanding chemotherapy** (page 52).

Skin

During treatment, your skin may become dry and more sensitive. Some chemotherapy drugs make your skin more sensitive to sunlight. Certain drugs may make the palms of your hands or the soles of your feet red and sore (palmar-plantar syndrome). Your specialist can give you advice and may reduce the dose of the drug.

Because you are at more risk of getting an infection, you will be advised to avoid wet shaving. Using an electric razor is less likely to cause cuts.

Some people have medicines called steroids with chemotherapy. Steroids may make your skin more likely to get spots and redden.

Nails

Your nails may become more brittle and develop lines or ridges. Or they may become discoloured. The skin around your nails may get dry and frayed.

Hair

Some chemotherapy drugs cause your hair to thin. Other drugs may cause you to lose all the hair on your head. Depending on the drug, some people also lose hair from other parts of the body. This can include eyebrows, eyelashes, facial hair and body hair such as chest, underarm or pubic hair. Ask your cancer doctor or nurse if the drugs you are having cause hair loss and if this is likely to include body hair.

Hair loss is almost always temporary. After treatment finishes your hair should start to grow back. We have more information on hair loss in our booklet **Coping with hair loss** (page 52).



Targeted therapies

Targeted therapies, which include immunotherapy drugs, can cause skin, nail and hair changes. For more information, visit [macmillan.org.uk/targeted-therapy](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/targeted-therapy)

Skin

Targeted therapies can make your skin dry, itchy and more sensitive. Skin rashes are also common. Some people develop skin changes that look like acne. Targeted therapies can make your skin more sensitive to sunlight. Some drugs may make the palms of your hands or the soles of your feet red and sore (palmar-plantar syndrome). Your cancer doctor and nurse can give you advice. They may reduce the dose of the drug.

Nails

Your nails may become brittle and break easily, or they may become discoloured.

Hair

Some targeted therapy drugs may make hair thinner, curlier or drier than usual. Men sometimes find that their facial hair grows more slowly. Some drugs may cause hair to change colour. But this usually returns to normal when treatment finishes.

Certain drugs may cause facial hair to grow faster, or eyebrows or eyelashes to grow longer and curlier. Your nurse specialist will give you advice on how to manage these changes.

Radiotherapy

Skin

Radiotherapy can cause changes to your skin but only in the area being treated. Your skin may become red, sore or itchy. If you have dark skin, it may become darker. We have more information on radiotherapy in our booklet **Understanding radiotherapy** (page 52).

The radiographers or nurses will tell you how to look after your skin. It is important to only use products they recommend on your skin in the area being treated.

If you have radiotherapy to an area where you normally shave, ask the radiographers or nurses for advice. If you are having radiotherapy to your armpit, you may be given advice on using deodorant. They may suggest using unperfumed and alcohol-free deodorants if the skin in your armpit becomes sensitive.

When you finish radiotherapy, you should protect the skin in the treated area from strong sunshine for at least a year. Once any skin reaction has disappeared, use a suncream with a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 30.

Hair

Radiotherapy to the head may cause hair loss. Sometimes the hair that grows back may be thinner, patchy or a different colour. In some people, hair loss may be permanent. Your cancer doctor can usually tell you if this is likely.

If you are having radiotherapy to the breast or pelvis (the area between the hips), you are likely to lose hair in that area.

Hormonal therapy

Hormonal therapy drugs are used to treat cancers such as breast and prostate cancer. They can affect your skin, nails and hair, but the effects are usually mild. Hormonal therapies may cause dry skin and rashes. Rarely, they may also cause spots.

If hormonal therapies cause hair thinning, it can be upsetting. But this should improve when you finish treatment. It is important to look after your hair and scalp. We have more information in our booklet **Coping with hair loss** (page 52).

'Most customers are women. Mostly we help men with skin care and it would be great to have more visiting.'

**Karen, Boots Macmillan
Beauty Advisor**



MANAGING CHANGES TO YOUR SKIN

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Dry skin

If you have dry skin, these tips may help:

- Wash with lukewarm water using mild, unperfumed, soap-free cleansers. Soap will make your skin drier.
- Use unperfumed bath and shower products. If your skin feels sensitive, or if you are having a targeted therapy drug, avoid products that contain colouring.
- Avoid having long, hot showers or baths which will make your skin drier. Pat your skin dry instead of rubbing it. Use a clean, soft towel.
- Moisturise your skin regularly. This will keep it supple and less likely to become dry and itchy. Apply lotions, creams or ointments soon after you have washed.
- Keep your nails short to protect your skin from scratches.
- If you have dry or sore lips, use a lip balm. Choose one made from moisturising ingredients such as petroleum jelly (Vaseline[®]), shea butter or glycerine.

Try these tips for cleansing your face:

- Use a gentle cleanser that does not remove the moisture from your skin. Creamy cleansers could be a good option. Put the cleanser on carefully and avoid your eyes.
- Remove cleansers with a damp cotton wool pad or a clean, damp flannel. This will leave your skin feeling soft and clean.
- If you use a toner, avoid products containing alcohol, which will make your skin dry.

'My skin reacted to the treatment and needed extra special care. I had been sensitive to the sun before; now I was super hyper-sensitive. Just because I had finished my treatment, my body (and life in general) didn't immediately go back to normal. That's what is good about Macmillan – they are there for the long haul, offering support even after treatment has 'officially' finished.'

Julie

Using moisturiser

If you have dry skin, use a moisturiser at least twice a day on your face and body. You may need a richer moisturiser than you usually use. Do not use products containing sodium lauryl sulphate (SLS), especially if you have eczema. This can irritate the skin.

Moisturisers containing oatmeal can be soothing for dry or sore skin. Try tying a muslin bag filled with oatmeal over your bath tap and letting the water run through. This can be a good way to soothe and soften your skin in the bath.

If your skin is very dry, it can become itchy. Try using an emollient or moisturising cream that contains oatmeal, menthol or 10% urea. This may help relieve the itchiness. Ask your specialist nurse or oncology team for advice. They may prescribe you something to reduce itching.

If you are having radiotherapy or targeted therapies, the staff at the hospital will talk to you about caring for your skin. Check with them first before using any skin products.

Oily skin

If your skin is oily, try the following tips:

- Use a good cleanser and a light, oil-free moisturiser to keep your skin in good condition.
- A cleanser that you wash off can be a good option. Gently work the cleanser into your skin, before washing it off.
- Use a soft flannel or muslin cloth to remove all of the cleanser and help your skin feel cleaner.
- Do not overwork your skin. Avoid exfoliating or harsh products that take moisture out of the skin.

If you are having chemotherapy, your skin may become less oily during treatment.

Rashes or spots

If you develop a rash, always get it checked by your cancer doctor or specialist nurse straight away. They will know the cause and be able to give you advice.

Some targeted therapies can cause a rash or spots that look like acne. But this is not caused by acne. Do not use anti-acne products, as they make the problem worse. Your specialist nurse or cancer doctor can give you treatment that will help.

Your specialist may prescribe creams or drugs to help if you develop itchy skin or a rash. Always tell your cancer doctor or specialist nurse if you get a rash.



Taking care in the sun

Certain drugs and treatments can make your skin more sensitive to sunlight. Here are some tips to protect your skin if you are out in the sun:

- Wear loose clothes made of cotton or natural fibres to cover up.
- Wear a wide-brimmed hat to protect your face and neck.
- Stay out of the sun during the hottest part of the day. This is usually between 11am and 3pm.
- Apply a suncream with a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 30. Choose one that protects skin against UVA and UVB rays.
- Wear sunglasses to protect your eyes from the sun.

Remember, the best way to protect your skin is to cover up and to stay out of strong sunlight.

Changes in your skin tone

As your treatment goes on, you may notice changes in your skin tone or in the brightness of your complexion. The following tips may help.

Using foundation

- If you wear foundation, you may need to change from your usual shade.
- Choosing a foundation with a dewy finish (moist looking) will brighten your complexion naturally.
- Choose a base colour that is not visible at your jawline. Even a sheer or light foundation will help to even out your skin tone.
- Tinted moisturiser can work well if you are not used to wearing a lot of make-up, or prefer not to.

Applying a bronzer

- Use a make-up brush to apply bronzer lightly to your forehead, cheekbones and down the middle of your nose. This adds a natural wash of colour to the face.
- Start by adding a small amount and gently build this up. Finish by buffing really well into the skin so there are no obvious lines.

You could ask a Boots Macmillan Beauty Advisor about other make-up options to improve your skin tone. We have more information about Boots Macmillan Beauty Advisors on page 2.

Using a concealer

You can use a concealer under and over foundation, or on its own. It can hide blemishes (such as marks or spots) or dark circles under your eyes. It is helpful if you need a quick cover-up.

If you have flushed skin

A green-tinted primer can help tone down rosy skin and even out the colour on your cheeks, nose and chin. But try to use these products sparingly. When you put on the primer, pat it gently on to your skin. Rubbing your skin can make the redness worse.

If you have flushed skin, try a medium-coverage foundation with sun protection. Make sure the foundation matches the areas of your face that are less red. Pat the foundation over the primer to avoid disturbing it.

You could ask a Boots Macmillan Beauty Advisor about using concealer or toning down flushed skin. We have more information about Boots Macmillan Beauty Advisors on page 2.

Keeping clean

Cancer treatments can make you more at risk of getting an infection. Keep your make up routine as clean as possible with the following tips:

- Wash your hands before applying creams or make-up.
- Do not share towels or flannels with other people.
- Check expiry dates on make-up.
- Do not share make-up brushes, sponges or any other applicators with anyone else.
- If you use mascara, avoid pumping the wand into the tube. This reduces the risk of introducing bacteria.
- Take eye make-up off using a new cotton pad for each eye to avoid spreading any possible infection.
- Clean your make-up brushes or sponges regularly, or use disposable sponges.
- Put the tops or lids back on any tubes or jars when you have finished using them.

Concerns about chemicals in cosmetics or toiletries

It can be worrying to read reports that suggest chemicals in cosmetics or toiletries may contribute to cancer risk. But there is no good scientific evidence to show this is true.

Parabens and phthalates are chemicals sometimes linked with cancer risk. This is because they have been found in body tissues, such as breast tissue. This has caused concerns that they may affect hormones in the body, particularly oestrogen.

But these chemicals are much weaker than natural oestrogen. Any effects are likely to be overwhelmed by the natural oestrogen in our bodies.

The UK and EU have safety regulations on the use of chemicals in cosmetics and toiletries. Manufacturers have to make sure their products are safe for use.

There is a lot of choice available in cosmetics and toiletries. So if you are concerned, you can choose products that do not contain these chemicals.

You can read more information about cosmetics and toiletries and cancer risk on Cancer Research UK's website (page 58).



MANAGING CHANGES TO YOUR NAILS

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Looking after your nails

There are different ways to help look after your fingernails and toenails:

- Wear protective gloves when doing household tasks or gardening. This protects your nails and skin from detergents, chemicals and injury. It also protects your hands from too much exposure to water, which may cause fungal infections of the nail bed.
- Wear comfortable shoes and cotton socks and avoid anything that is tight-fitting or rubs.
- Clip your fingernails and toenails to keep them short. This makes nail changes less noticeable. Do not use scissors.
- Moisturise regularly using a hand, foot and nail cream. Try using a nail-strengthening cream.
- Massage a good cuticle cream into your cuticles to help prevent dryness, splitting and hangnails. Do not cut your cuticles.
- Use an emery board to keep your nails short and smooth and to avoid snagging.
- When filing your nails, only move the emery board in one direction across the nail. This stops your nails splitting further. Do not move the board backwards and forwards.

Disguising nail changes

Wearing nail varnish is a good way to disguise nail changes. But if your nails are split, sore or damaged, do not use nail varnish or false nails.

Here are some tips for wearing nail polish:

- Try water-based polishes which contain less harsh chemicals.
- Use dark nail polishes to help disguise discoloured nails.
- Use nail polish remover that does not have acetone or other harsh solvents.

'It doesn't have to mean that life is over for you and you're going to die. Yeah, you will feel rubbish, but you can still rock your favourite pair of boots, or nail polish or red lipstick. Looking good makes me feel so empowered.'

Carla



MANAGING CHANGES TO YOUR HAIR

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Coping with hair loss

Some cancer treatments cause changes to the texture and condition of your hair. It may become drier or more brittle. Some treatments may also cause hair thinning or complete hair loss. Chemotherapy is the most common cause of complete hair loss. But your hair usually grows back after your treatment finishes.

Other drugs such as targeted therapy or hormonal drugs may cause hair thinning but not usually complete hair loss. This can be upsetting, especially as you may need to take the drugs for some time. But there are ways of looking after your hair that can help prevent hair loss (page 35).

With some chemotherapy drugs, it may be possible to prevent or reduce hair loss by using a cold cap. This works by reducing blood flow so that less of the drug reaches your scalp. Your specialist nurse or cancer doctor can tell you if this is suitable for you.

If you have radiotherapy, you usually lose the hair in the treatment area but not anywhere else. Hair loss after radiotherapy is sometimes permanent.

Before chemotherapy, you might choose to cut your hair shorter rather than wait for it to fall out. The weight of long hair can pull on the scalp and make your hair fall out faster. Cutting it shorter may help to give you a sense of control over your appearance.

If you want to remove all your hair, use clippers. Shaving with a blade or razor can lead to cuts and infections.

'I am okay but certainly know my body is being hit with drugs. The way I deal with changes, such as hair loss, is knowing the treatments are attacking the cancer as well.'

Lorna

If you are thinking about wearing a wig, ask your nurse about this as soon as you can. This means there is time to match the wig as closely as possible to your own hair. You will also be prepared if you lose your hair more quickly than expected.

NHS wigs are free if you live in Scotland or Wales. Health Service wigs are free if you live in Northern Ireland. In England, you may be entitled to a free wig on the NHS. This is if you are having, or have had, cancer treatment and you meet certain criteria. Visit [macmillan.org.uk/hairloss](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/hairloss) or speak to your nurse specialist to find out more.

If you want to cover up hair loss, other options include:

- hats
- scarves
- turbans.

It is important to do whatever makes you feel most comfortable. If you do not wear a wig, remember to protect your head from the sun, cold or wind. There are different types of headwear available. Wearing hats, scarves or turbans can also add colour and style to your appearance.

'I was really pleased when wearing the wig nobody noticed except to say they liked my hair short.'

Margaret

Looking after your hair

These tips can help you care for dry, brittle or thinning hair.

Only use gentle hair products and non-medicated shampoo.

- Only apply conditioner to the middle lengths of hair in small sections. Only use conditioner if your hair is long enough to do this.
- Use a wide-toothed comb when your hair is wet and more likely to get damaged. Start combing the ends of your hair first to reduce tangles. Combs cause less damage than brushes.
- Use brushes that have wide-spaced prongs rather than full-bristled brushes.
- Avoid using hair dryers, straighteners and curling tongs.

We have more detailed information about coping with hair loss, to help you look after your hair during and after cancer treatment. We have more information on hair loss in our booklet **Coping with hair loss** (page 52).



MANAGING CHANGES TO YOUR EYEBROWS AND EYELASHES

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Changes to your eyebrows and eyelashes

Some cancer drugs may cause your eyebrows and eyelashes to become thinner or to fall out completely. Your specialist nurse can tell you if this is likely. It depends on the drugs and the dose you have.

Losing your eyebrows and eyelashes can change your appearance. This can be upsetting, but they usually grow back.

Your eyelashes and eyebrows may fall out later than the hair on your head. Sometimes this happens gradually during treatment or after treatment has finished.

There are things you can do to help disguise these changes. Boots Macmillan Beauty Advisors can help you with the techniques described here. You can also watch an advice video about these techniques at [boots.com/macmillan](https://www.boots.com/macmillan)

'The weirdest thing was having no eyebrows, I'd always been terrible at drawing them so this was a challenge.'

Francesca

Your eyebrows

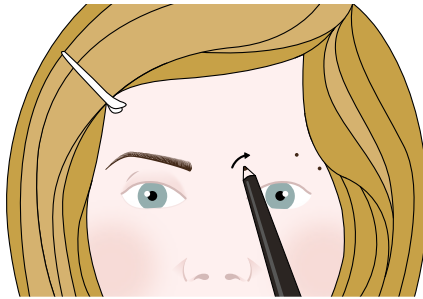
You can redraw eyebrows with an eyebrow pencil that is slightly lighter than your normal hair colour. Another natural-looking way to redraw the eyebrows is by applying eyeshadow powder with a make-up brush.

Boots Macmillan Beauty Advisors can show you how to redraw your eyebrows, as it can be scary to try this at first if you are not used to it.

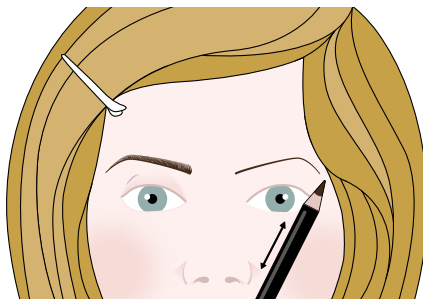
Creating natural-looking eyebrows

- If possible, practise drawing on your eyebrows before your treatment begins. This way, you can get used to following the shape and arch of your brow. You could take a close-up photo of yourself before treatment. This will help you remember the position of your eyebrows and what they looked like.

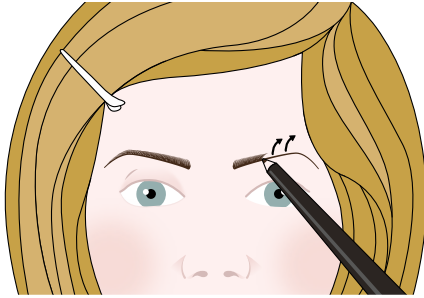
- Try drawing a dot of colour above the outer and inner corners of each eye, and a dot where you think you will create an arch. The arch is normally at its highest point where you hold the pencil at the bottom of the nose. It should line up through the middle of the iris of the eye (coloured circle around the pupil). You can make a mark on the eyebrow and use this as a guide. This way, you can then check for symmetry before you start drawing.



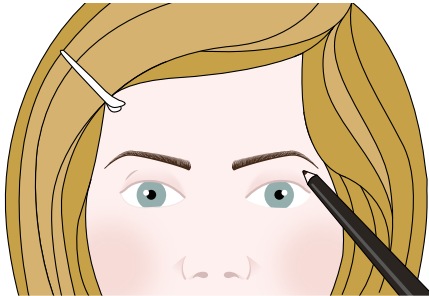
- Use your brow bone and your eyes to identify where your brows should be. Place the brow pencil alongside your nose and skirt the outer corner of your eye at a 45 degree angle. This shows where a natural brow would start and finish.



- Use a lighter pencil than your normal hair colour. Draw from the centre of the brow line outward, using light, feathery strokes. Plenty of tiny strokes with the pencil will look more realistic than a single line.



- Create a brow that is thicker-looking at the inner end (nearest to the nose) and thinner at the outer edge. Light pressure is all that you need. Comb through the colour with an eyebrow wand to give a more natural appearance.



- Check for symmetry when you move on to your other eye. But remember that no two brows are identical. Just make them look more or less the same.

Some people choose to have permanent or temporary tattooing to create new eyebrows. This should not be done during treatment. We have more information on hair loss that you may find useful in our booklet **Coping with hair loss** (page 52).

Long and thick eyebrows

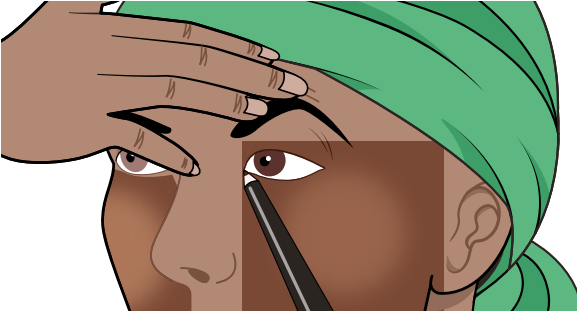
Some targeted therapy drugs may make your eyebrows grow long and thick. If this happens, you can carefully trim them.



Your eyelashes

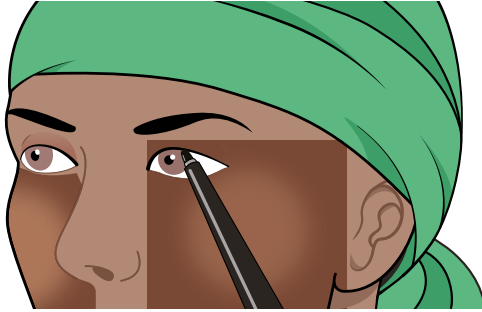
There are different make-up tips you can try if your eyelashes become thinner or fall out completely.

- Use a soft eyeliner and smudger to define your eyes and create the illusion of eyelashes. You can use a dark eyeshadow instead of eyeliner to create a softer line.



- Lift the skin at your eyebrow when applying the make-up. This will tighten your skin and make the pencil easier to apply.
- Use soft strokes along the eyelash line by using a smudger to soften the line and push colour further into the lashes.

- Apply the make-up lightly to make your eyelashes well-defined and natural looking.



- Use a gentle, teasing action when applying mascara. A wand with short bristles may be easier to use on short and sparse eyelashes.
- If you want to wear false eyelashes, check with your specialist nurse or healthcare team first. The glue may irritate sensitive skin.

Looking after your eyelashes

- Do not use eyelash curlers. They can damage fragile eyelashes.
- Try not to rub your eyes to help prevent you losing eyelashes.
- When you are removing eye make-up, hold a cotton pad soaked in eye make-up remover to your eye. Keep it there for a couple of seconds before gently wiping away. This stops you pulling too much on your lashes.
- Avoid waterproof mascara. It can be harder to remove. If your eyes are sensitive, try using mascara that dissolves in warm water.

Long or ingrowing eyelashes

Some targeted therapy drugs can cause your eyelashes to grow very long or grow inwards. This can irritate your eyes. You may need to have your eyelashes trimmed by a nurse. Do not try to do this yourself. You should get advice from your specialist nurse or cancer doctor.

'I thought I was going to be really upset about hair but instead I think I've decided it's not a problem. It'll come back. Also if it bothers anyone when I'm out – it's their problem, not mine.'

Margaret



YOUR FEELINGS

Getting emotional support

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Getting emotional support

There are many ways to get support to help you manage changes to your appearance and find ways to cope. We hope our tips and suggestions help you find what works best for you.

Talking to people close to you about how you are feeling can be a positive step. If others know how you feel, it is easier for them to support you.

Sharing experiences with people in the same situation can also help. You can visit the Macmillan Online Community – [macmillan.org.uk/community](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/community) Or ask your specialist nurse or oncology team to put you in touch with a local support group.

Our booklet **Body image and cancer** (page 52) has advice on coping with different feelings and other people's reactions. It also has practical advice on how to improve your body image and where to get help and support.

You can also speak to our cancer support specialists about any emotional or practical issue. Call the Macmillan Support Line on **0808 808 00 00**.





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About our information

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

Order what you need

You may want to order more booklets or leaflets like this one. Visit **be.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
- British Sign Language
- easy read booklets
- interactive PDFs
- large print
- translations.

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**.

Other ways we can help you

At Macmillan, we know how a cancer diagnosis can affect everything, and we're 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 free, confidential phone line is open 7 days a week, 8am to 8pm. Our cancer support specialists can:

- help with any medical questions you have about cancer or your treatment
- help you access benefits and give you financial guidance
- be there to listen if you need someone to talk to
- tell you about services that can help you in your area.

Call us on **0808 808 00 00** or email us via our website, [macmillan.org.uk/talktous](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/talktous)

Macmillan Information and Support Centres

Our Information and Support Centres are based in hospitals, libraries and mobile centres. There, you can speak with someone face to face.

Visit one to get the information you need, or if you'd like a private chat, most centres have a room where you can speak with someone alone and in confidence.

Find your nearest centre at [macmillan.org.uk/informationcentres](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/informationcentres) or call us on **0808 808 00 00**.

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 to bring people together in their communities and online.

Support groups

Whether you are someone living with cancer or a carer, 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](https://www.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](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/community)

The Macmillan healthcare team

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.

Help with money worries

Having cancer can bring extra costs such as hospital parking, travel fares and higher heating bills. If you've been affected in this way, we can help.

'Everyone is so supportive on the Online Community, they know exactly what you're going through. It can be fun too. It's not all just chats about cancer.'

Mal

Financial guidance

Our financial team can give you guidance on mortgages, pensions, insurance, borrowing and savings.

Help accessing benefits

Our benefits advisers can offer advice and information on benefits, tax credits, grants and loans. They can help you work out what financial help you could be entitled to. They can also help you complete your forms and apply for benefits.

Macmillan Grants

Macmillan offers one-off payments to people with cancer. A grant can be for anything from heating bills or extra clothing to changes to your home.

Call us on **0808 808 00 00** to speak to a financial guide or benefits adviser, or to find out more about Macmillan Grants.

We can also tell you about benefits advisers in your area. Visit [macmillan.org.uk/financialsupport](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/financialsupport) to find out more about how we can help you with your finances.

Help with work and cancer

Whether you're an employee, a carer, an employer or are self-employed, we can provide support and information to help you manage cancer at work. Visit [macmillan.org.uk/work](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/work)

Work support

Our dedicated team of work support advisers can help you understand your rights at work. Call us on **0808 808 00 00** to speak to a work support adviser (Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm).

Macmillan Organiser

This includes a records book to write down information such as appointments, medications and contact details.

Other useful organisations

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

Beauty, hair loss and cancer support organisations

Breast Cancer Care

Helpline 0808 800 6000

Textphone 0808 800 6000

Email

info@breastcancercare.org.uk

www.

breastcancercare.org.uk

Provides information and support for anyone affected by breast cancer. Specialist breast care nurses run the helpline.

Changing Faces

Helpline 0300 012 0275

Email

info@changingfaces.org.uk

www.changingfaces.org.uk

Offers support and information for adults and children with a visible difference: a mark, scar or condition that makes them look different.

Can arrange consultations with skin camouflage specialists who can teach people to self-apply specialist cover creams.

Look Good Feel Better

Tel 01372 747 500

Email info@lgfb.co.uk

www.

lookgoodfeelbetter.co.uk

A free cancer support service for people undergoing treatment for any type of cancer. Offers free skincare and make-up workshops across UK to help you manage the visible side effects treatment and boost confidence and well-being. Holds workshops for men and has a specific booklet that covers issues for men.

Look Good Feel Better For Men

www.lookgoodfeelbetter.co.uk/support-advice/men

Has tips to help men deal with the side effects of cancer treatments on hair, skin, body and mind.

General cancer support organisations

Cancer Black Care

Tel 0734 047 1970

Email

info@cancerblackcare.org.uk

www.cancerblackcare.org.uk

Offers information and support for people with cancer from minority ethnic communities, their friends, carers and families.

Cancer Focus

Northern Ireland

Helpline 0800 783 3339

(Mon to Fri, 9am to 1pm)

Email hello@cancerfocusni.org

www.cancerfocusni.org

Offers a variety of services to people affected by cancer, including a free helpline, counselling and links to local support groups.

Cancer Research UK

Tel 0300 123 1022

www.cancerhelp.org.uk

Has patient information on all types of cancer and 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.

General health information

Health and Social Care in Northern Ireland

www.hscni.net

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

Healthtalk

Email

info@healthtalkonline.org

www.healthtalk.org

www.youthhealthtalk.org

(site for young people)

Has information about cancer, and videos and audio clips of people's experiences.

National Cancer Institute at the National Institutes of Health – USA

www.cancer.gov

Gives information on cancer and treatments.

NHS.UK

www.nhs.uk

The UK's biggest health information website.

Has service information for England.

NHS Direct Wales

111.wales.nhs.uk

NHS health information site for Wales.

NHS Inform

www.nhsinform.co.uk

NHS health information site for Scotland.

Counselling and emotional support

British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP)

Tel 01455 883 300

Email bacp@bacp.co.uk

www.bacp.co.uk

Promotes awareness of counselling and signposts people to appropriate services. You can search for a qualified counsellor in the Therapist Directory.

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.

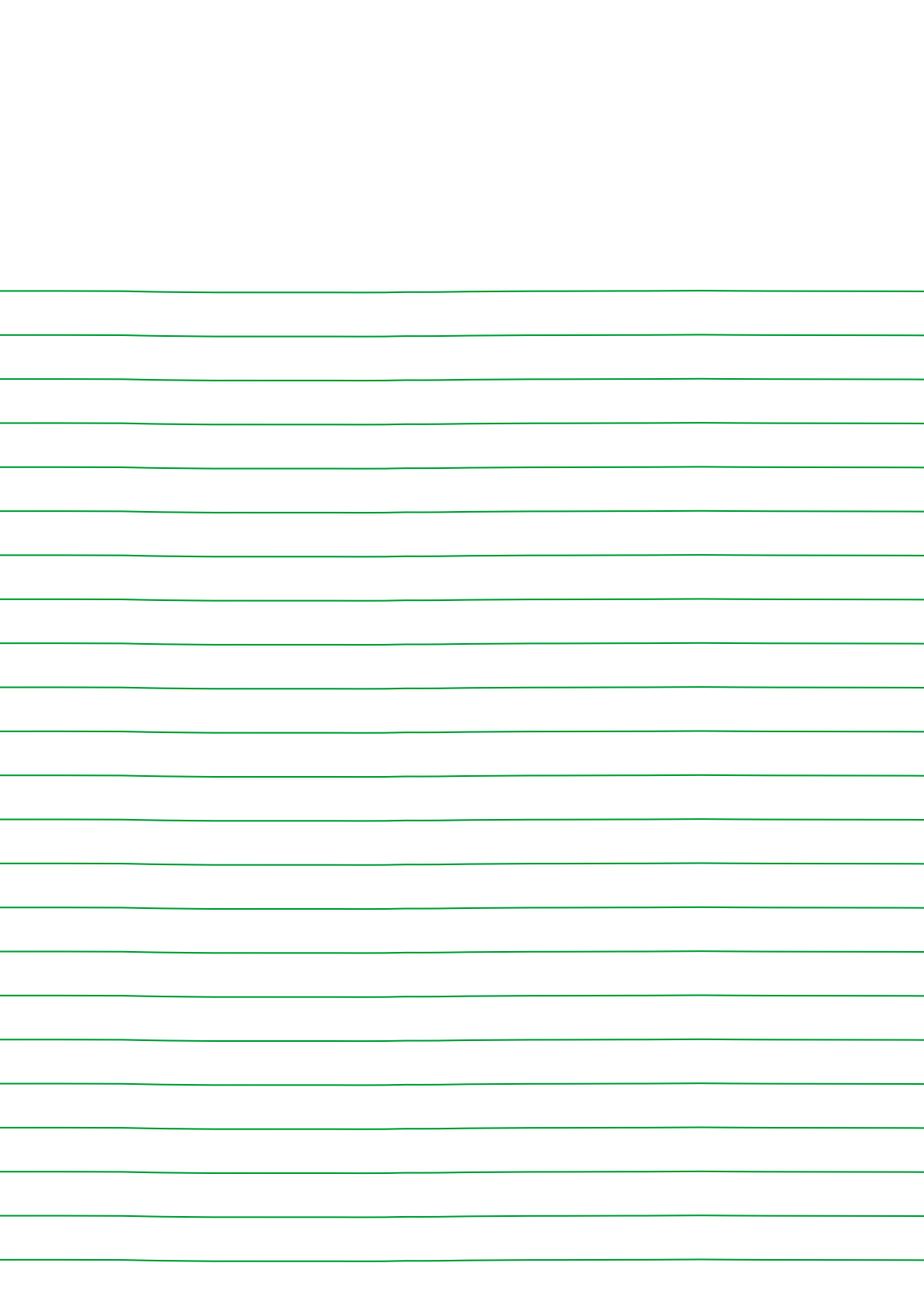
UK Council for Psychotherapy (UKCP)

Tel 020 7014 9955

Email info@ukcp.org.uk

www.psychotherapy.org.uk

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



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.

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, Prof Tim Iveson, Macmillan Consultant Medical Oncologist.

With thanks to: Beth Dolecki, Boots Macmillan Beauty Advisor; Sharon Hulley, Macmillan Skin Cancer Clinical Nurse; Jenny King, Chemotherapy Nurse Specialist; and Debbie Wright, Oncology Pharmacist.

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

We have listed a sample of the sources used in the booklet. If you would like more information about the sources we use, please contact us at informationproductionteam@macmillan.org.uk

Carr. The impact of cancer and its therapies on body image and sexuality.

Psychological Aspects of Cancer. Springer. 2013.

Cororve Fingeret. Managing body image difficulties of adult cancer patients. Cancer. 120(5). 2014.

Quintard and Lakdja. Assessing the effect of beauty treatments on psychological distress, body image, and coping: a longitudinal study of patients undergoing surgical procedures for breast cancer. Psycho-oncology. 17(10). 2008.

Can you do something to help?

We hope this booklet has been useful to you. It's just one of our many publications that are available free to anyone affected by cancer. They're produced by our cancer information specialists who, along with our nurses, benefits advisers, campaigners and volunteers, are part of the Macmillan team. When people are facing the toughest fight of their lives, we're there 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.



Share your cancer experience

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

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.

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?

Raise money

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

Give money

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

Call us to find out more

0300 1000 200

macmillan.org.uk/getinvolved

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

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Issue no

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Security number

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Signature _____

Date / / _____

Don't 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'd rather donate online go to macmillan.org.uk/donate

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

This booklet explains how certain cancer treatments can cause changes to your appearance. It is for people who have had changes to their skin, nails and hair because of cancer treatment.

It gives advice on how to manage these changes to help you feel more like you again. We hope it helps you deal with some of the questions or feelings you may have.

We're here to help everyone with cancer live life as fully as they can, providing physical, financial and emotional support. So whatever cancer throws your way, we're right there with you. For information, support or just someone to talk to, call **0808 808 00 00** (7 days a week, 8am to 8pm) 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.

Need information in different languages or formats? We produce information in audio, interactive PDFs, easy read, Braille, large print and translations. To order these, visit **macmillan.org.uk/otherformats** or call our support line.

**MACMILLAN
CANCER SUPPORT**

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Patient Information Forum