

In partnership with

MACMILLAN
CANCER SUPPORT

easy
read

Chemotherapy

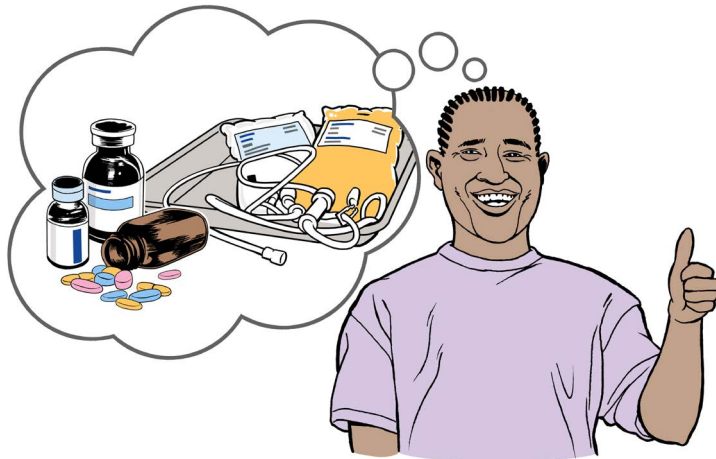




About this easy read booklet



This booklet is about chemotherapy.



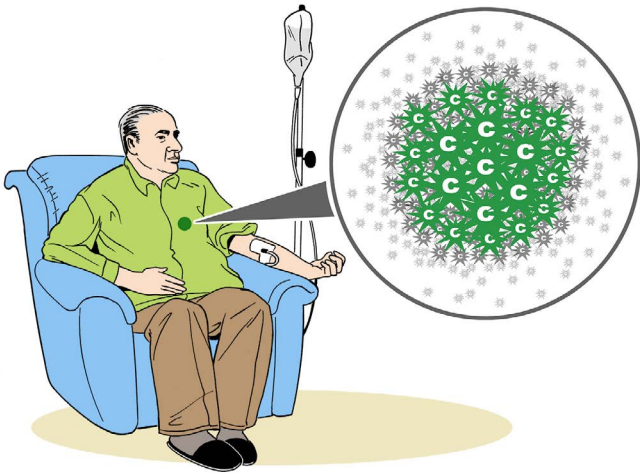
You can learn about what will happen at the hospital when you go in for chemotherapy.



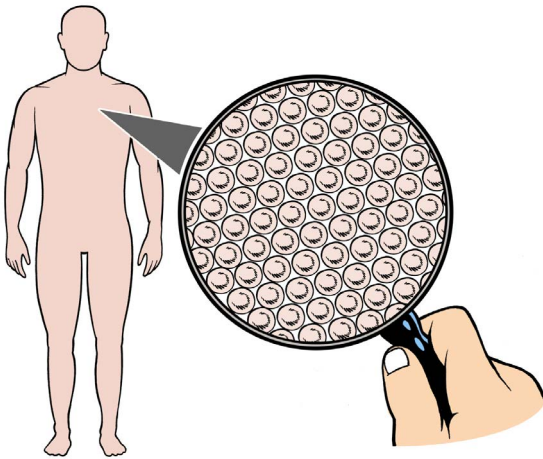
If you are worried about your health, you should talk to a doctor or nurse.



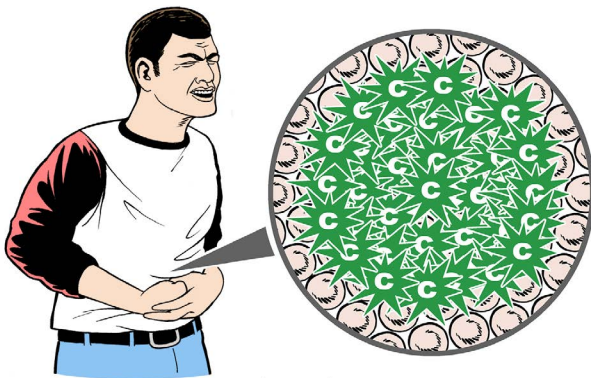
Chemotherapy



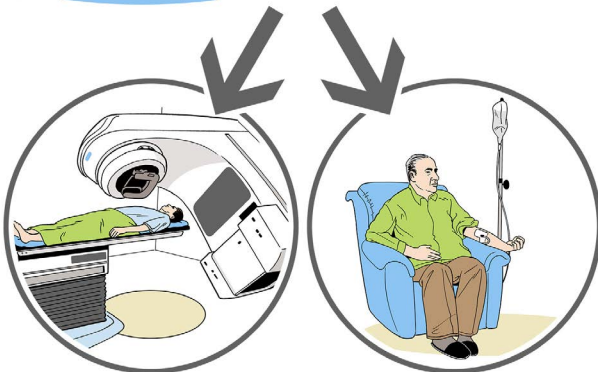
Chemotherapy is a type of treatment for cancer. It uses special drugs to kill cancer **cells** in the body.

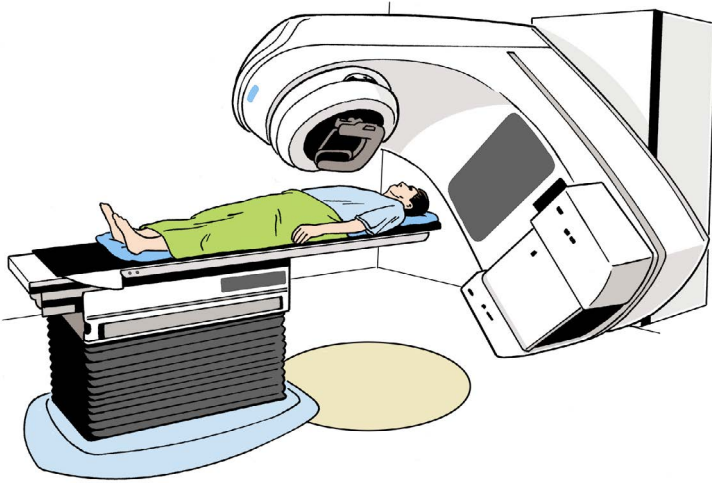


Cells are the tiny building blocks that make up people's bodies.



Some types of cancer can be treated with just chemotherapy. Sometimes chemotherapy is used with other treatments like **radiotherapy, surgery** or other cancer drugs.





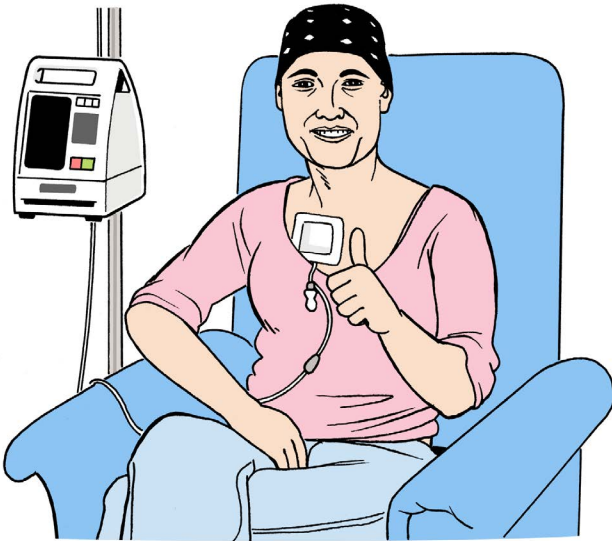
Radiotherapy is a treatment that uses powerful x-rays to kill cancer cells.



Surgery is when a doctor removes, replaces or fixes something inside your body. This is also called an operation.



Why chemotherapy is given

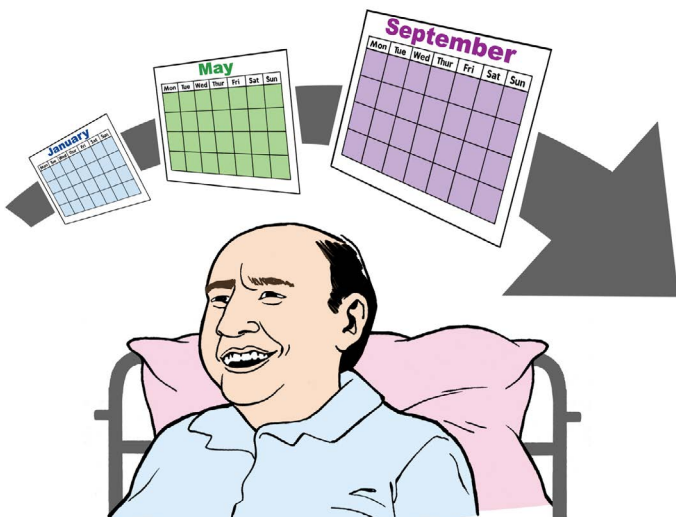
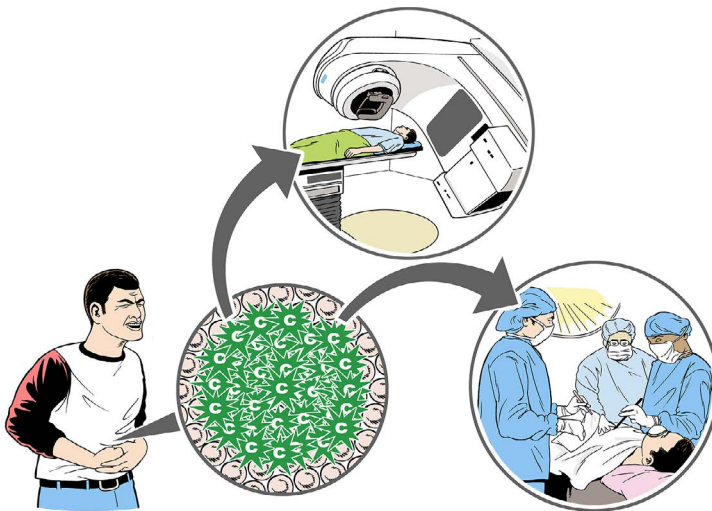


Chemotherapy is given for different reasons:

- it can be given because it is the best way to get rid of the cancer

- it can be given because other treatments are not enough on their own to get rid of the cancer

- it can be given to help you feel better or live longer.





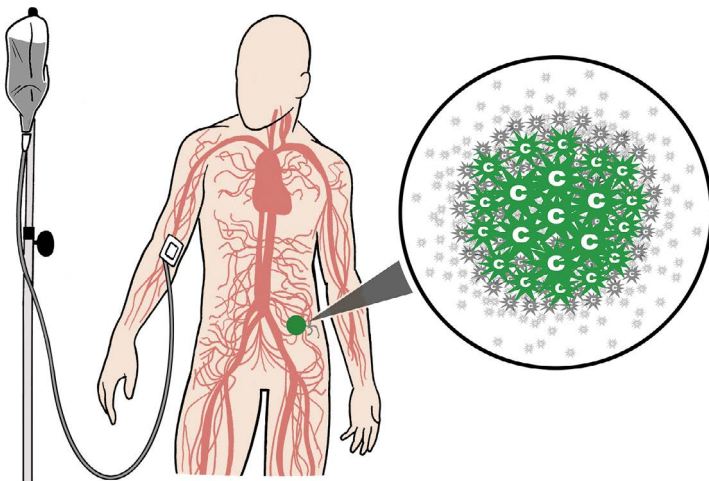
How chemotherapy works



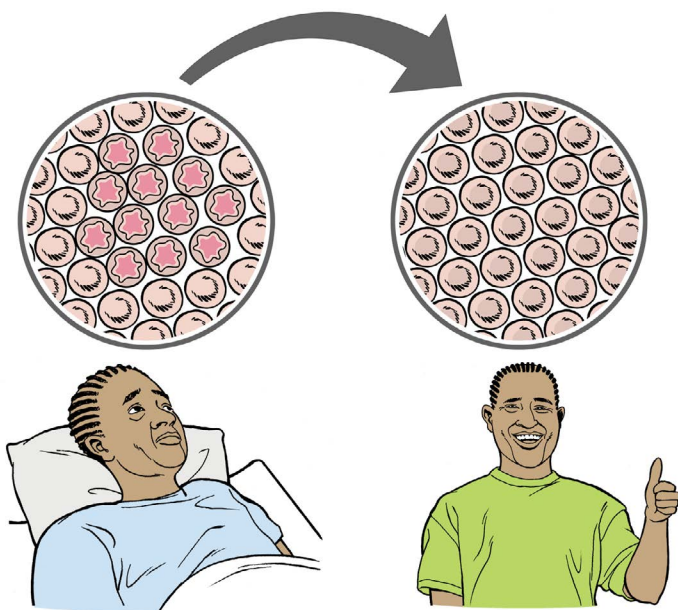
There are lots of different types of chemotherapy drugs.



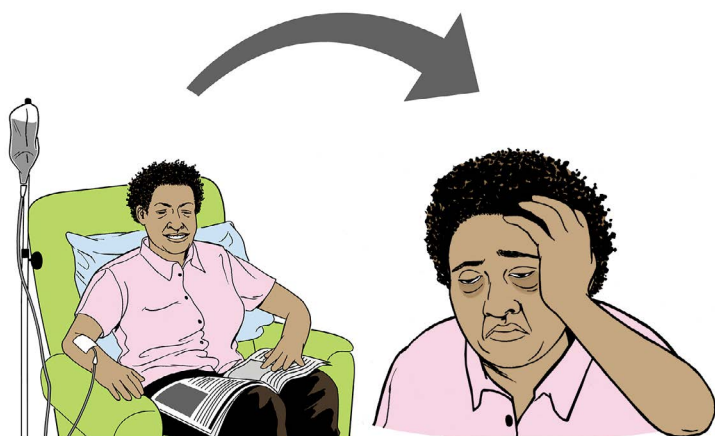
Each person will be given different drugs depending on what type of cancer they have.



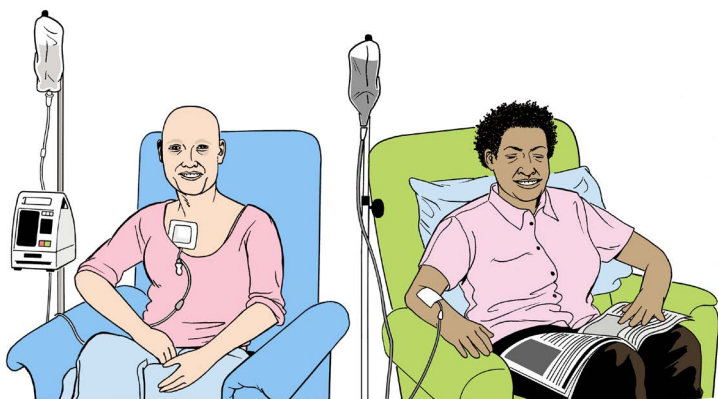
The drugs travel through the body in your blood. They work by damaging the cancer cells so they cannot spread or make more cancer cells.



The drugs can also damage some of the healthy cells in your body. But healthy cells can usually mend themselves and get back to normal after a short time.



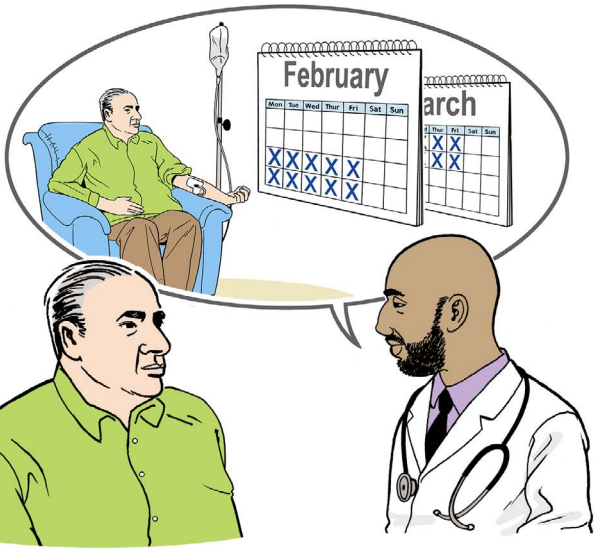
The effects of the drugs on healthy cells can cause **side effects**. These are unwanted effects caused by having treatment, like tiredness or feeling sick.



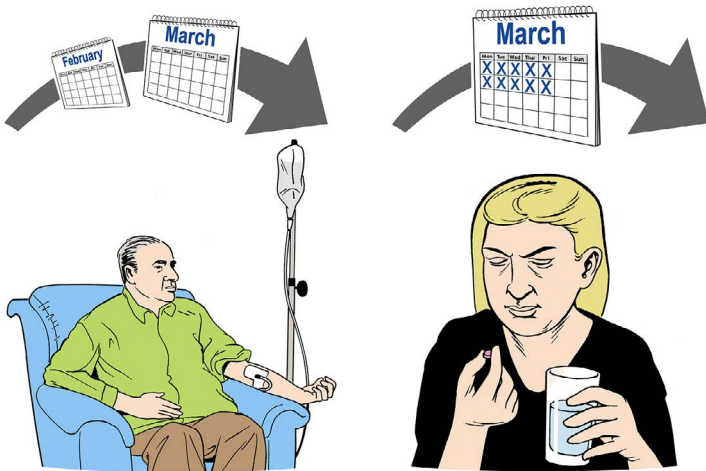
Some people will only have a few side effects and others may have more.



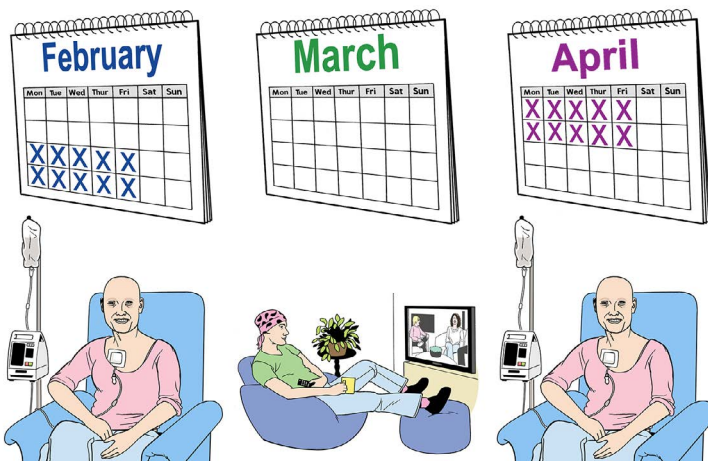
What happens



Your doctor will tell you when you will need treatment.



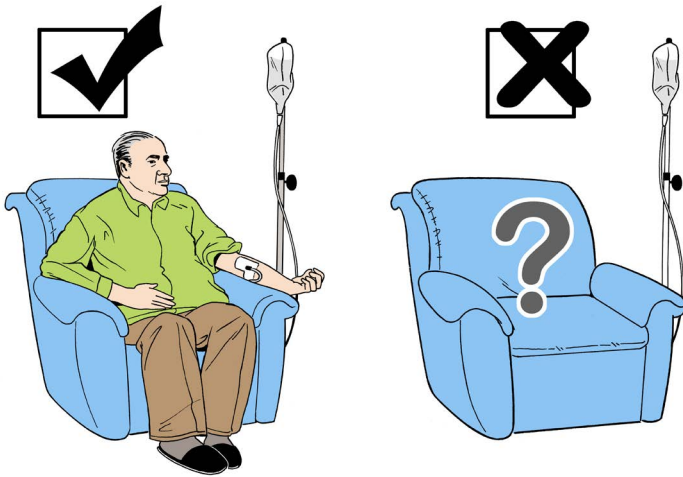
Some people have treatment for a few weeks. Other people might need to have treatment for a few months or longer.



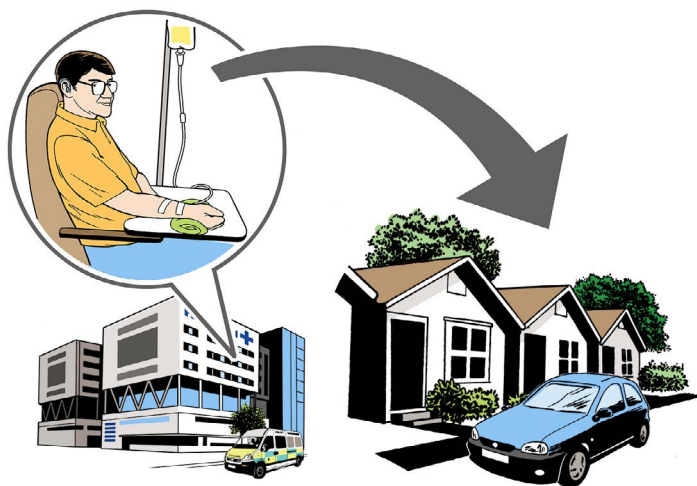
People usually have some treatments and then have a break from the treatments.



Over the time you are having chemotherapy, your doctor will keep checking to see how the treatment is working. They might change your treatment.



It is very important that you keep going for your chemotherapy even if you feel unwell. If you miss treatment it will not work as well.



Usually people come to the hospital for treatment and then go home the same day.



If you are ill and already in hospital, then you will be given your treatment there.



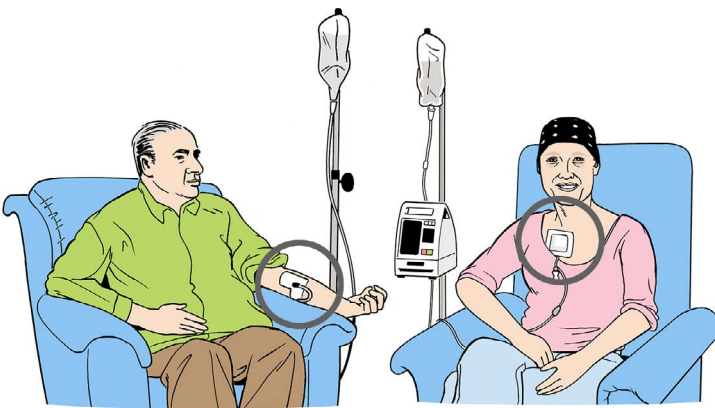
There are two main ways that chemotherapy may be given, as tablets or capsules, or by injection.



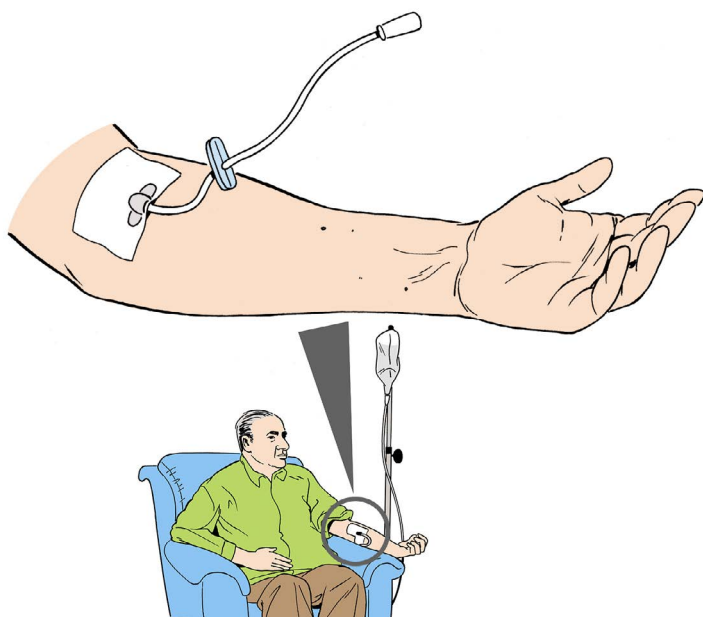
If you are having tablets or capsules your doctor or nurse will tell you how many to take and how often to take them.



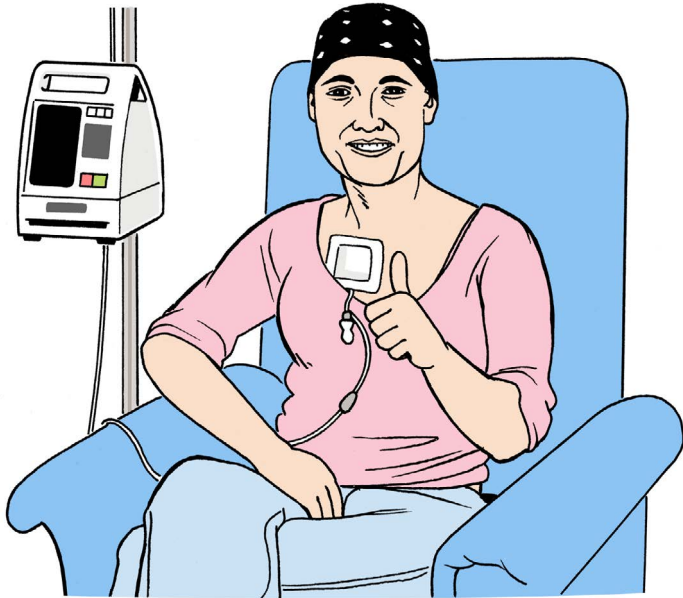
It is very important you know when to take your tablets. You may need support with this.



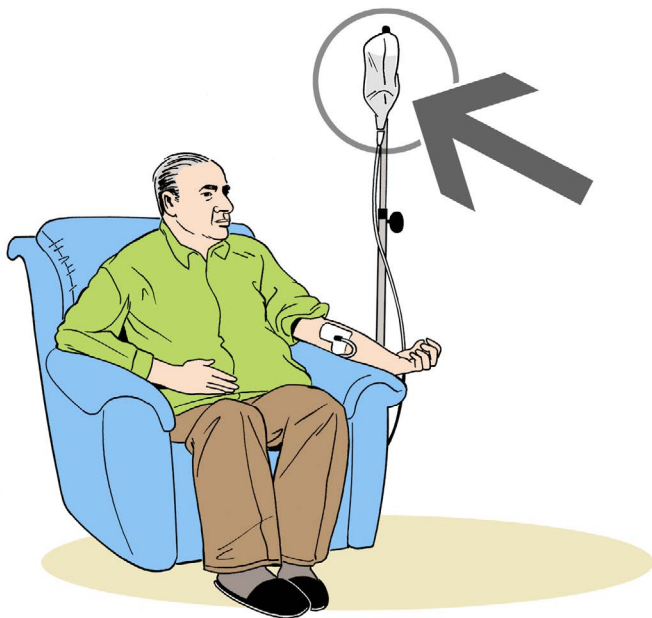
An injection is when a needle is used to put drugs into your body. The needle is put through your skin. The nurse can inject chemotherapy drugs into different places on your body.



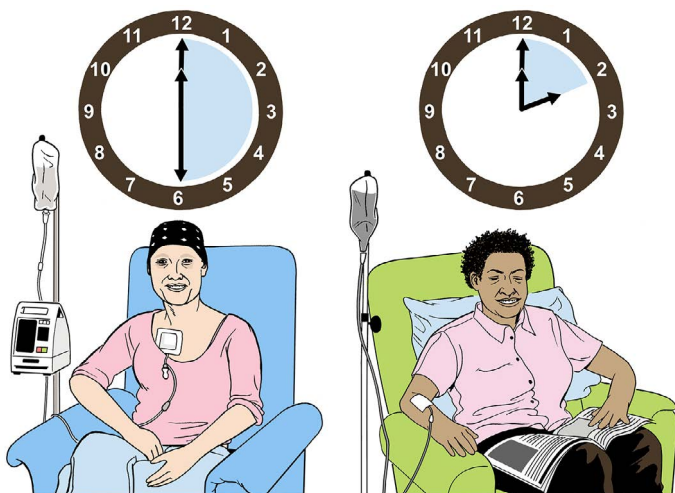
You will usually have to have lots of treatments, so the nurse may put a small tube under your skin. The tube stays there all the way through your treatment.



This makes it easier to give you the drugs without having to give you lots of injections.



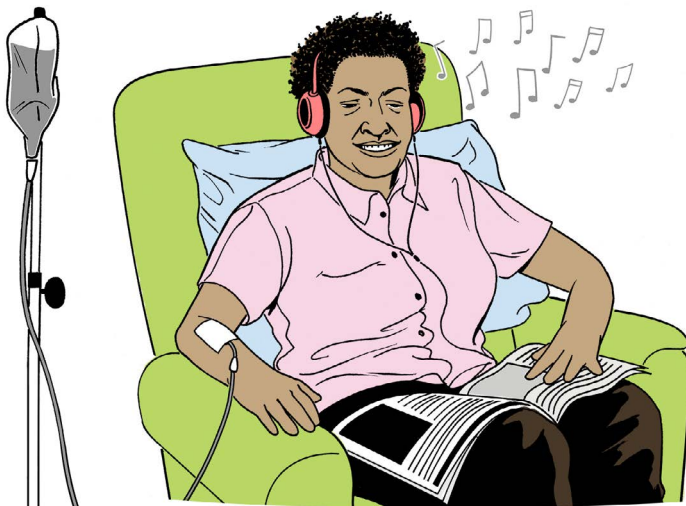
The chemotherapy drugs are given into the tube from a bag of liquid called a drip.



This can take from half an hour up to several hours.



You have to sit still while this is happening. This can be boring so it is good to have a friend to talk to.



You can bring your own music to listen to or something to read.

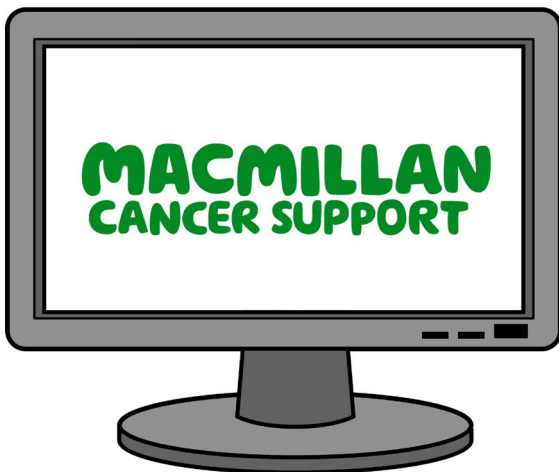


How Macmillan can help you

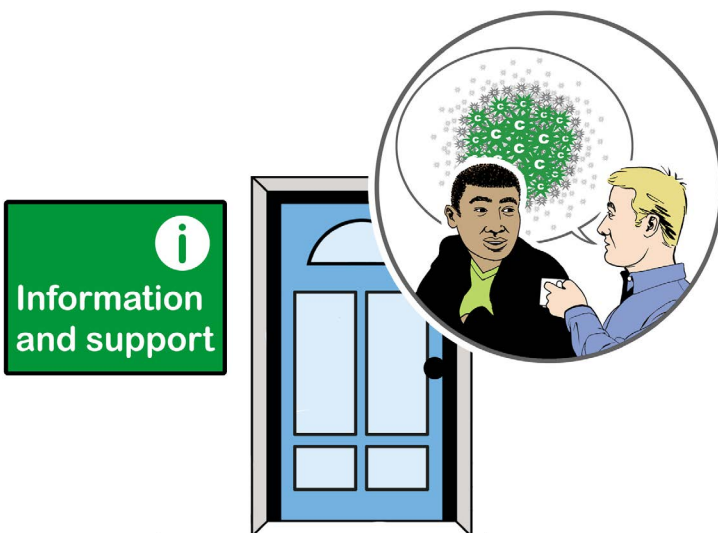


You can get support from:

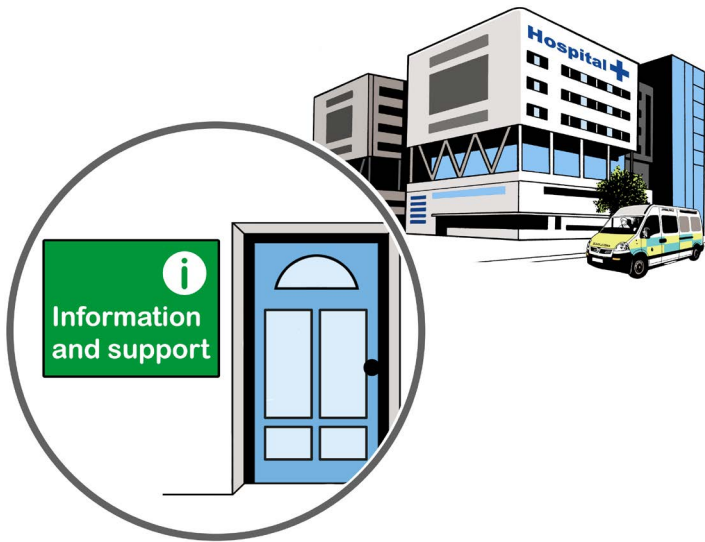
- The Macmillan Support Line. Call **0808 808 00 00** 7 days a week, 8am to 8pm.



- The Macmillan website. Visit macmillan.org.uk for lots of information about cancer and living with cancer.



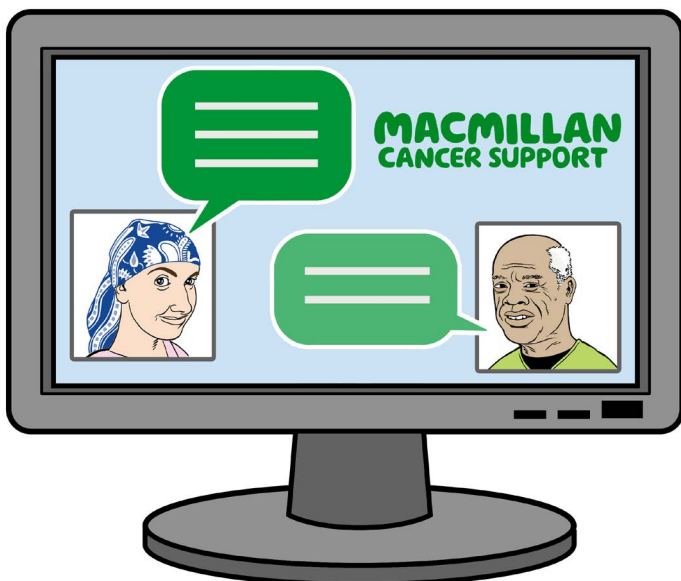
- Information centres. At an information centre, you can talk to a cancer support specialist and get written information.



Find your nearest centre at [macmillan.org.uk/informationcentres](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/informationcentres) or call us. Your hospital might have a centre.



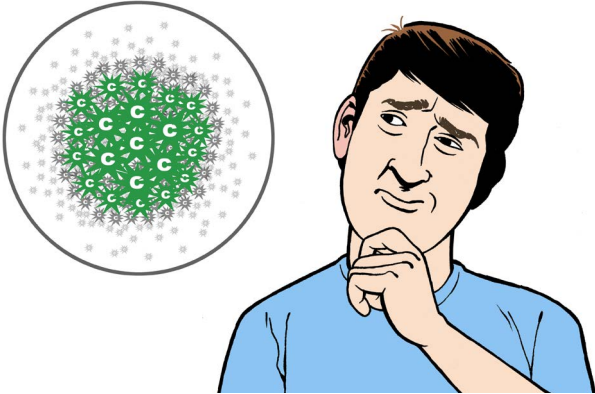
- Local support groups. Find a group near you at [macmillan.org.uk/supportgroups](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/supportgroups) or call us.



- The Macmillan Online Community. You can talk to other people in similar situations at [macmillan.org.uk/community](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/community)



More easy read booklets



Order more easy read booklets from macmillan.org.uk/easyread

There are booklets on lots of topics:

About Macmillan

- How Macmillan Cancer Support can help you

About cancer

- Lung cancer
- What is cancer?

Signs and symptoms

- Breast care for women
- Cervical screening
- How to check your balls [testicles]
- Screening for cancer
- Signs of cancer
- Symptoms of cervical cancer
- Symptoms of prostate cancer



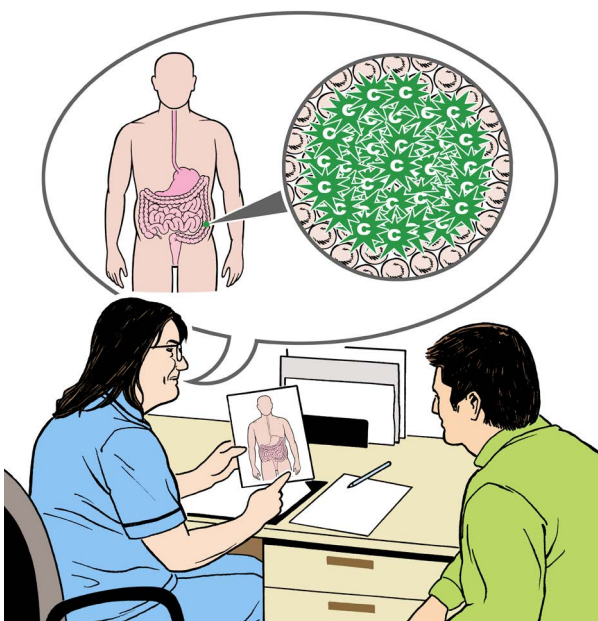
Living a healthy life

- Be safe in the sun
- Drink less alcohol
- Eat a healthy diet
- Exercise
- Have safe sex
- Stop smoking



Tests for cancer

- Having a biopsy
- Having a colonoscopy
- Having a CT scan
- Having an endoscopy
- Having examinations and blood tests
- Having an MRI scan
- Having an ultrasound
- Having an x-ray



Being told you have cancer

- Finding out you have cancer
- Getting your test results
- Seeing the doctor



Treatment for cancer

- Chemotherapy
- Giving your consent
- Having surgery
- Radiotherapy
- Side effects from chemotherapy
- Side effects from radiotherapy
- Treatments for prostate cancer



Living with cancer

- 7 steps to equal healthcare
- After treatment for cancer
- Claiming benefits when you have cancer
- Complementary therapies
- Help with costs when you have cancer
- Talking about cancer and your feelings
- Things that are important to me
- Work and cancer
- Your feelings and cancer
- Your sex life and cancer
- Your social life and cancer



End of life

- Changes that can happen at the end of life
- Choosing where to die
- Getting ready to die
- If you are dying from cancer
- Making decisions about the future if you are dying
- Spirituality and religion at the end of life
- The end of life
- Thinking about your funeral
- Who can help if you are dying



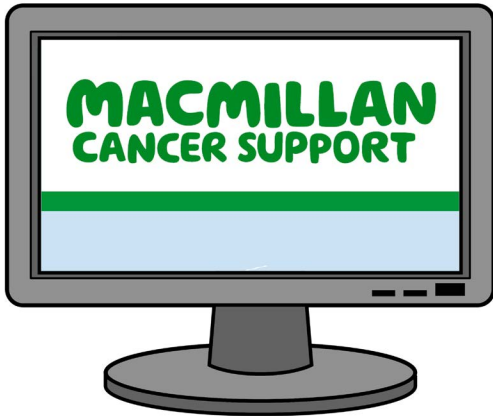
After someone dies

- Going to a funeral when someone dies
- Grief and loss when someone dies
- How you may feel when someone dies
- What can help you feel better when someone dies

To order easy read booklets like this one go to the website macmillan.org.uk/easyread or call us on **0808 808 00 00**

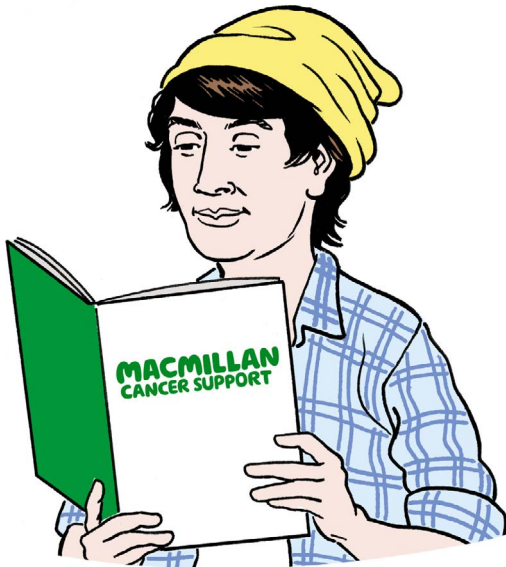


More information and resources



Macmillan website

There is lots of information about cancer at macmillan.org.uk



Booklets about cancer

You can order booklets about cancer from be.macmillan.org.uk



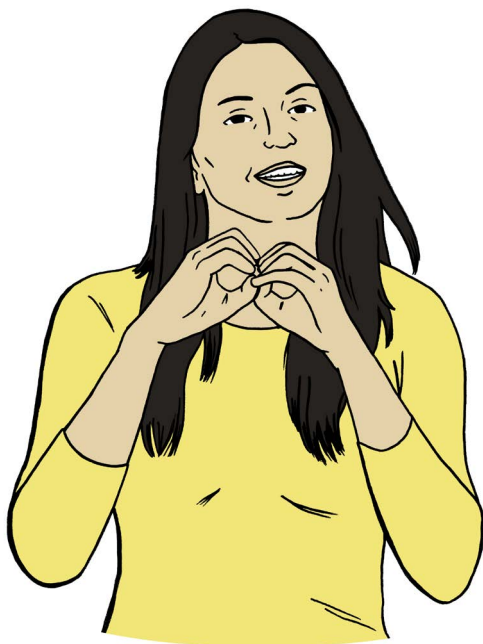
Videos

You can watch videos about cancer at macmillan.org.uk/videos



Audio

You can listen to information about cancer and order CDs from [macmillan.org.uk/audio](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/audio)



British Sign Language (BSL)

You can watch information in BSL at [macmillan.org.uk/bsl](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/bsl)



eBooks

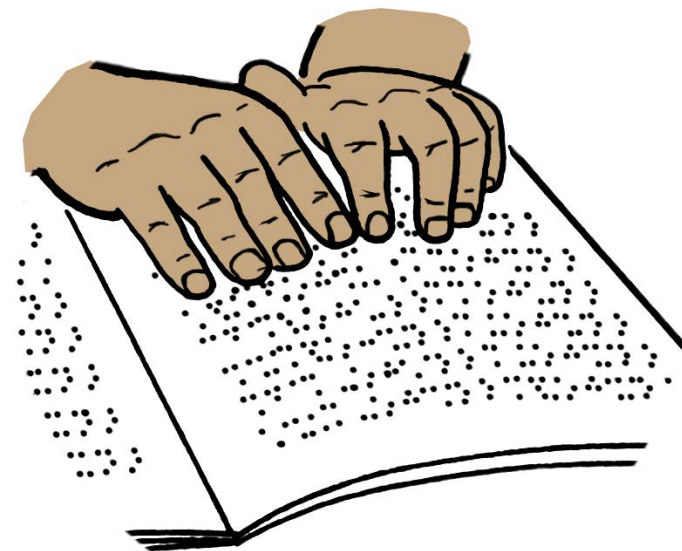
You can get eBooks about cancer from [be.macmillan.org.uk](https://www.be.macmillan.org.uk)



Large print

Tell us if you need information in large print.

Email: cancerinformationteam@macmillan.org.uk



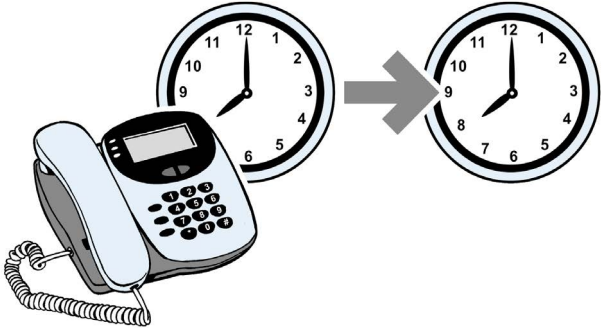
Braille

Tell us if you need information in Braille.

Email: cancerinformationteam@macmillan.org.uk

This booklet is about cancer.

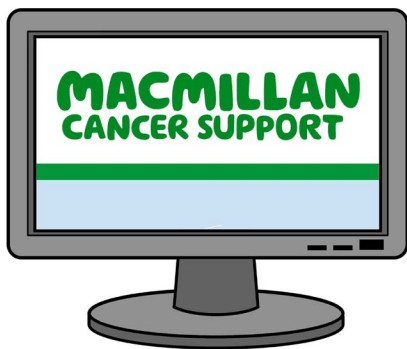
It is for anyone who has a learning disability or who finds easier words and pictures helpful. If you have more questions about cancer or would like to talk to us, call the Macmillan Support Line.



- Call us free on:
0808 808 00 00
7 days a week from 8am to 8pm.



- If you use a textphone, you can call the Macmillan Support Line using the Next Generation Text (NGT) service by dialling
18001 0808 808 00 00



- Or go to the website
macmillan.org.uk

This easy read booklet has been produced by Macmillan Cancer Support working with CHANGE.

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