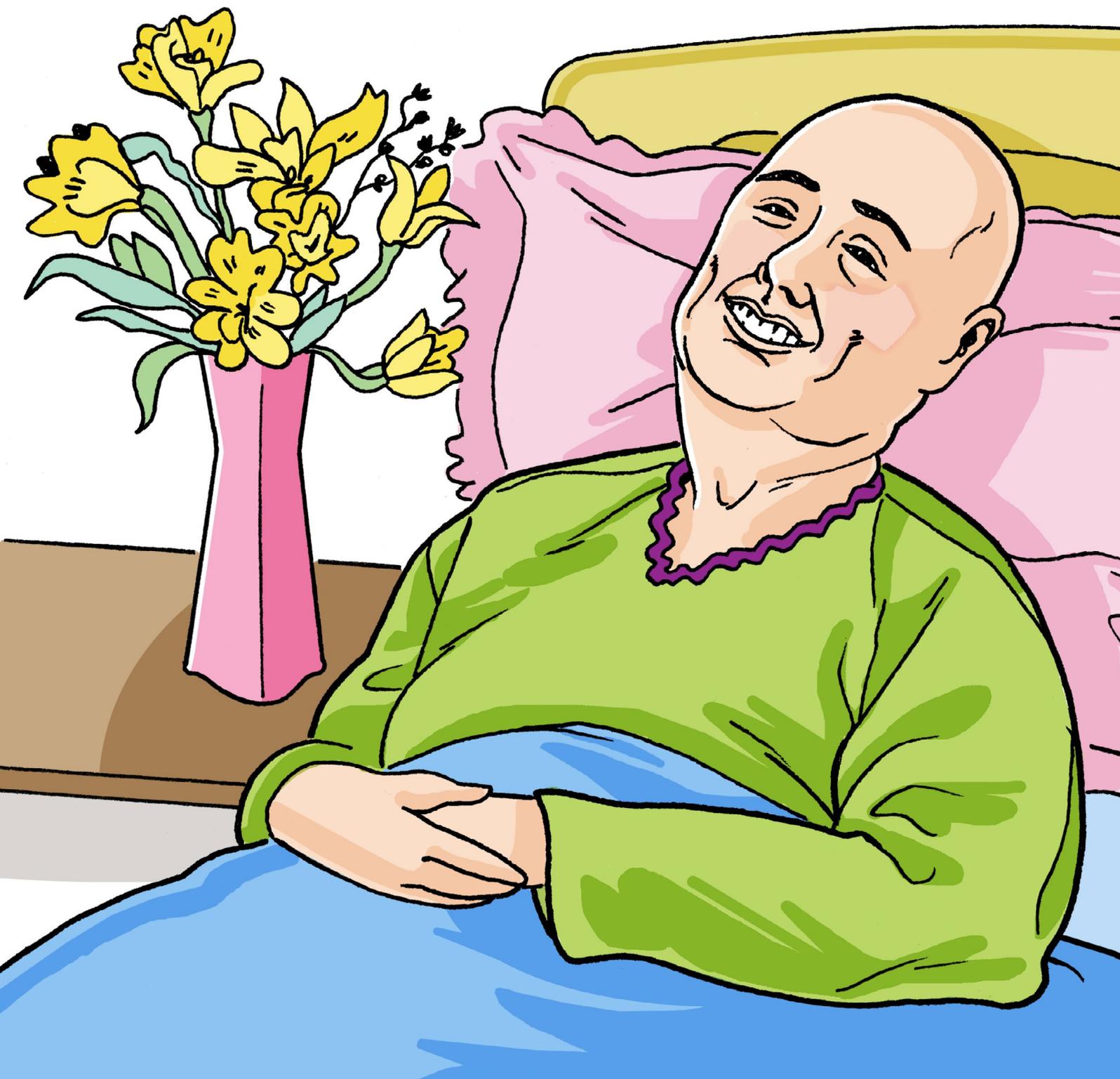


In partnership with

MACMILLAN
CANCER SUPPORT

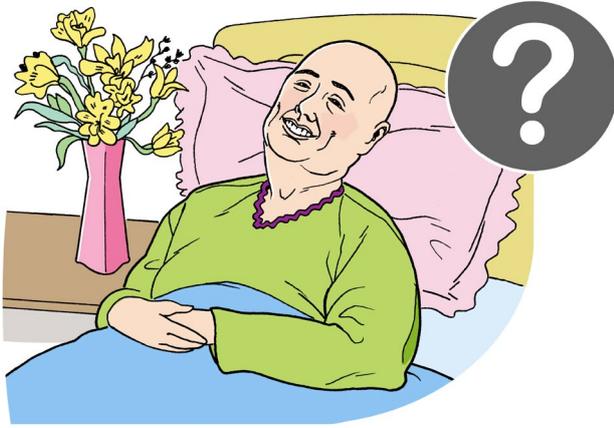
easy
read

Changes that can happen at the end of life





About this easy read booklet



This booklet is about the changes that can happen at the end of your life.



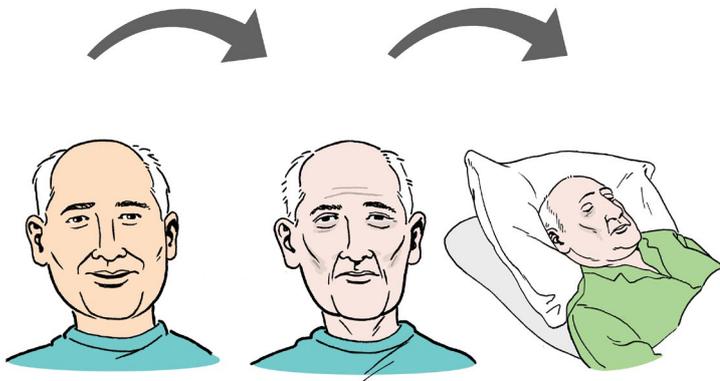
You can learn about what might happen at the end of your life.



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



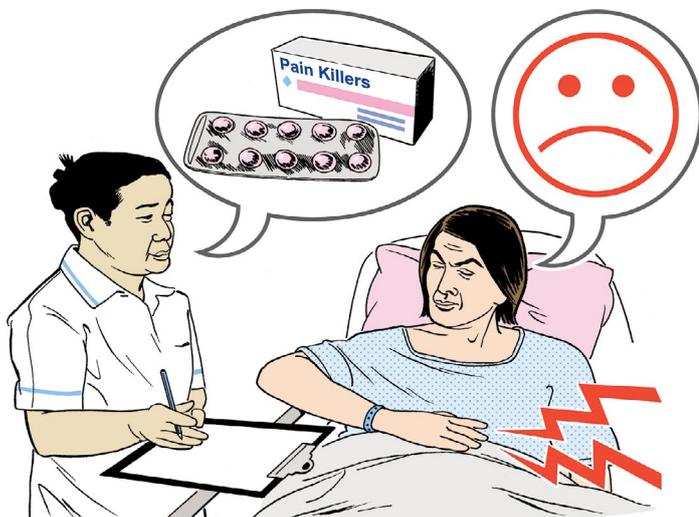
Changes that can happen at the end of life



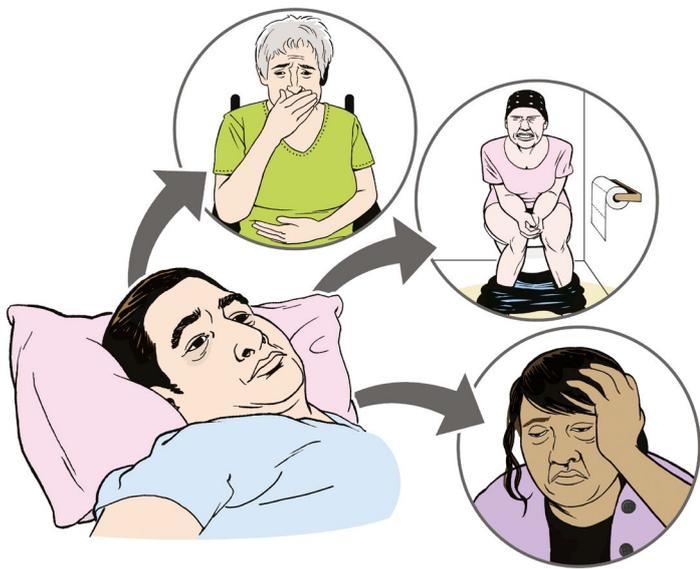
When someone has an illness that isn't going to get better, the illness becomes worse over time and causes changes in their body.



Doctors and nurses will try to make sure the person is as comfortable as possible during these changes. This is called **palliative care**.



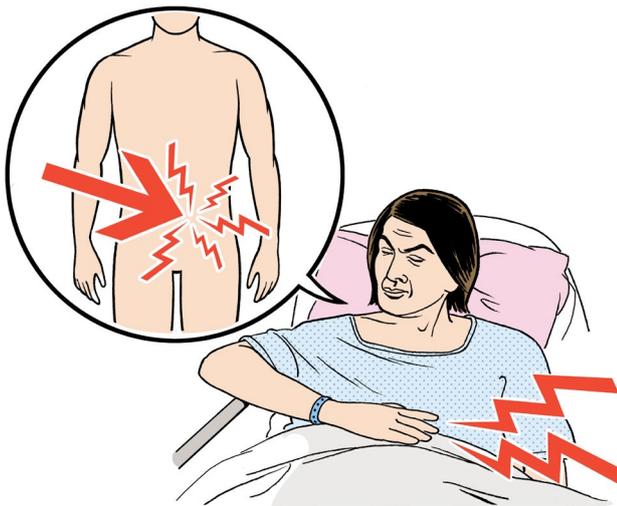
The doctors and nurses may give treatments, like medicines. These treatments will not cure the illness. But they can help with any problems the illness has caused.



Problems caused by the illness are called **symptoms**.



Symptoms that you may have



Pain

If you are in pain it is important to try to explain where the pain is and how bad it is.



Then the nurse can give you the best medicine for your pain.



There may be some side effects from strong pain medicines.

Some of these can be:



- **Drowsiness.** This is when you feel sleepy.



- **Sickness.** There are some medicines that can help stop this. Ask your doctor about this.



- **Constipation.** This is when you find it hard to poo. Your nurse or doctor will give you medicine to help.

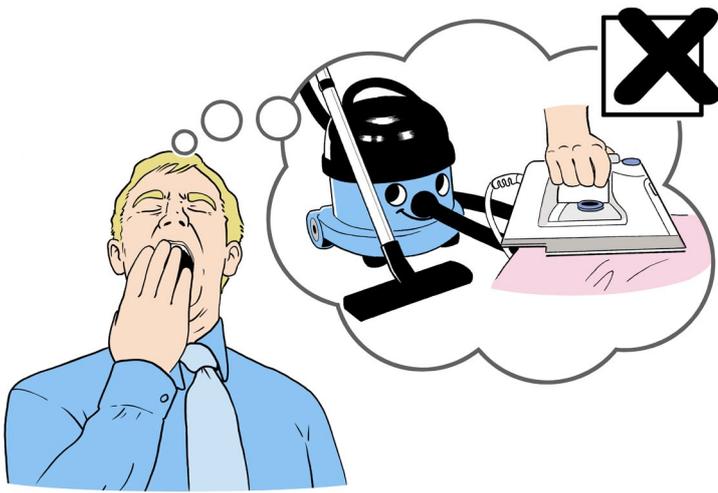


Tiredness

As people get more ill they lose energy and become tired and weak.



If you are feeling very tired you might find it hard to do all the things you used to do. It is important to only do as much as you feel like doing.



You may feel too tired for jobs like cooking and cleaning. You can ask people to help with these jobs.



Rest as much as you need to. You may feel like you want to sleep a lot even in the daytime.

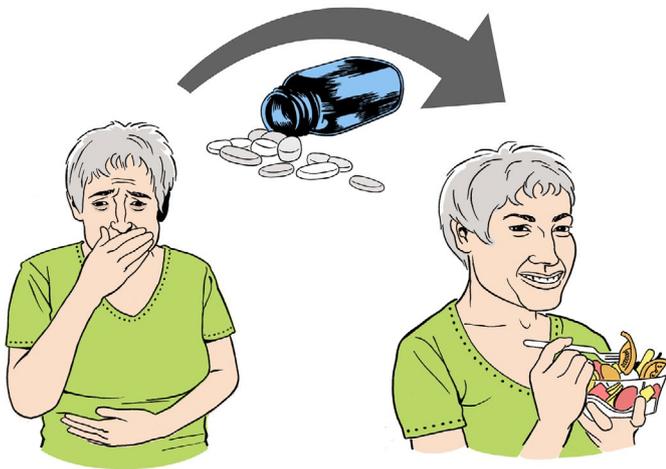


You may find there are times of the day when you feel less tired. You might want to use these times to do some of your favourite things.



Feeling sick

Your illness may be making you feel sick. Sometimes the medicines you are taking can make you feel sick.



If you are feeling sick or being sick, the doctor can give you some medicines to help.



Losing your appetite

Losing your appetite means you do not feel as hungry as you used to.



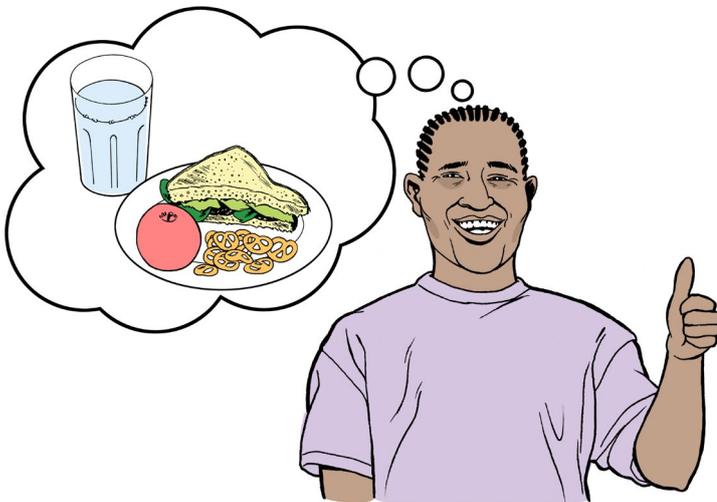
This might be because of your illness or because of the medicines you are taking.



It could be helpful to:



- eat when you want to



- only eat things you feel like eating



- eat small amounts or snacks



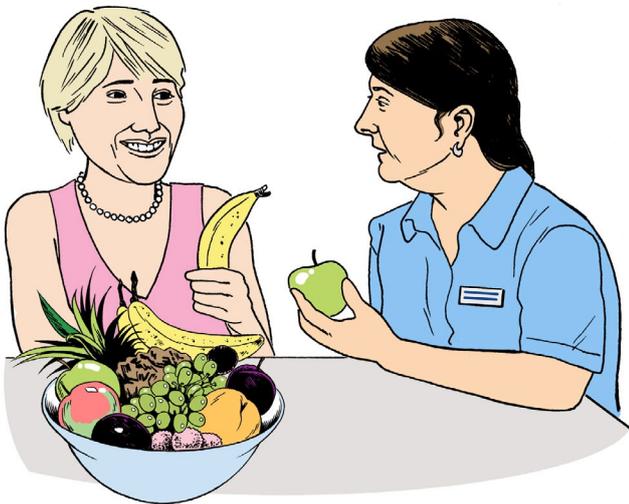
- have drinks or liquid meals that will give you energy



- if you have a dry mouth but do not feel like drinking then you can try sucking ice or ice lollies to keep your mouth wet. Pieces of fruit work too.



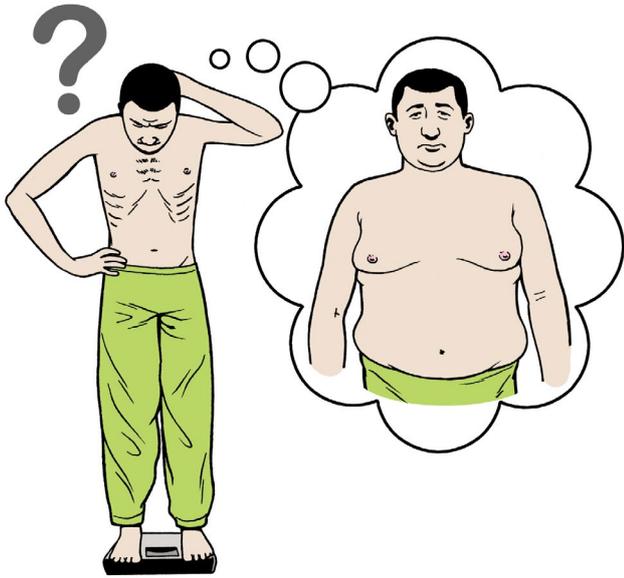
A **dietitian** is a person who knows about food and eating. They will help you find the best foods to eat.



They will also help if you have problems with eating and drinking. Someone called a **speech and language therapist** can help with this too.

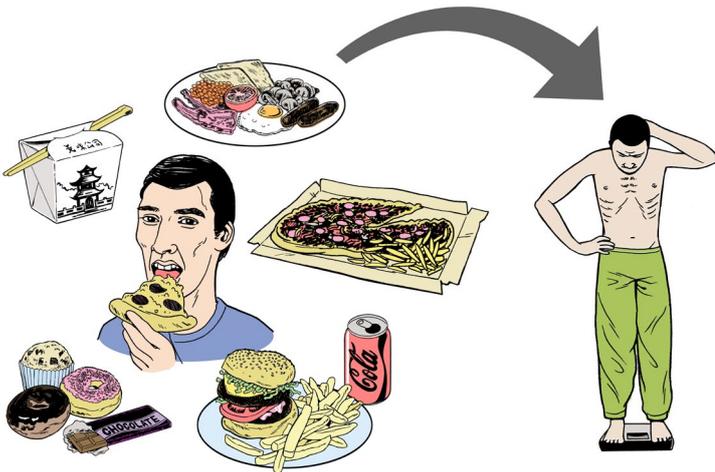


A **speech and language therapist** is a person who can help with any speech and communication problems. They can also help with chewing and swallowing problems.

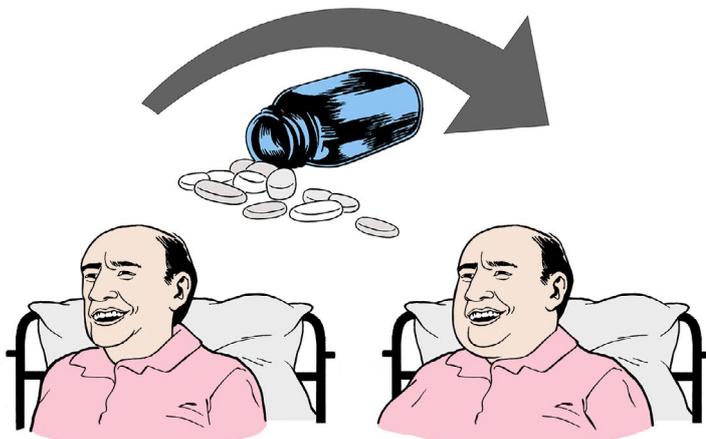


Changes in your weight

As you become more ill your body may lose weight and you can become thinner. This can be because of the cancer or because you are eating less.



Sometimes people who are eating a lot of food can still lose weight. This is because of their illness.



Some people put on weight because of their illness. Some medicines can also make you put on weight.

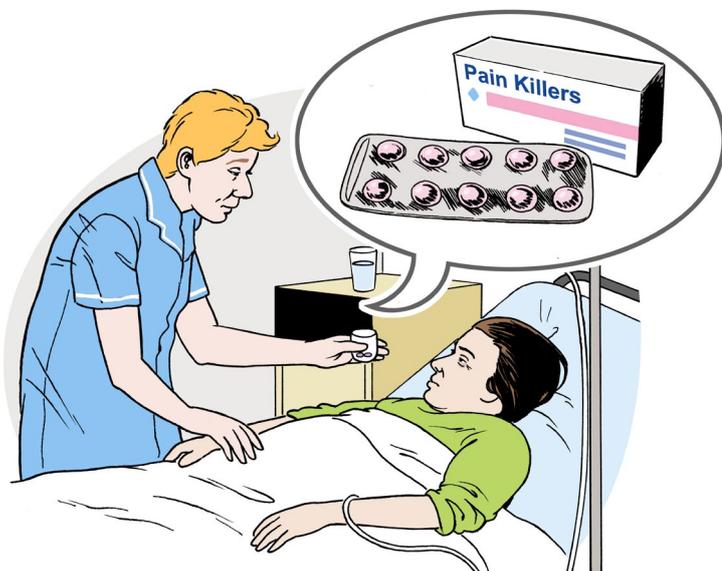


Constipation

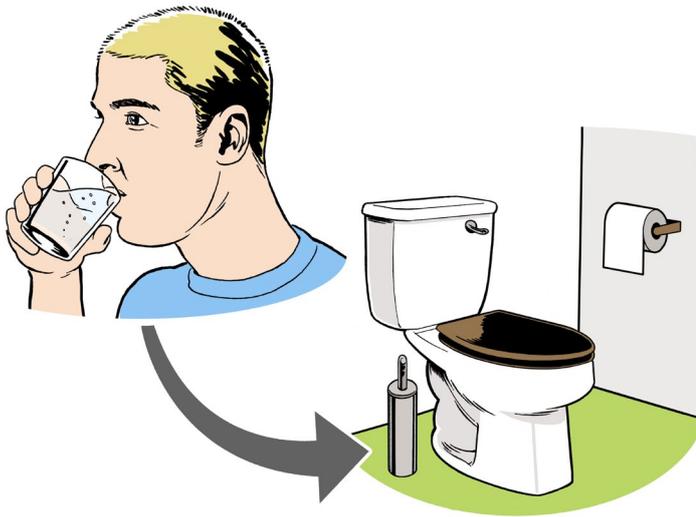
Constipation means you may find it hard to poo.



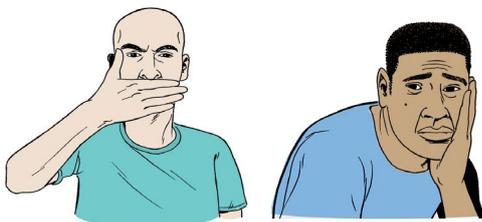
Constipation can become a problem as you become more ill. It can happen if you are not moving around as much anymore.



Or it can be caused by pain medicines.



You may also not be eating or drinking much. The doctor or nurse can give you medicines called **laxatives** to help you go to the toilet more easily.



Changes in how you feel

Becoming more ill can also affect how you feel.



You might feel that you are not interested in anything anymore, even things that used to be important to you.



You may not want to do anything at all because you feel so tired. You may not even want to talk.



This is OK. But if you are feeling very sad, try talking to someone you trust. This can help.



How Macmillan can help you

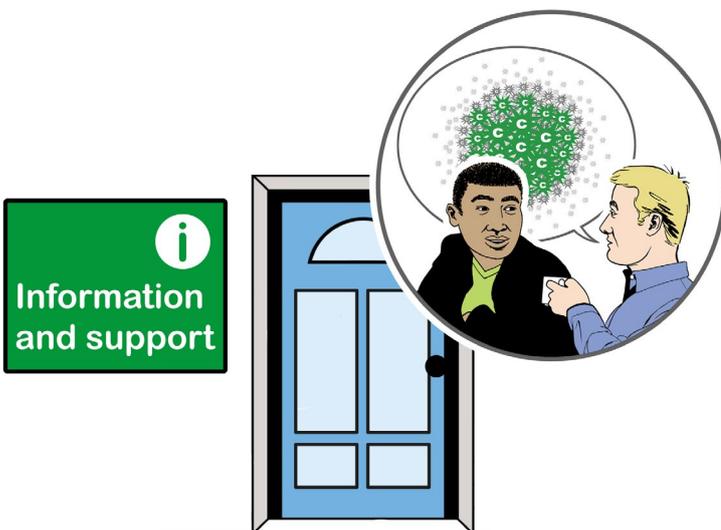


You can get support from:

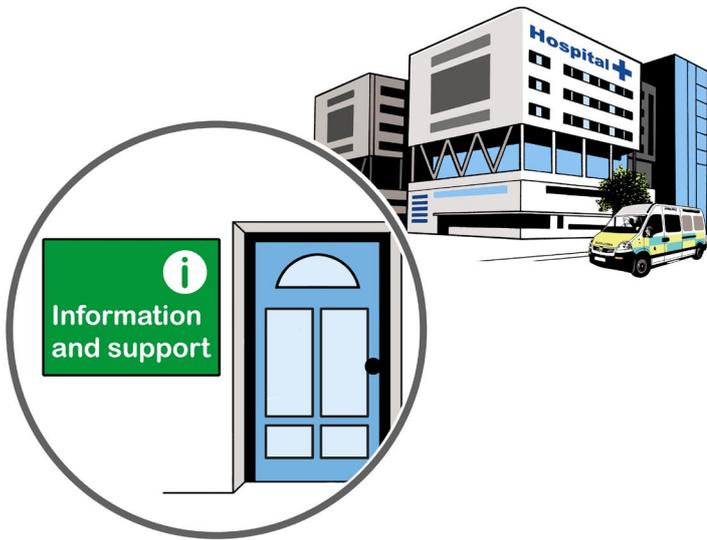
- The Macmillan Support Line. Call **0808 808 00 00** 7 days a week, 8am to 8pm.



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



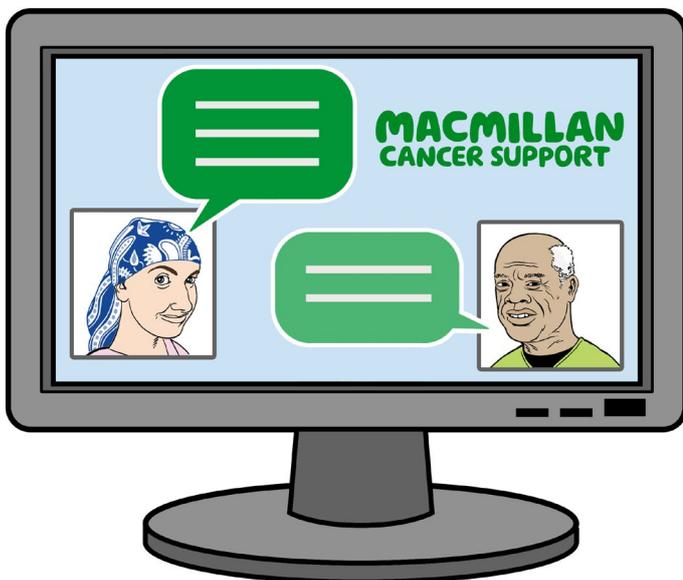
- Information centres. At an information centre, you can talk to a cancer support specialist and get written information.



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



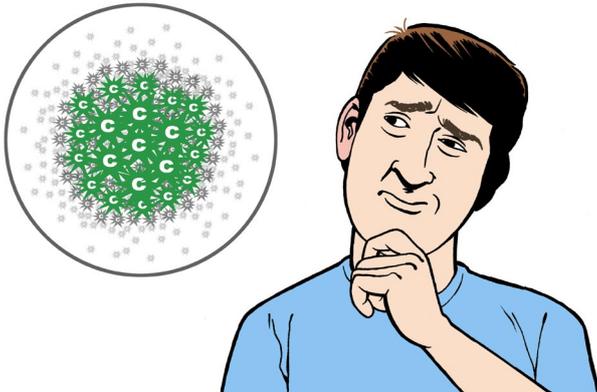
- Local support groups. Find a group near you at [macmillan.org.uk/supportgroups](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/supportgroups) or call us.



- 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](https://www.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



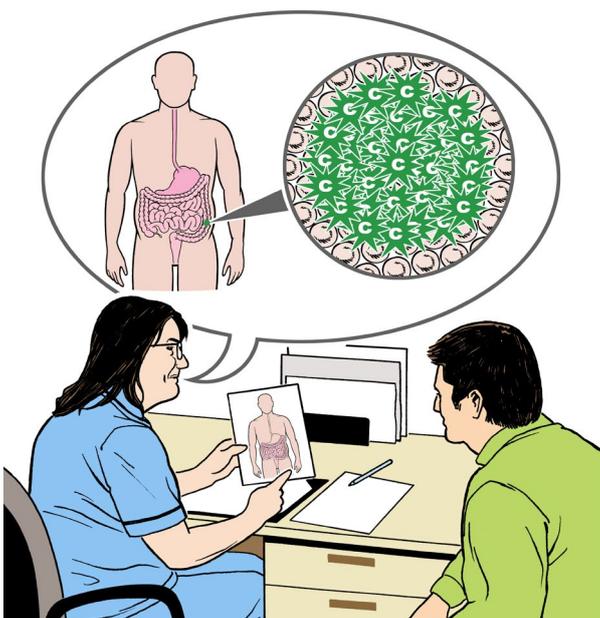
Living a healthy life

- 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**

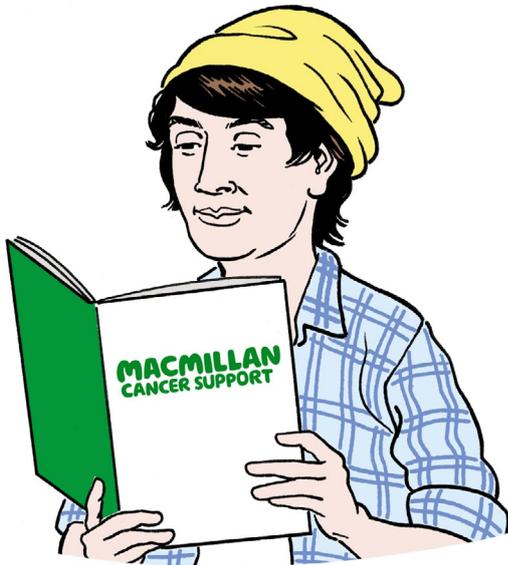


More information and resources



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



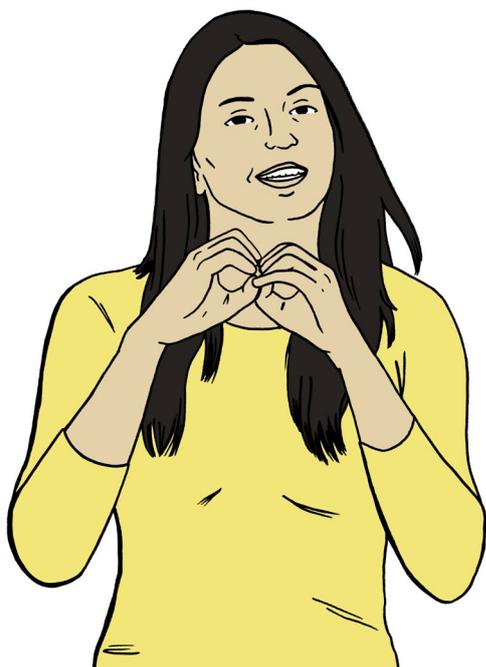
Videos

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)



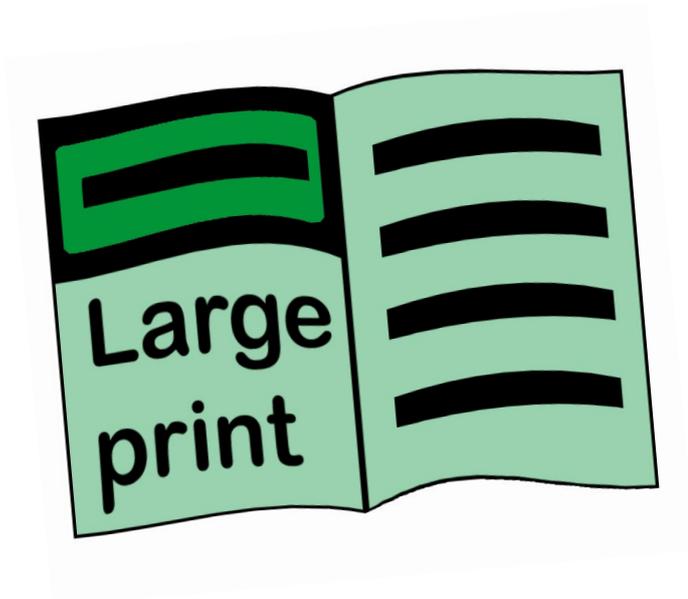
British Sign Language (BSL)

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



eBooks

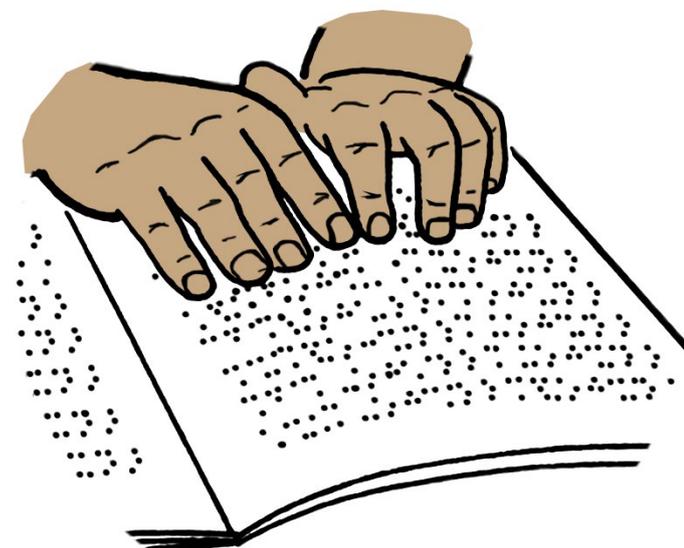
You can get eBooks about cancer from [be.macmillan.org.uk](https://www.be.macmillan.org.uk)



Large print

Tell us if you need information in large print.

Email: cancerinformationteam@macmillan.org.uk



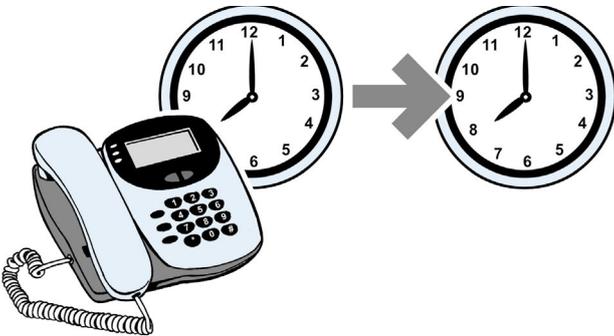
Braille

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.

MAC16303_ER_E04 Produced January 2021.

Next planned review January 2024.

© Macmillan Cancer Support. All illustrations © CHANGE.

Macmillan Cancer Support, registered charity in England and Wales [261017], Scotland [SC39907] and the Isle of Man [604].



In partnership with

**MACMILLAN
CANCER SUPPORT**