
Living with Lung Cancer - A Quick Guide



Contents

This is a brief summary of the information on 'Living with lung cancer' from CancerHelp UK. You will find more detailed information on the website.

In this information there are sections on

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

Coping with lung cancer

It can be very difficult coping 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 be children to consider.

Just try to remember that you do not 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. It is likely that 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.

The 'coping with cancer' section of CancerHelp UK contains lots of information you may find helpful. There are sections on your feelings, on telling people about your cancer, on getting help and helping yourself, sex and sexuality, and on practical issues like financial support, benefits and sick pay.

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 there may be an obvious cause. If you are 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

If you are very anxious, this will probably make you feel more breathless. If you feel panicky, try to slow your breathing. Concentrate on breathing in and out slowly. It may help to learn a relaxation technique. There are lots of books and tapes available on relaxation. You may be able to borrow some 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.

Making life easier

CancerHelp UK has practical ideas on how to make life easier for yourself. There are sections on planning ahead to make tasks easier, moving around, eating and drinking, and asking for help with your breathlessness.

What to ask your doctor about living with lung cancer

- Where can I get help dealing with my feelings?
- Do I have to pay for counselling?
- Will I be able to go back to work?
- Can I take up my usual sports, hobbies and activities again?
- How can I learn to cope with my breathlessness?
- Do you know of a breathlessness clinic I could go to?
- What practical help is available?
- Can I get any help with money?
- Can anyone help me with claiming benefits?

Lung cancer organisations

Cancer Research UK
 Main website: www.cancerresearchuk.org
 Patient information website:
<http://cancerhelp.cancerresearchuk.org>
 Cancer Information Nurses phone:
 0808 800 40 40

British Lung Foundation
 Helpline: 08458 50 50 20 (Mon-Fri 10am-6pm)
 Website: www.lunguk.org

Roy Castle Lung Cancer Foundation
 Helpline telephone number: 0800 358 7200 (office hours)
 Website: www.roycastle.org/



Notes

More information

For more information about lung cancer, visit our website
<http://cancerhelp.cancerresearchuk.org>

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 cancer trials in the UK. You can view or print the information in a larger size if you need to.

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 April 2011. 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. © Cancer Research UK 2011. Cancer Research UK is a registered charity in England and Wales (1089464) and in Scotland (SC041666).