

# Living with Unknown Primary Cancer - A Quick Guide



## Contents

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

In this information there are sections on

- Coping with unknown primary cancer
- Questions for your doctor
- Cancer organisations

## Coping with unknown primary cancer

It can be very difficult coping with a diagnosis of cancer, both practically and emotionally. You are likely to be feeling very upset and confused at first.

It may be particularly difficult to cope with a diagnosis of unknown primary tumour. Some people say they feel they are fighting an invisible enemy. You also have to come to terms with the fact that your cancer is very unlikely to be cured. No one can say how long your treatment will keep it under control. That in itself can be very hard to deal with. Your doctor will be able to tell you more as time goes on.

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 that you have cancer? And how do you find the words? There may be children to consider.

The 'coping with cancer' section of CancerHelp UK contains lots of information you may find helpful. There is information on

- Your feelings
- Talking to people: who and what to tell, including talking to children
- How you can help yourself, and who else can help you
- Sex and sexuality
- Financial matters

## What to ask your doctor about living with unknown primary cancer

- How will my treatment affect me?
- Will I be able to go back to work?
- Is there anything I shouldn't eat?
- Where can I get help with claiming benefits and grants?
- What practical help is available?
- Why did this happen to me?
- Are my children at risk of getting cancer?



- Where can I get help dealing with my feelings?
- Can you refer me for counselling?
- Do I have to pay for counselling?
- Could you refer me to a specialist nurse?

## Cancer organisations

Cancer Research UK  
 Main website: [www.cancerresearchuk.org](http://www.cancerresearchuk.org)  
 Patient information website:  
<http://cancerhelp.cancerresearchuk.org>  
 Cancer Information Nurses phone: 020  
 7061 8355

Cancer of Unknown Primary (CUP)  
 Foundation – Jo's friends  
 Website: <http://www.cupfoundjo.org>

## More information

For more information about unknown primary 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 May 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).