

Radiotherapy

Diagnosis and Treatment



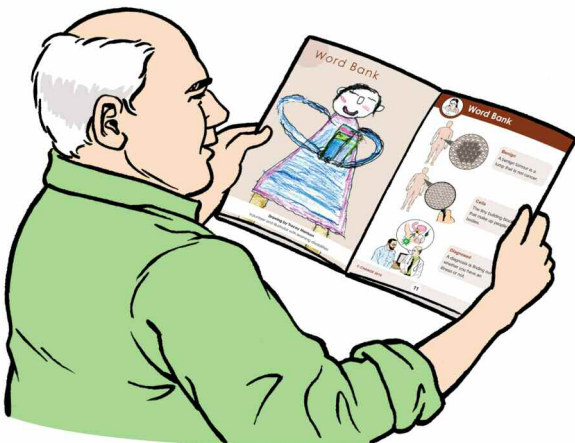
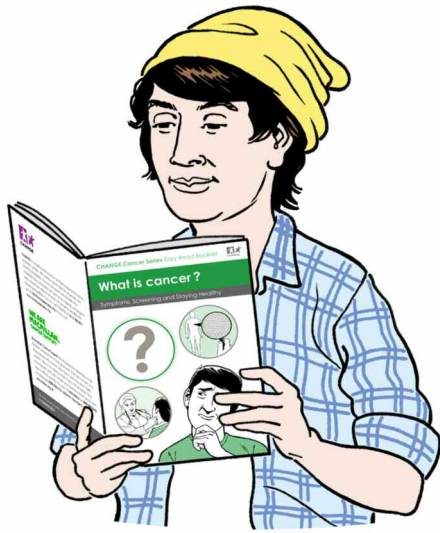
Introduction

This booklet uses easy words and pictures to help you get information about cancer.

You might want someone to help you look at the booklet so you can talk about it.

There is a Word Bank at the back of the booklet to help with hard words. Any words in **bold** you can find in the Word Bank.

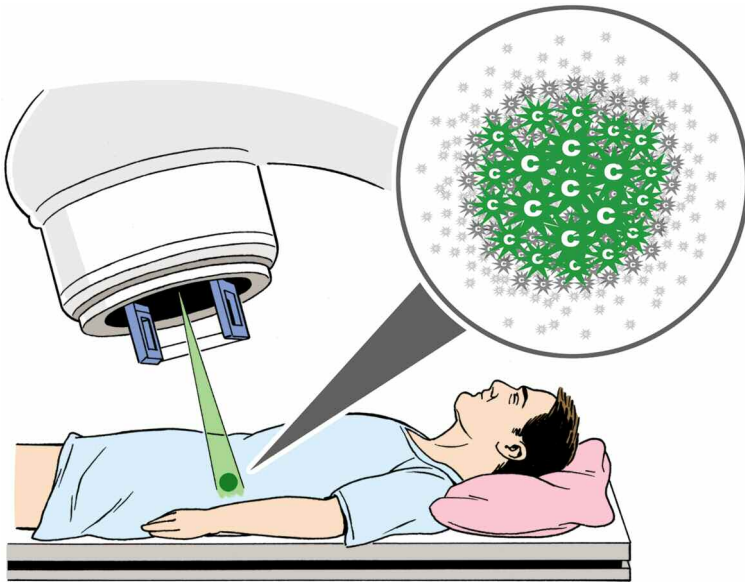
This booklet can help you learn about cancer. But this is not the same as talking to your doctor. If you are worried about your health, you should talk to a doctor or nurse.



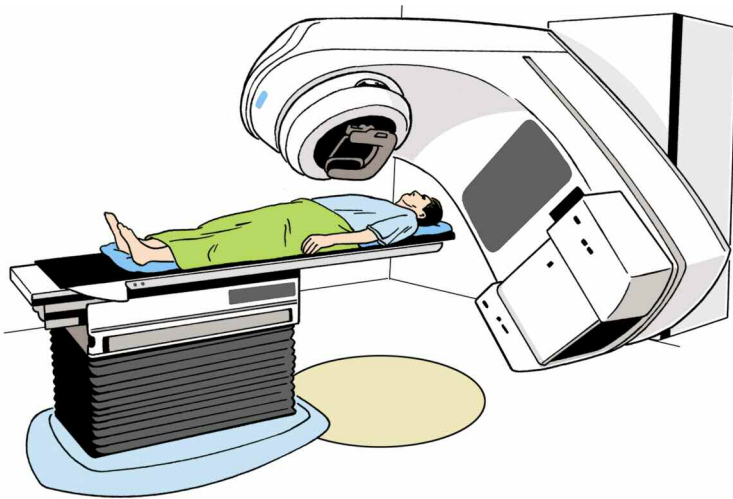


Radiotherapy

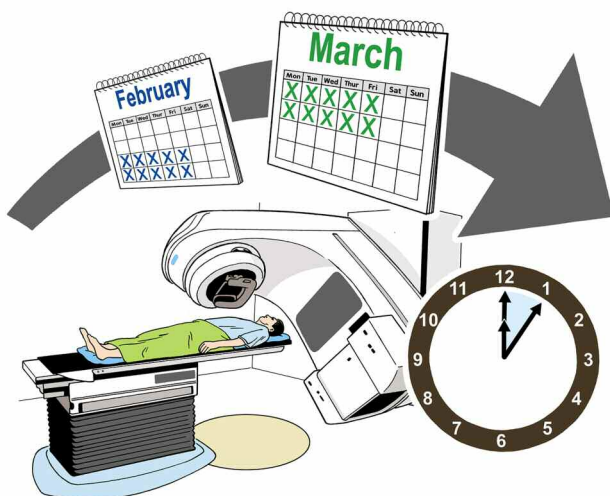
What is radiotherapy?



Radiotherapy uses strong **x-rays** to kill cancer **cells**. It can be used on many types of cancer.



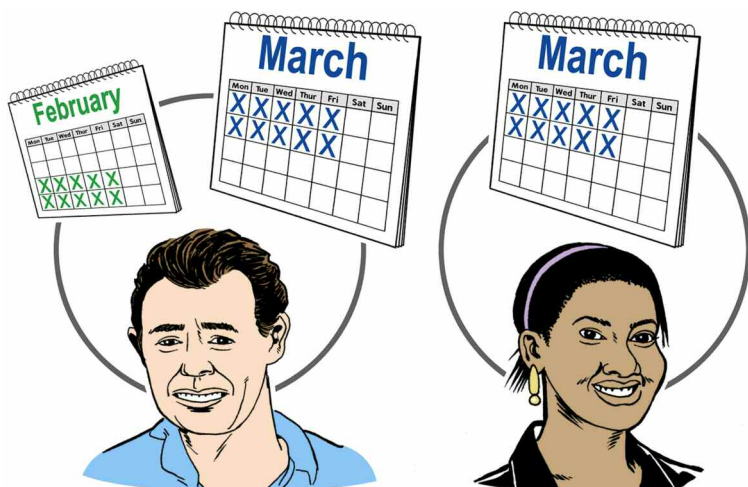
Radiotherapy is given by a machine. This sends x-rays to the part of your body where the cancer has been found.



You will usually have a short treatment every day.

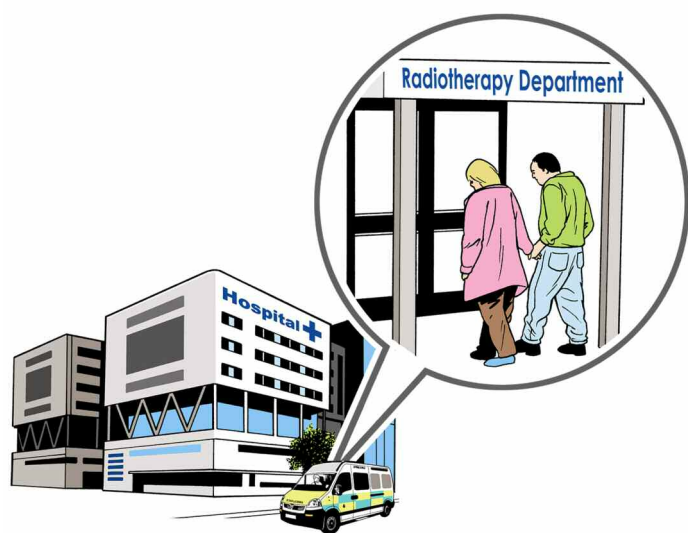


Radiotherapy



The number of treatments you have will depend on what kind of cancer you have. Every person will be different.

Radiotherapy - what happens



You will have your treatment in the radiotherapy department of the hospital. It will be done by a person called a **radiographer**.



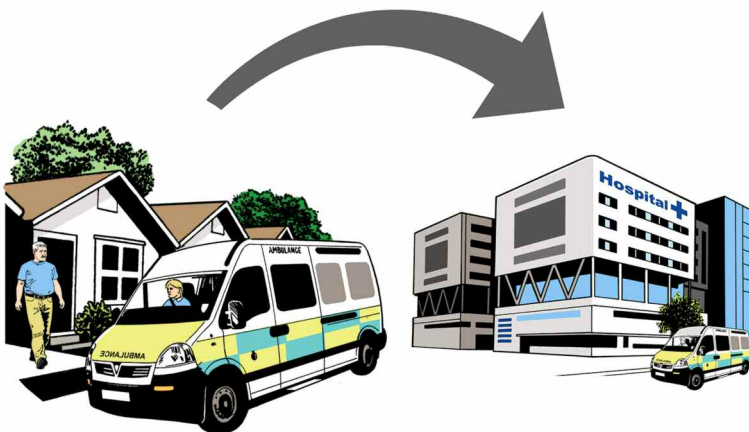
It is very important to go to every treatment. If you miss one, it may not work as well.



Radiotherapy



If you have a long way to travel each day for your treatment, then ask your supporter if they can drive you to the hospital.



Some hospitals provide transport. Charities and support groups sometimes do this too.



Ask the staff in the radiotherapy department about this.



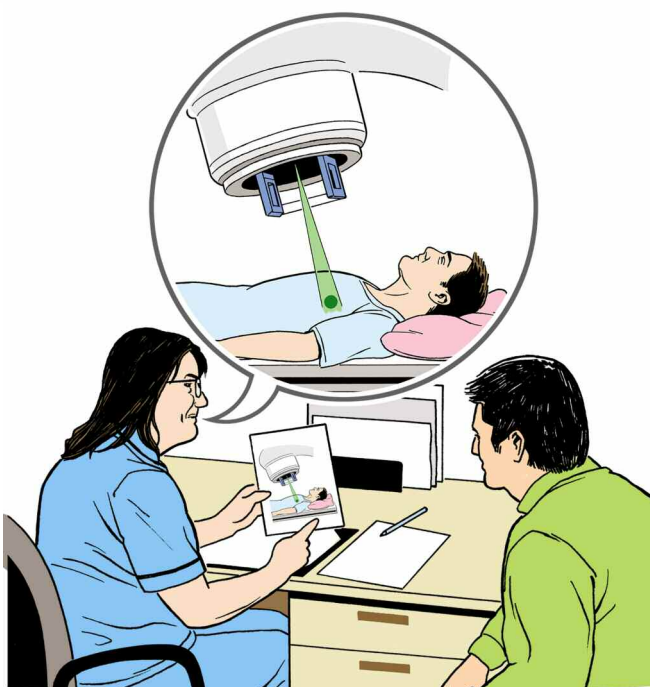
Radiotherapy



Radiotherapy can make you feel very tired. It could help to take your supporter when you come for treatments.



Before you start your treatment you will be asked to give your **consent**. This means you have agreed to have the treatment.



Before your first treatment, the radiographer will tell you what you will see and hear during the treatment.



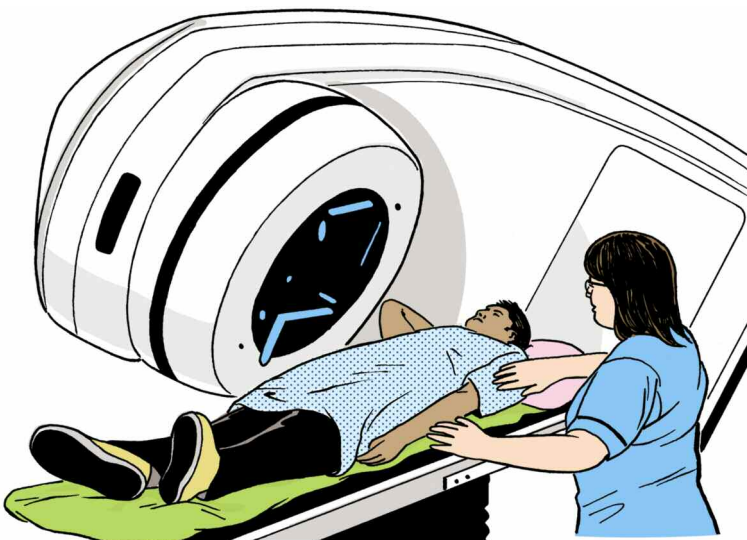
Radiotherapy



It's good to ask any questions and talk about anything that is worrying you.



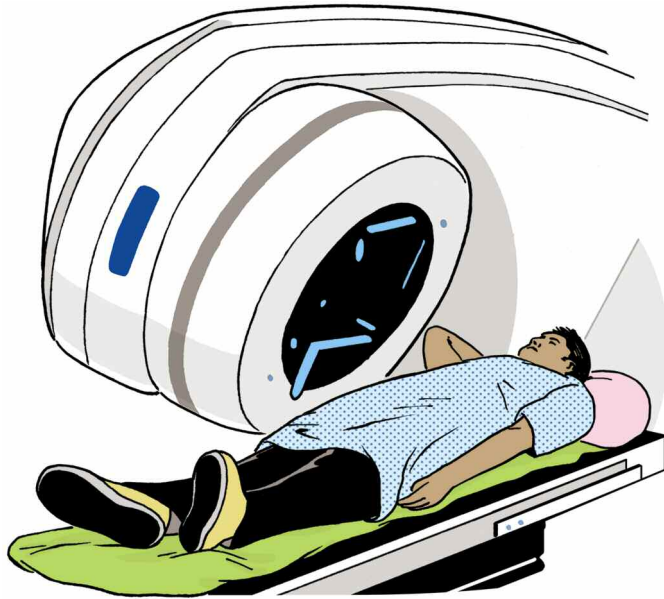
You may be able to go and see the radiotherapy department before your treatment, so that you know what will happen.



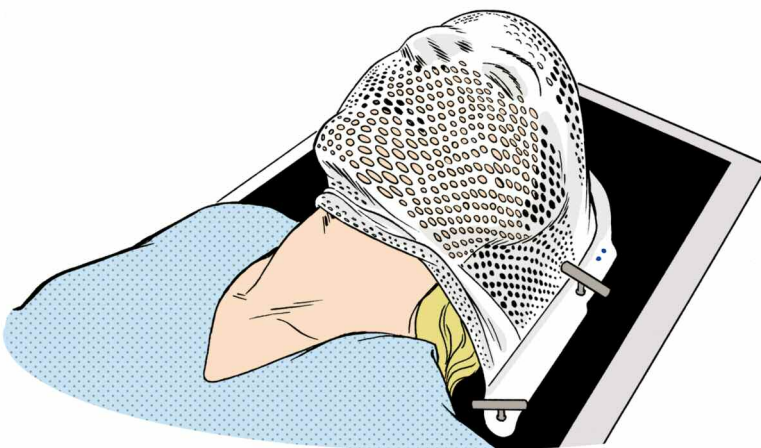
When you come for your treatment, the radiographer will help you to lie down in the right position.



Radiotherapy



You will then have to keep very still while the radiotherapy is happening.



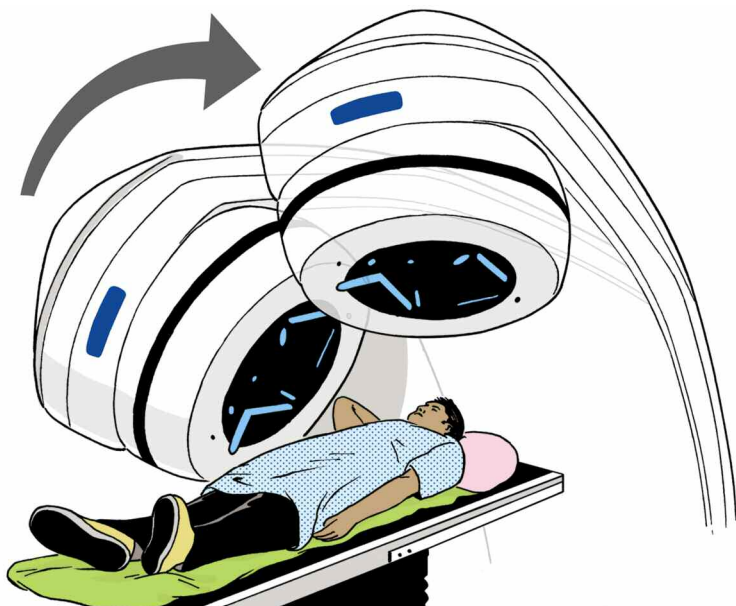
If you are having radiotherapy on your head, you might have to wear a special mask on your face to help you keep still.



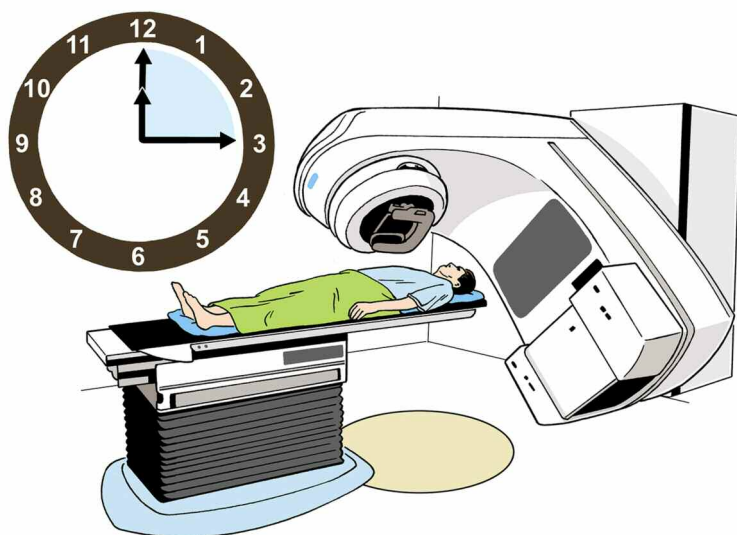
The radiographer will then have to leave the room, so they are protected from the strong x-rays. But don't worry, they can still see and hear you and talk with you.



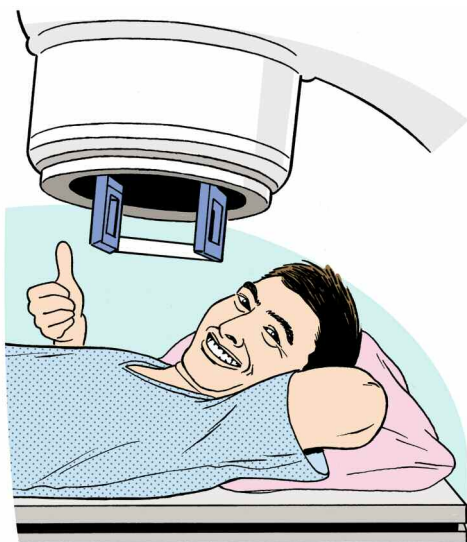
Radiotherapy



The radiotherapy machine might have to move about to give you the treatment from different directions.



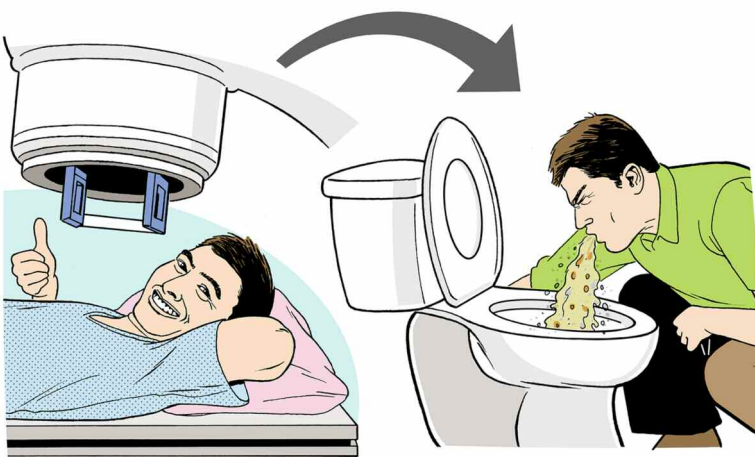
Try not to worry about this or the noise the machine makes. The whole treatment usually only takes 10 to 15 minutes.



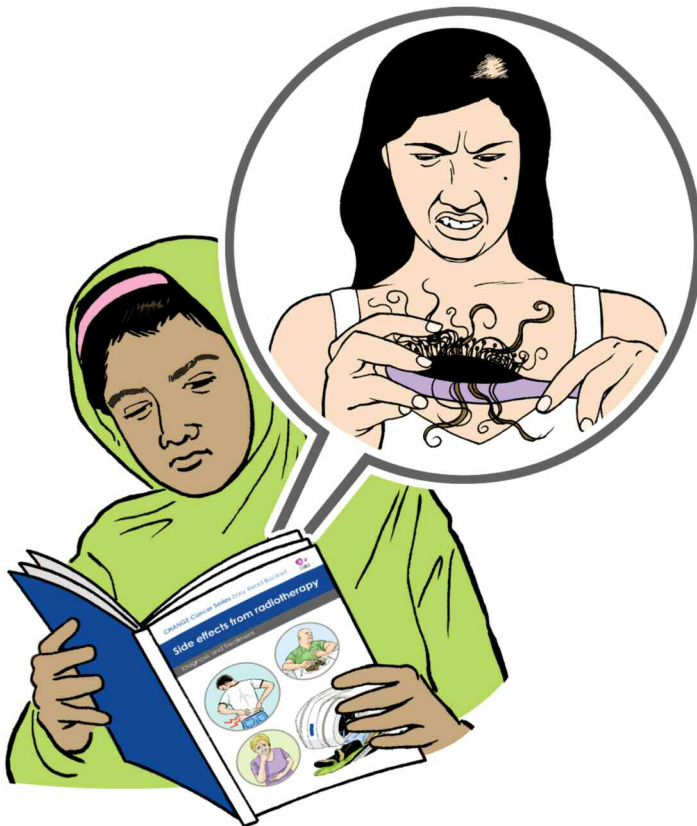
The treatment does not hurt.



Radiotherapy



But it can cause some **side effects**. These are things that happen because of the treatment, like feeling tired or sick.



The side effects you have will depend on the part of your body being treated. There is more information about this in the 'Side effects from radiotherapy' booklet.

Word Bank

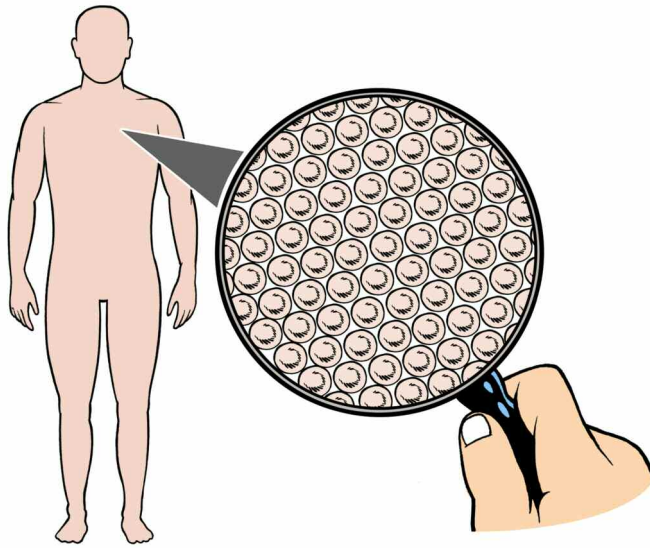


Drawing by Tracey Harrison

Volunteer and Illustrator with learning disabilities



Word Bank



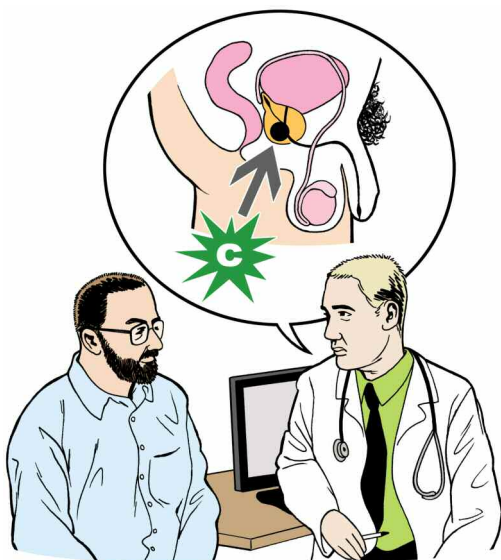
Cells

The tiny building blocks that make up people's bodies.



Consent

This means you understand why you need treatment and say that it is OK to have it. You can also decide that you don't want to have treatment.

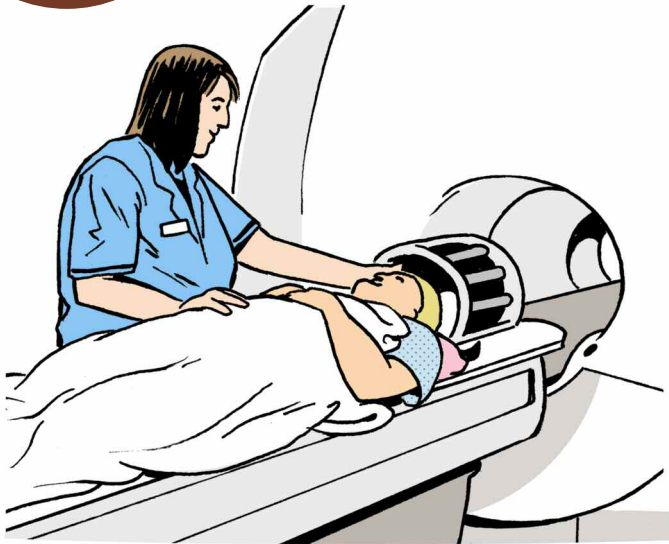


Diagnosis

A diagnosis is finding out whether you have an illness or not.

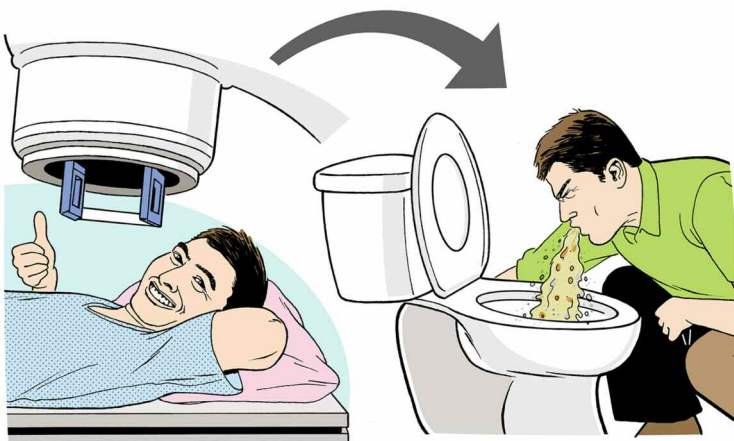


Word Bank



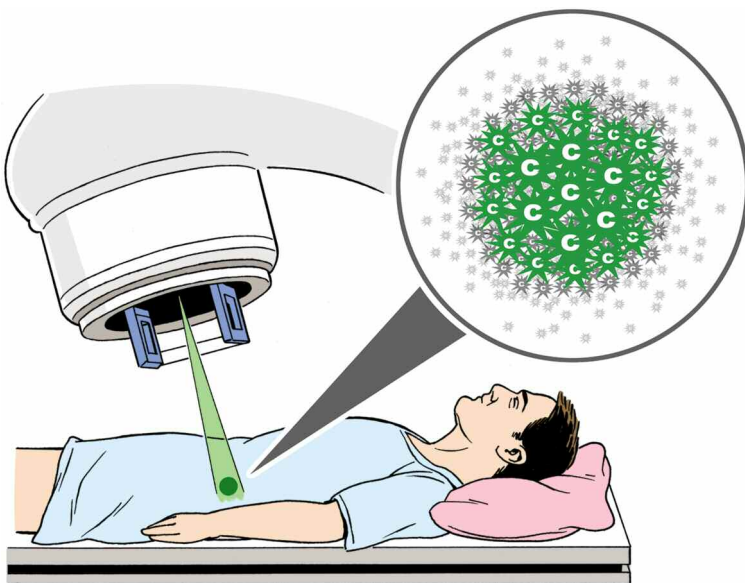
Radiographer

A person who takes scans and x-rays of people's bodies. They can also give people radiotherapy treatment.



Side effects

These are things that happen because of your treatment, such as feeling tired or sick.



X-rays

X-rays are powerful rays or beams that can be used to treat cancer.



Notes

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Useful contacts



Drawing by Tracey Harrison

Volunteer and Illustrator with learning disabilities



Useful contacts

Helpful organisations

Cancer Research UK

A charity that is researching treatments for cancer. Its website has lots of information about cancer.

Phone: 0808 800 4040

Web: www.cancerresearchuk.org



Macmillan Cancer Support

A charity that helps people who have cancer. They give practical, medical and financial support. They try to make cancer care in the UK better.

Phone: 0808 808 00 00

Web: www.macmillan.org.uk

NHS Contacts

These contacts give you information about your health and health services:

England and Scotland **Phone:** 111

Wales **Phone:** 0845 46 47

Northern Ireland **Web:** www.hscni.net

Paul's Cancer Support Centre

Gives help, information and complementary therapies to people with cancer.

Phone: 0207 924 3924

Web: www.paulscancersupportcentre.org.uk



Useful contacts

RESPOND

Gives therapy to people with learning disabilities after trauma or abuse. They also offer training and support to carers.

Phone: 0808 808 07 00

Web: www.respond.org.uk

Written and audio material

Books Beyond Words

A series of picture books for people with learning disabilities. The books talk about cancer, health and bereavement.

Web: www.booksbeyondwords.co.uk

Phone: 020 8877 9799

Email: admin@booksbeyondwords.co.uk

FAIR Multimedia

Publishes a range of health leaflets, audio discs and CDs for people with learning disabilities. This includes a series on cancer.

Email: fair@fairadvice.org.uk

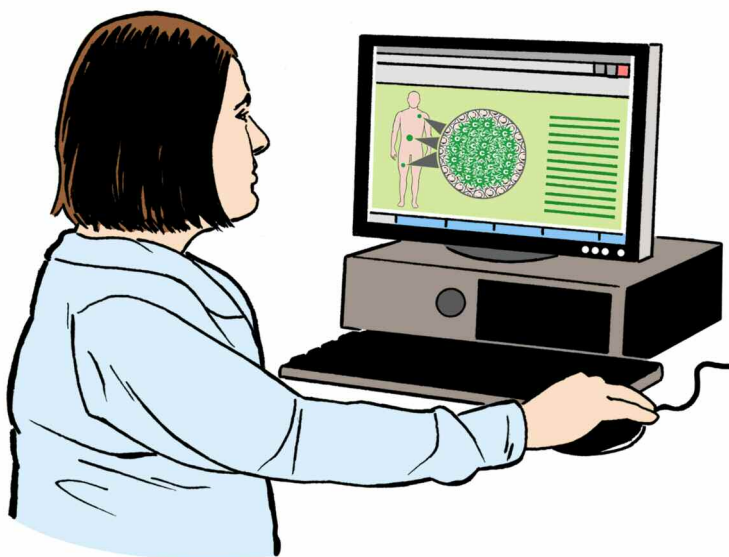
Phone: 0131 662 1962

Web: www.fairadvice.org.uk/health-publications.php



Useful contacts

Online help



www.easyhealth.org.uk

Has lots of online health information that is easy to understand.

www.macmillan.org.uk

Has lots of information about cancer and where to get help. You can also talk to other people with cancer in the online community.

Videos and DVDs

Leeds Animation Workshop

Has animated films on social issues for people with learning disabilities. There is one called 'Getting Better' about going to the doctor and the health clinic.

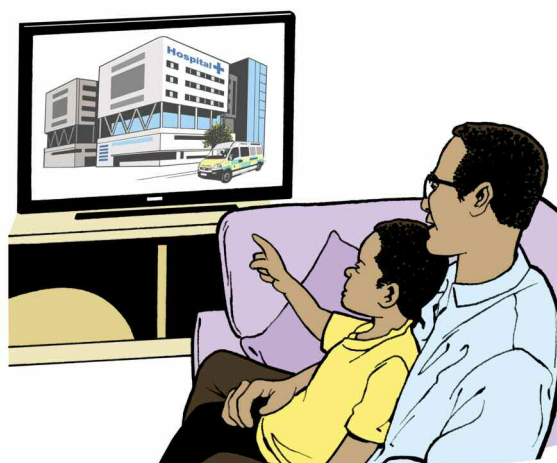
Phone: 0113 248 4997

Web: www.leedsanimation.org.uk/index.html

Speak Up Self Advocacy

Has DVDs and booklets for people with learning disabilities about health and illness.

Web: www.speakup.org.uk





CHANGE is a leading national Human Rights organisation led by disabled people. We work for equal rights for all people with learning disabilities. The cancer books and booklets that CHANGE have produced are part of an ongoing campaign to raise awareness about the issues of cancer for people with learning disabilities. You can call CHANGE on **0113 242 6619**, email **info@changepeople.org** or find us at **www.changepeople.org**

WE ARE MACMILLAN. CANCER SUPPORT

Macmillan Cancer Support has reviewed the information in this booklet and paid for it to be produced. They are a charity who help people with cancer. They have nurses and other health workers. They try to make cancer care in the UK better. They have experts who can answer your questions about cancer and how it affects your life. You can call **Macmillan** on **0808 808 00 00** or textphone **0808 808 0121 (Mon–Fri, 9am–8pm)**. Or go to **macmillan.org.uk**

This easy read booklet was produced by CHANGE

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