

“ I know someone with cancer ”

VISITING HOSPITAL

All about the hospital and types of treatment



ABOUT THIS BOOKLET

'Visiting hospital' has been produced by Bupa. It has been written with the advice of cancer specialists, healthcare professionals and families affected by cancer.

We hope you find it useful.

We want to say a big thanks to all the kids and families who've shared their stories with us for this booklet.



Check out these other booklets in the "I know someone with cancer" series:



You can also find electronic versions of these booklets online at bupa.co.uk/iknowsomeonewithcancer

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Hi

We've put this booklet together for kids who know someone who is having treatment for cancer, or who is about to start treatment.

Inside you'll find out all about what happens in hospitals, and meet some of the doctors and nurses who help people with cancer to get better.

Hey. Jake here. Hospitals are good places because they can make people better. They do smell a bit weird though!



We'll also explain the different types of treatment and hear from other kids who know someone with cancer.

We hope you find it useful. Take a look inside...



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ASK DOC



Doctor Luke James answers some questions you might have if the person you know needs to visit the hospital.

The person you know might have had to go to hospital already, or they might have an appointment to go there soon.

Q Why do they need to go to hospital?

A When people become poorly, they sometimes need to go into hospital to be looked after. Hospitals have special equipment and medicines that doctors use to help someone who has cancer get better.

Q How long will they have to be there for?

A This depends on the treatment the person with cancer is having. Sometimes they will visit hospital for a short time during the day for tests or treatment. Other times they will be in longer, such as overnight or for a couple of days. This sometimes happens when they have an **operation**, but you'll be told about it if this is going to happen.

Q Can I visit them?

A Hospitals will often let you visit friends and family at special times of the day. Sometimes the person you are visiting will have their own room or will be on a ward with lots of other people who are having treatment as well.



Q What will I do when I visit?

A You'll be able to chat to them about what you've been doing recently. You might want to take along any schoolwork you're proud of to show them. If they fancy going for a wander, you could both go for a drink at the café or look around the hospital shops.

Take a book or a game so you don't get bored...

Look up the words in **bold** on p15

...like when adults are talking too much!

Q What if I don't want to visit?

A If you don't want to visit hospital, that's OK. Perhaps you'd like to call them or send a card. If they don't have their mobile phone with them, there's always a telephone number at the hospital you can contact them on, just ask them which number is best to use.



When I visited my uncle in hospital I got him some food. It made me feel better doing that. We chatted about school and TV. It was friendly and looked good there. I had fun. Don't be frightened about going.



Q Who will look after me at home?

A Don't worry you won't be left to look after yourself. If the person staying in hospital usually takes care of you, they'll try to arrange for someone else to help out while they're away.

Ask an adult

Here are some things you might want to ask an adult in your family:

- * Will the person going to hospital be staying overnight?
- * How long will they be there?
- * Who will cook dinner at home?
- * Who will give me lifts?

ChildLine You can talk to ChildLine online or by phone on 0800 1111 whenever you need to. Whatever your worry, it's better out than in.



www.childline.org.uk

ChildLine is a service provided by the NSPCC. Registered charity numbers 216401 and SC037717.

Use this space to jot down the answers to these questions or write any other questions you may have.

Don't worry if you can't think of any questions right now!



10 TIPS for hospital visits

Ideas for things to take and do when you go along.

1 **Special delivery**
Fill a card full of messages from friends and family and deliver it on your visit.

2 **Show off!**
Take a piece of school work or art that you're proud of and tell them all about it.

3 **Play 'Heads, bodies, legs!'**
You need a piece of paper and a pen for every player.

* Each draw a head at the top, then fold the paper down to cover up your picture.

* Swap paper and draw a neck and body, then fold again.

* Switch sheets again to draw legs and feet. Unfold to reveal your crazy creation.

4 **Shopping trip**
Ask if you can help by fetching the person something from the hospital shop or drinks machine.

What do you get if you sit under a cow?

A pat on the head!



5 **LOLz!**
Before you go, write down a few funny jokes to tell them!

6 **Photo fun**
Show them pics on your camera of what you've been up to, or take some photos to look at.

7 **Handy!**
People having treatment can catch bugs more easily - pack some anti-bacterial hand gel and use it in hospital so you don't spread any germs.

8 **Make it cosy**
Surprise them with a framed photo or souvenir from home. Check that it's OK to take!

9 **Brain games**
Take along an activity or puzzle book so you don't get bored.



10 **Take yourself!**
You don't have to take anything else if you don't want to. The person in hospital will be happy to see YOU!

Make a HOSPITAL GIFT BOX

Being in bed all day can be boring! Here's something to cheer up the person in hospital.

1 Find a clean shoebox or another type of box with a lid. Decorate it with wrapping paper, stickers or pen doodles.

2 Fill the box full of fun and useful things that the person you know would like.



Ask an adult if it's OK to take all the things you've picked!

Here are some ideas!

- * Carton of juice
- * iPad (load it with songs and audio books!)
- * Family photos
- * Face wipes and tissues
- * Magazine or puzzle book
- * Mints or boiled sweets
- * Cards and games

“When my mum was in bed, we made a scrapbook of things to do together when she was feeling better. Now we're stickering each thing as we do it!”



TYPES OF TREATMENT

The kind of treatment someone has all depends on their type of cancer. Here are the three main ones.

The doctors will figure out which is best.



People with cancer may have more than one type of treatment.



Radiotherapy

This is when powerful **X-rays** are used to destroy cancer. A special machine aims the X-rays at the exact place where the cancer is.

Radiotherapy may be used before surgery to shrink a **tumour** so the tumour is easier to take out. It is often used after surgery to make super sure that the cancer has been destroyed.

Each session of radiotherapy usually **only** takes a few minutes, but the **patient** will probably have to have it on every weekday for a few weeks.

After radiotherapy, the skin where the X-rays go in might get itchy or sore and look a bit sunburnt. The person you know may also feel tired. These **side effects** should stop before too long.

Look up the words in **bold** on p15

There are more than 200 different types of cancer so all of these will be treated a bit differently.

Surgery

This is when a doctor called a surgeon very carefully removes a cancerous **tumour** from the body.

How long the surgery takes will depend on the **operation**, but the person will need to stay in hospital for a while afterwards so doctors can keep an eye on them.

After surgery there will be a **scar**. It may be red and sore at first, but it will heal eventually.

Chemotherapy

Chemotherapy (*key-mo-therapy*) is a mixture of anti-cancer **drugs**. It may be put straight into the person's blood or given as tablets.

Because chemotherapy is strong it is usually given a bit at a time over a few months. Most people are given some of their medicine at the hospital on one or more days during each month. They may also be given some tablets to take at home.

Chemotherapy may make a person feel tired or sick for a while, even though it is making them better. Some types of chemotherapy can make the person's hair fall out too.

Most of these side effects gradually go away once the treatment is over – and their hair will grow back.



Sometimes, people can have all their chemotherapy at home. A nurse will come to the house to give them the medicine.



Chemotherapy is sometimes called chemo for short.

When my mum had chemo she got very tired and went to bed a lot. She was in the house but you weren't supposed to disturb her – so she was there but she wasn't. It was difficult at first but I got used to it – even though my dad couldn't plait my hair properly!



WHO'S WHO?

When someone with cancer goes to hospital for treatment they will be looked after by a team of people. Here are some of them.

Consultant

This is a senior doctor who leads the team looking after the person you know.

“As a consultant, my job is to look at test results and figure out the best way to make someone better. I work with a team of experts to do this.”



There are lots of types of doctors, and they're all called different things!

Oncologist

Another name for a cancer specialist. Oncologists (*on-kol-oh-jists*) are specially trained in different types of cancer and the drugs that treat them. The consultant will also be an oncologist.



Say "AHHHH"

Anaesthetist

An anaesthetist (*an-ees-the-tist*) is a doctor who looks after a **patient** while they have an **operation** – they give them a drug called an **anaesthetic** so they can't feel anything. Some types of anaesthetic make people fall into a nice deep sleep during an operation.

Look up the words in **bold** on p15

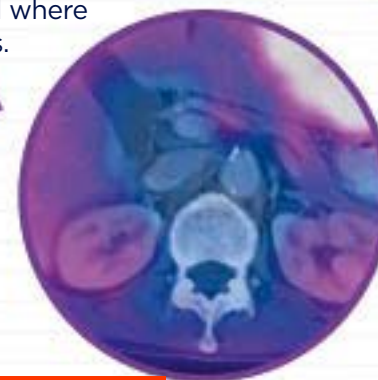
Surgeon

A surgeon is a doctor who does **operations**. The surgeon may operate to do a test for cancer, called a biopsy, or to carefully cut out a **tumour**.

Radiologist

After someone has had a **scan** or **X-ray**, a radiologist (*ray-dee-ol-oh-jist*) has to look very carefully at the images to figure out what kind of cancer the person has and where in the body it is.

This image is a scan of part of the body.



Physiotherapist

After cancer treatment, some people may have trouble getting their body moving properly again. A physiotherapist (*fizz-ee-oh-therapist*) will give them special exercises and massages to help with this.

Radiographer

Radiographers (*ray-dee-og-raffers*) operate machines that give a treatment called **radiotherapy**.



“When Gran was in hospital I took her some flowers. It felt a bit awkward thinking of things to say but hospitals are good places and they can help the person you know get better.”



Err, Izzy...

Nurses keep an eye on patients to see that they're OK.

Nurse

Lots of nurses will help take care of the person you know while they're at the hospital. They may give medicine, change dressings, take blood samples and bring the person drinks.

“I'm a radiographer and my job is to aim high-powered X-rays at the cancer to destroy it. This doesn't hurt and it only takes a few minutes each time.”

Ask the person you know if they've met any of the people on these pages. You could write them down here.

FILL ME IN

If the person you know is going to hospital, use these pages to note down useful info.

Keeping in touch!

The name of the hospital is:

The name/number of the ward or room they're going to be in is:

Tick the type of treatment(s) the person you know is going to have.

- Surgery
- Chemotherapy
- Radiotherapy



You can still keep in touch while someone you know is in hospital.

Call the hospital on:

Text or call the person you know on their mobile number:



Dear... Write to them at the hospital address:



Ask an adult for a stamp or if they can take your letter along when they visit.

Just ask!

Before you visit, you might want to find out the answers to these questions.

Am I allowed to take in any snacks or drinks?

Yes No

Can I still visit if I have a cold?

Yes No

Can I put a picture on the wall near their bed with sticky tack?

Yes No



I took my mum's favourite soft drink in case the hospital didn't have it.

Visiting times

Jot down the hospital visiting times here.

	Day	Evening
Mon - Fri	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Weekend	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

A-maze-ing!

Hospitals can sometimes feel a bit like mazes as they have so many corridors! Help Izzy find frog.



WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

Some types of **chemotherapy** need to be put directly into the blood. Find out how...

Medicine tubes

To put chemo medicine into the blood, doctors gently put a thin, bendy tube into someone's **vein**.



One end of the tube is outside the body so the medicine can be easily put into it. It has a little lid to keep out germs. The medicine goes through the tube and into a vein in the hand, arm or chest. This way of giving medicine is called **intravenous**.

Another type of tube is called a **portacath**. This is a bit different to the others because the end sits just *under* the skin. It's usually put into the chest, and you'll be able to see a little bump where it is.

Look at your hands - you can probably see some veins through your skin!



“ I don't like cough mixture, but it helps me to get better. My brother said that his chemo medicine was even more yucky than cough mixture, but it would make him even more better in the end. ”



GLOSSARY

An A-Z of new words you might hear in the hospital or read in this booklet.

ANAESTHETIC

(*an-ess-thet-ic*) This is a type of painkiller. **General anaesthetic** makes people fall into a nice deep sleep before an operation. **Local anaesthetic** numbs the part of the body being operated on - the person stays awake but can't feel anything.

CELLS The tiny building blocks that make up the body.

CHEMOTHERAPY (*key-mo-therapy*)

Drugs used to destroy cancer cells.

DRIP A way of slowly putting medicine into the body. The medicine is in a bag and 'drips' down a tube into a **vein**.

DRUG A medicine.

IN-PATIENT Someone who stays overnight in hospital.

INTRAVENOUS When medicine is put straight into a **vein**.

ONCOLOGY (*on-kol-oh-jee*)

The study and treatment of cancer.

OPERATION When a surgeon carefully works on the body to try and repair it.

OUT-PATIENT

Someone having hospital treatment who doesn't need to stay there overnight.

PATIENT Someone who's poorly and is being looked after by doctors and nurses.

PRIMARY CANCER

The first place a cancer grows.

PROSTHESIS

(*pross-thee-sis*)

Sometimes the best way to get rid of cancer is to remove the part of the body where it is. A prosthesis is an artificial body part that replaces the bit that's been removed.

RADIOTHERAPY

A cancer treatment using powerful **X-rays**.

SCAN An image of the inside of the body made by a computer.

SCAR A mark left on the skin after an **operation**.

SECONDARY CANCER Another place in the body where cancer is found if it has spread from the **primary cancer**.

SIDE EFFECTS

Ways that medicine could make a person look or feel unwell - even while it's making them better.

TUMOUR A growth or lump in the body. Not all tumours are cancerous. A **benign** tumour isn't cancer. A **malignant** tumour is cancer.

VEINS The body's own tubes that carry blood all around our bodies.

X-RAY A beam of high-energy radiation.



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