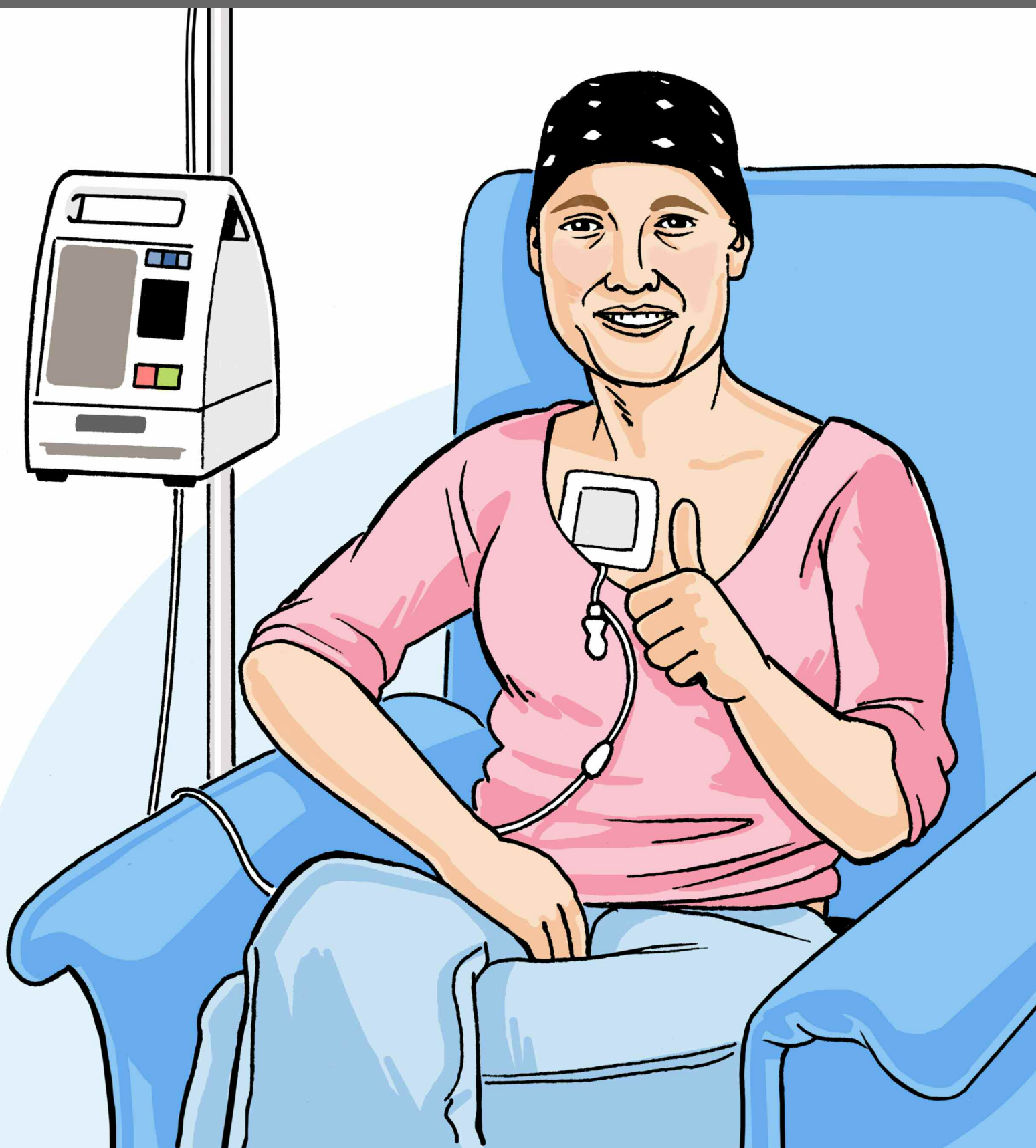


# Chemotherapy

Diagnosis and Treatment



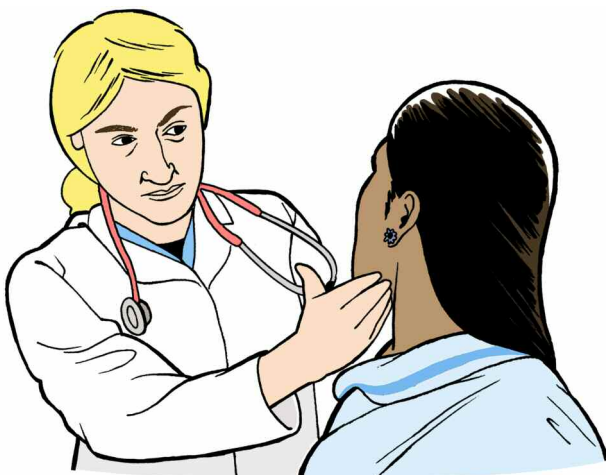
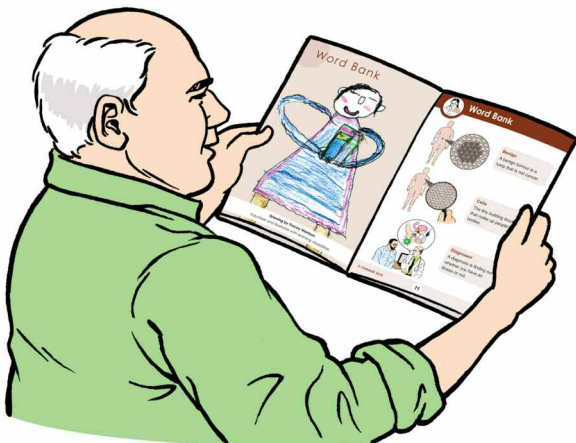
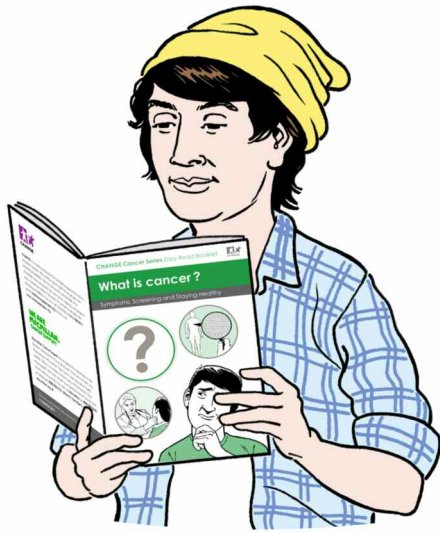
# Introduction

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.

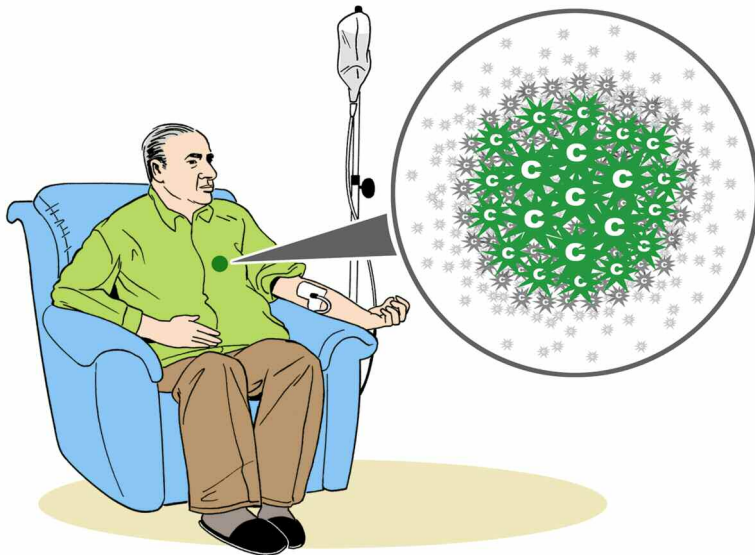
This booklet can help you learn about cancer. But this is not the same as talking to your doctor. If you are worried about your health, you should talk to a doctor or nurse.



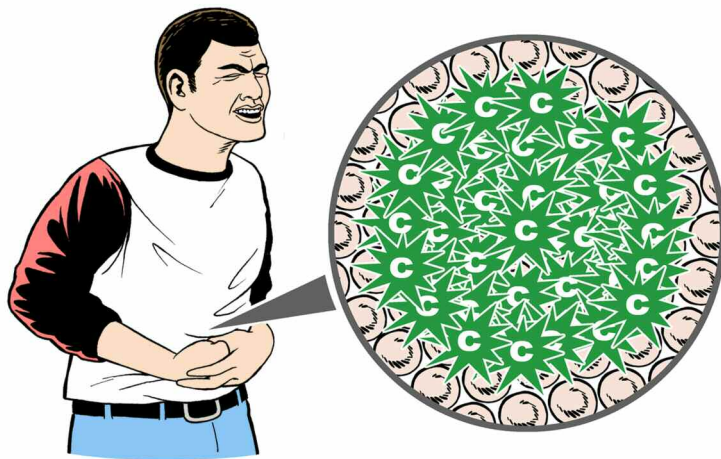


# Chemotherapy

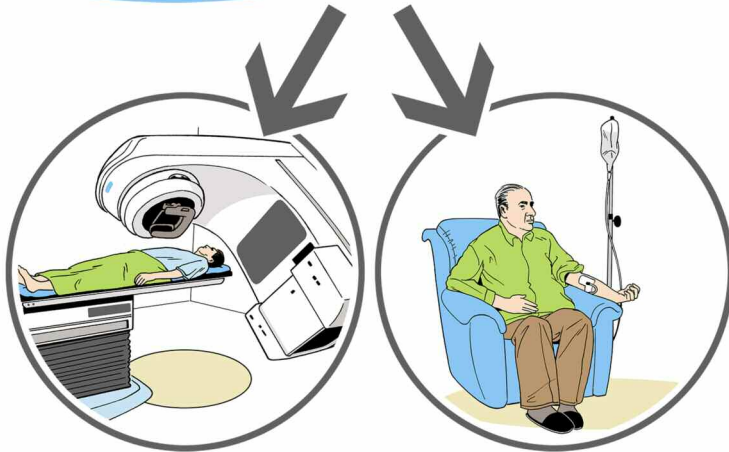
## What is chemotherapy?



**Chemotherapy** is a type of treatment for cancer. It uses special drugs to kill cancer **cells** in the body.



Some types of cancer can be treated with just chemotherapy. Sometimes chemotherapy is used with other treatments like **radiotherapy** and **surgery**.





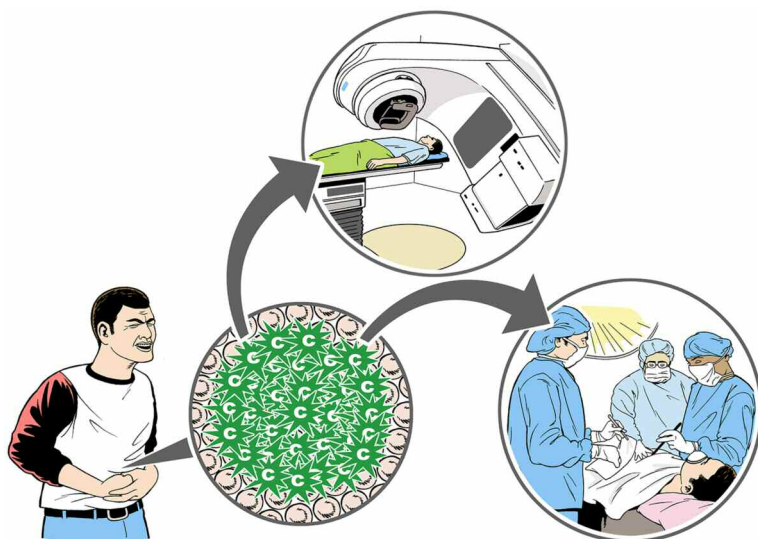
# Chemotherapy

## Why is chemotherapy given?

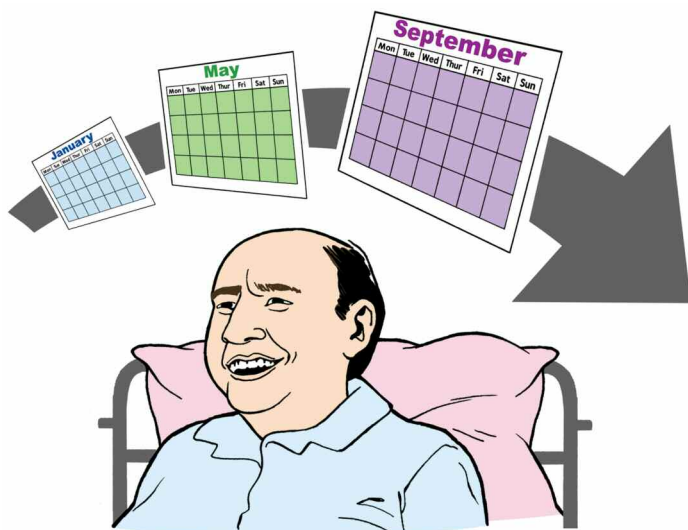


Chemotherapy is given for different reasons:

- It can be given because it is the best way to get rid of the cancer



- It can be given because other treatments are not enough on their own to get rid of the cancer



- It can be given to help you live longer

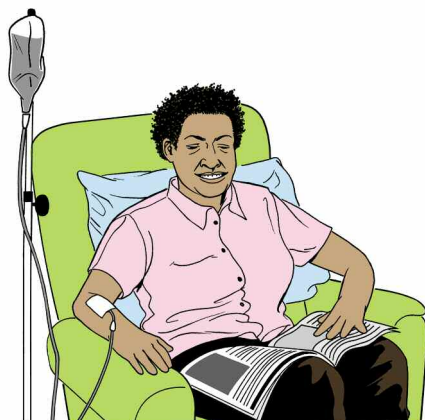


# Chemotherapy

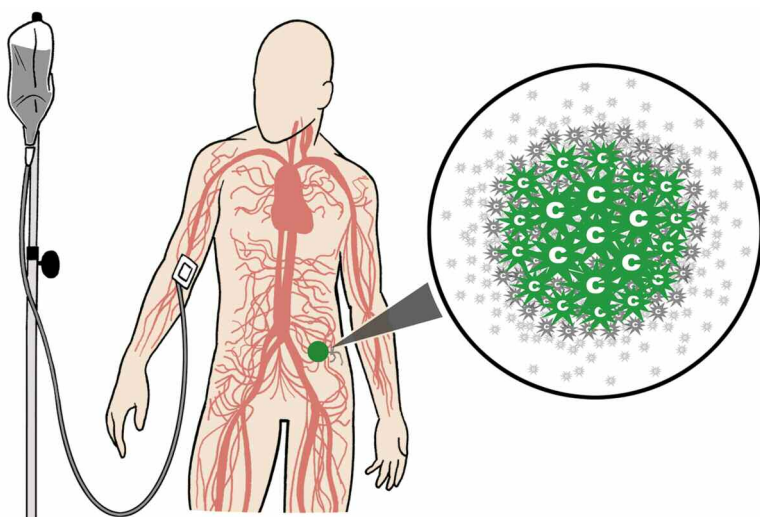
## How chemotherapy works



There are lots of different types of chemotherapy drugs.



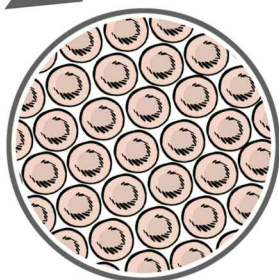
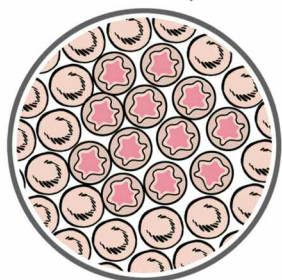
Each person will be given a different mixture depending on what type of cancer they have.



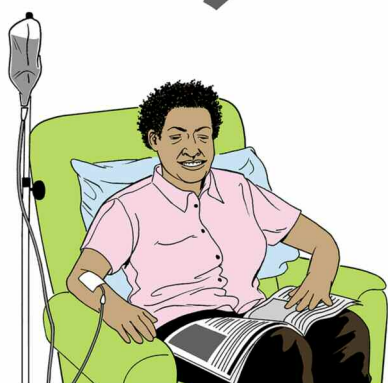
The drugs travel through the body in your blood. They work by damaging the cancer cells so that they can not spread and make more cancer cells.



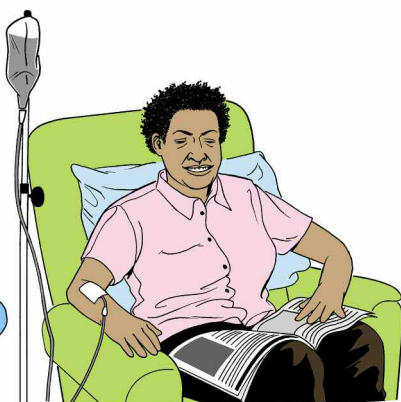
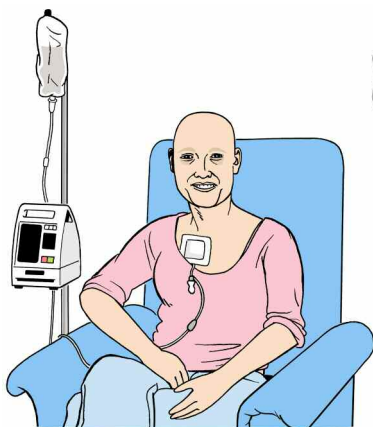
# Chemotherapy



The drugs can also kill some of the healthy cells in your body. But healthy cells can usually mend themselves and get back to normal after a short time.



The effects of the drugs on healthy cells can cause **side effects** like tiredness or feeling sick.

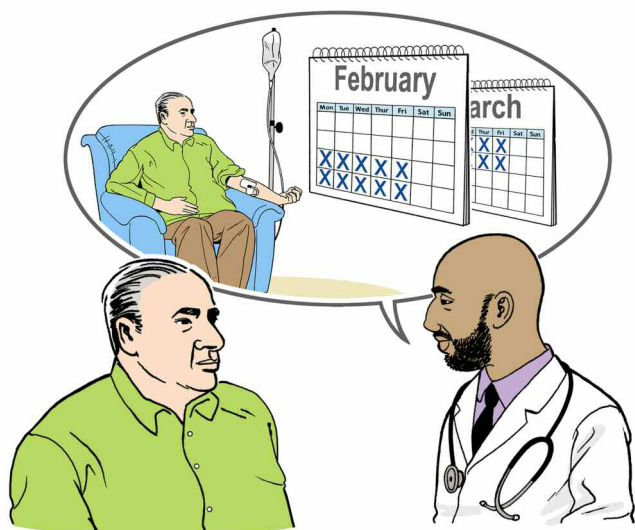


Some people will only have a few side effects and others may have more.

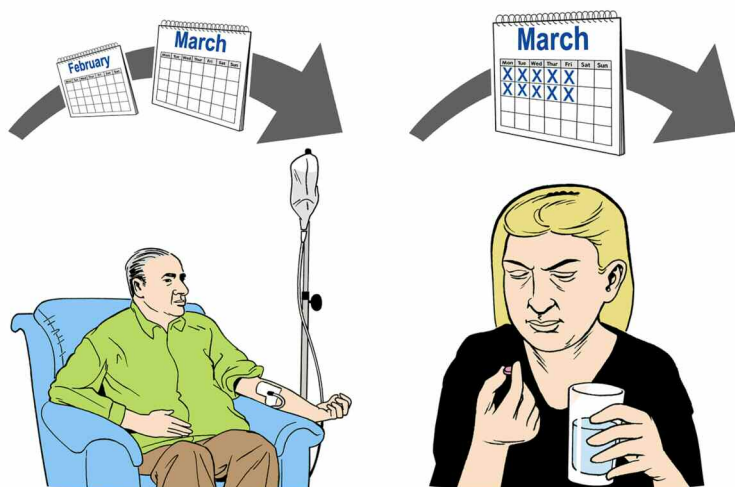


# Chemotherapy

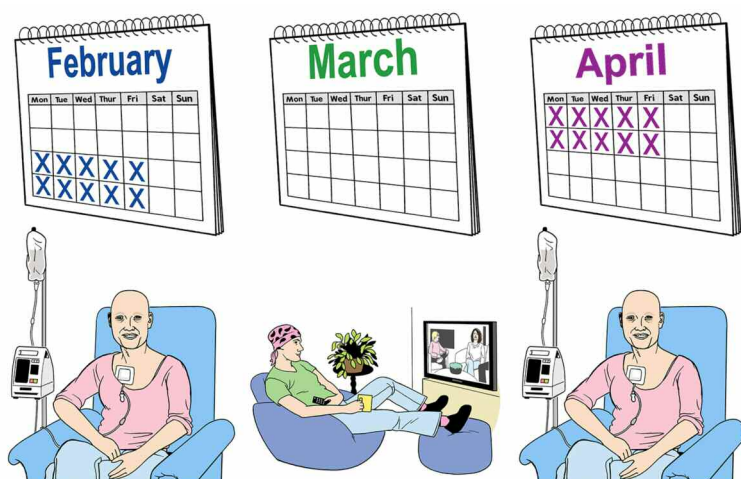
## Chemotherapy - what happens?



Your doctor will tell you when you will need treatment.



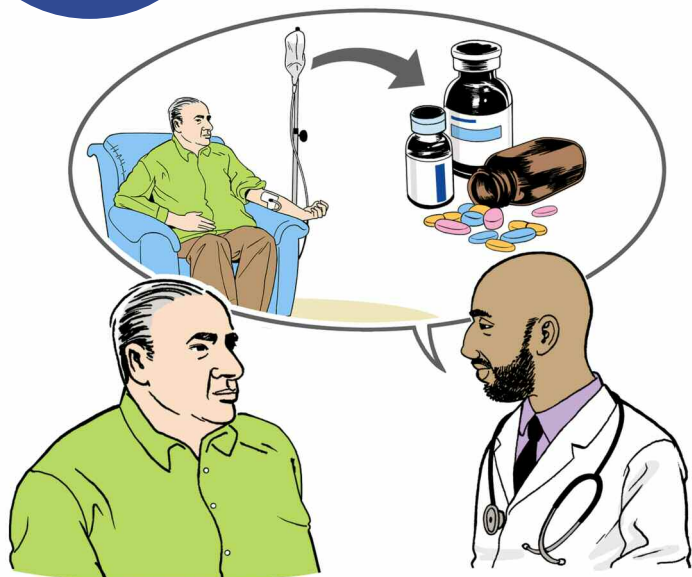
Some people have treatment for a few weeks and other people might need to have treatment for a few months.



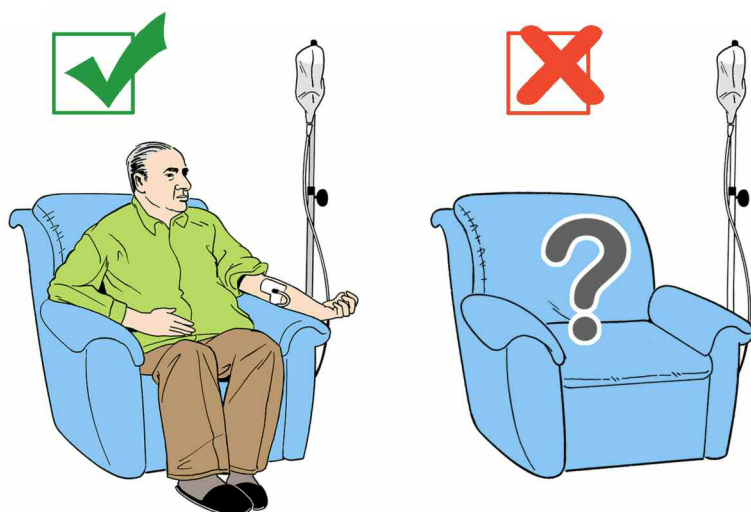
People usually have some treatments and then have a break from the treatments.



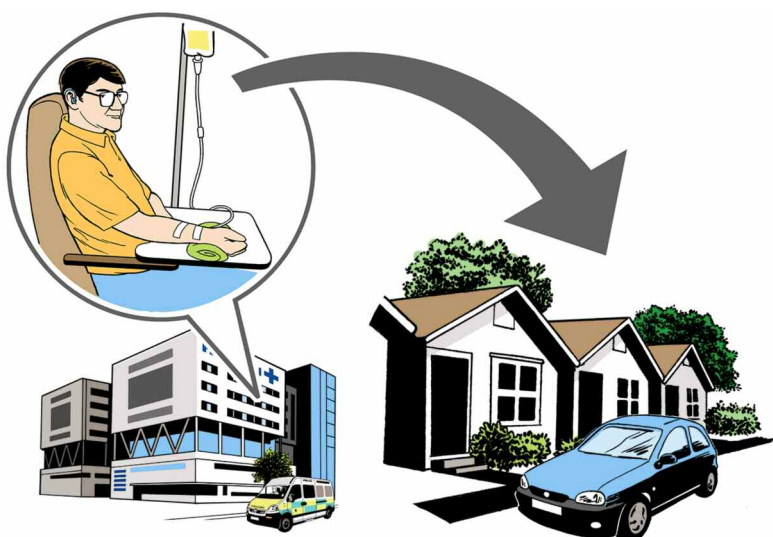
# Chemotherapy



Over the time you are having chemotherapy your doctor will keep checking to see how the treatment is working. They might then change your treatment



It is very important that you keep going for your chemotherapy even if you feel unwell. If you miss treatment it will not work so well to treat the cancer.

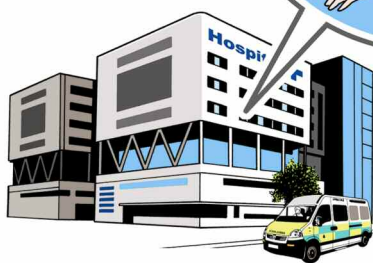
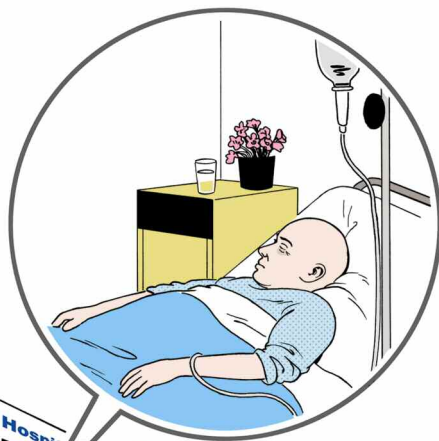


Usually people come to the hospital for treatment and then go home the same day.





# Chemotherapy



If you are very ill with cancer and already in hospital, then you will be given your treatment there.



Chemotherapy treatment can be given in different ways. The two main ways that chemotherapy is given are:

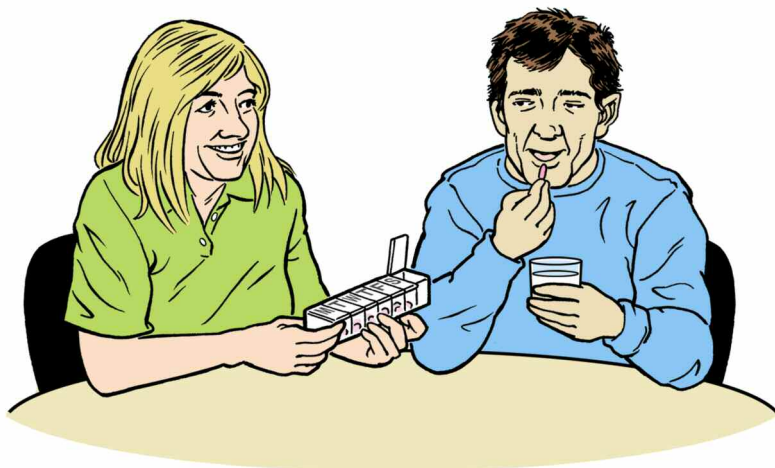


- **Tablets or capsules.**

Your doctor or nurse will tell you how many tablets to take and how often to take them.



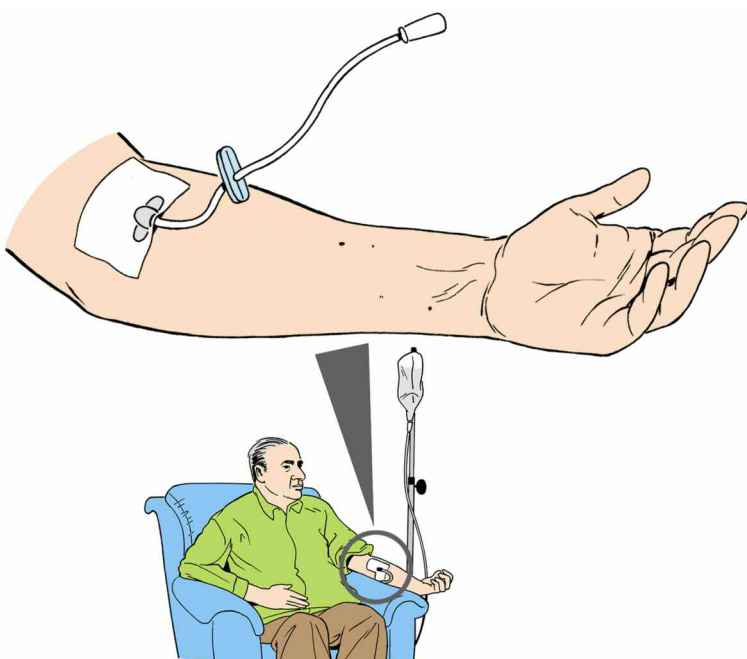
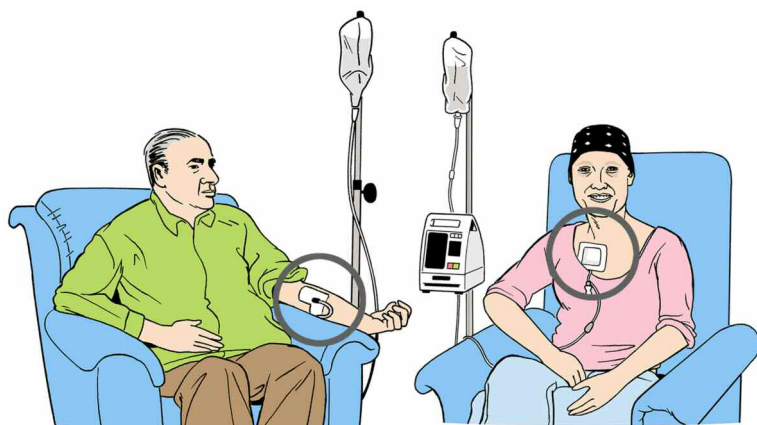
# Chemotherapy



It is very important you know when to take your tablets. You may need support with this.

- **By injection.**

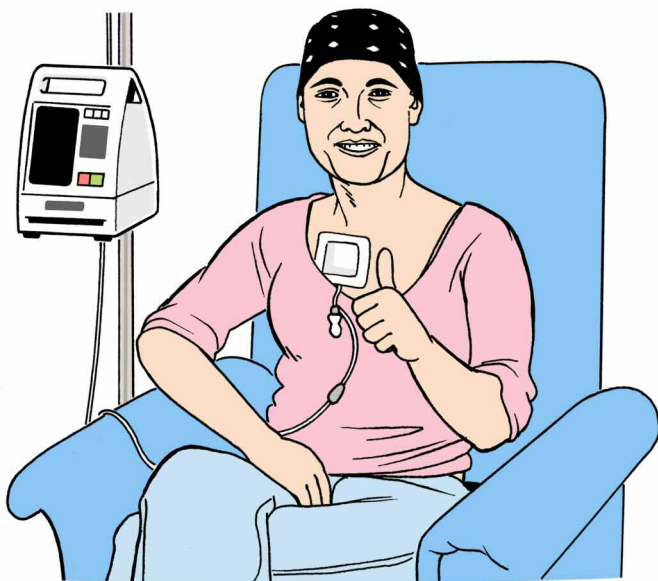
This means putting the drugs into your blood through your skin using a needle. There are different places on your body that the drugs can be injected into.



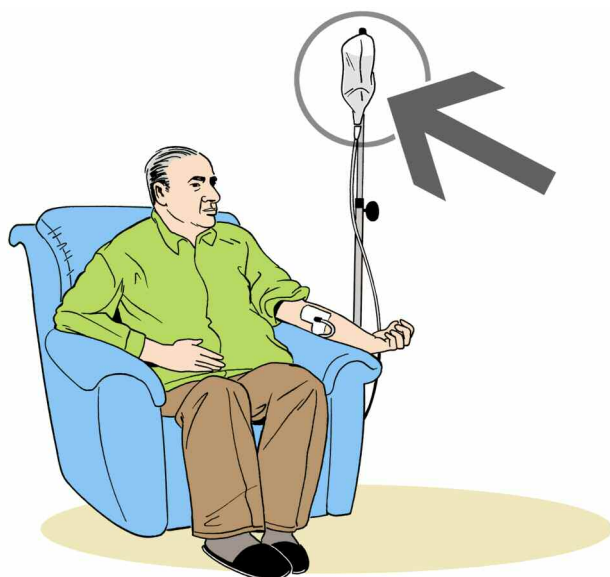
You will usually have to have lots of treatments, so the nurse will put a small tube under your skin that stays there all the way through your treatment. This is called a **portacath**.



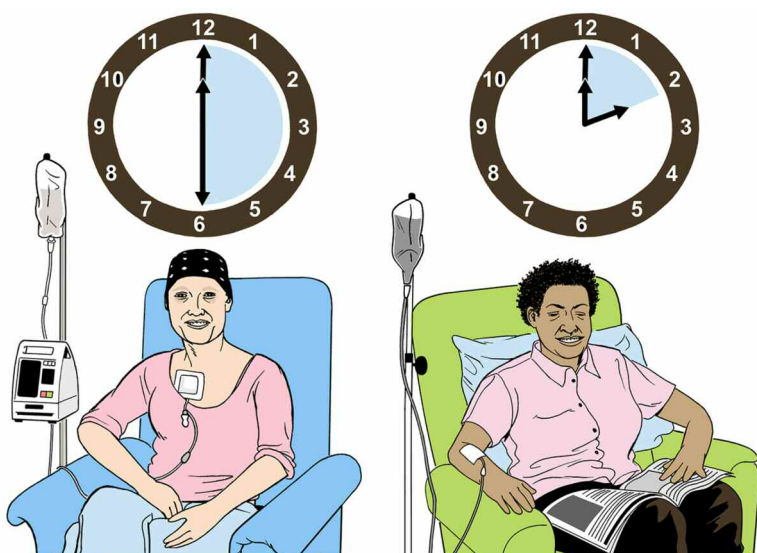
# Chemotherapy



This makes it easier to give you the drugs without having to give you lots of injections.



The chemotherapy drugs are given into the tube from a bag of liquid called a drip.



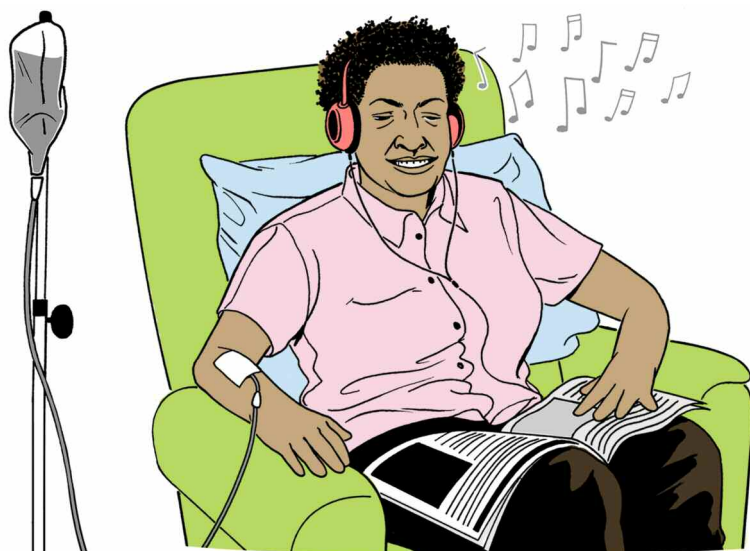
This can take from half an hour up to several hours.



# Chemotherapy



Having to sit still while this happens can be boring, so it is good to have a friend with you to talk to.



You can bring your own music with you to listen to or something to read.

# Word Bank

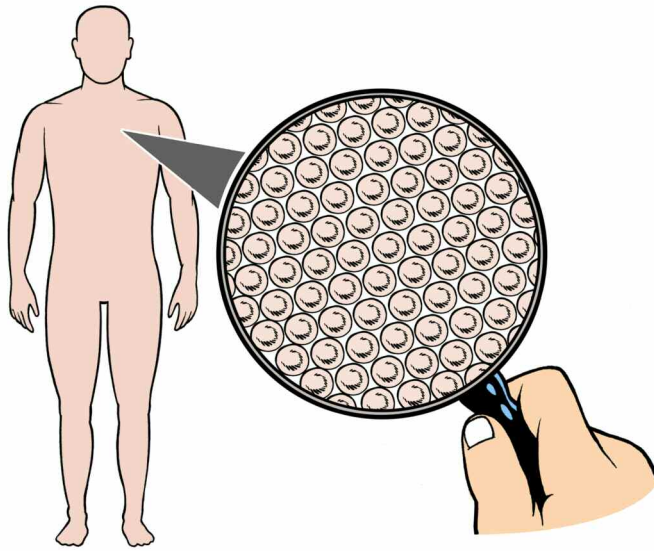


**Drawing by Tracey Harrison**

Volunteer and Illustrator with learning disabilities

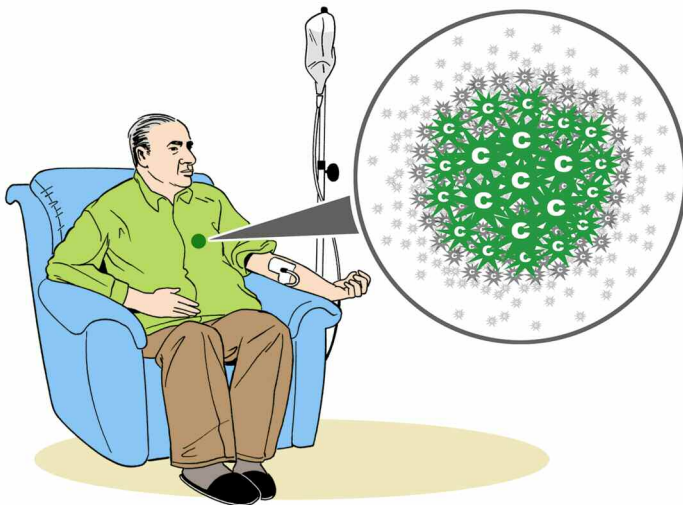


# Word Bank



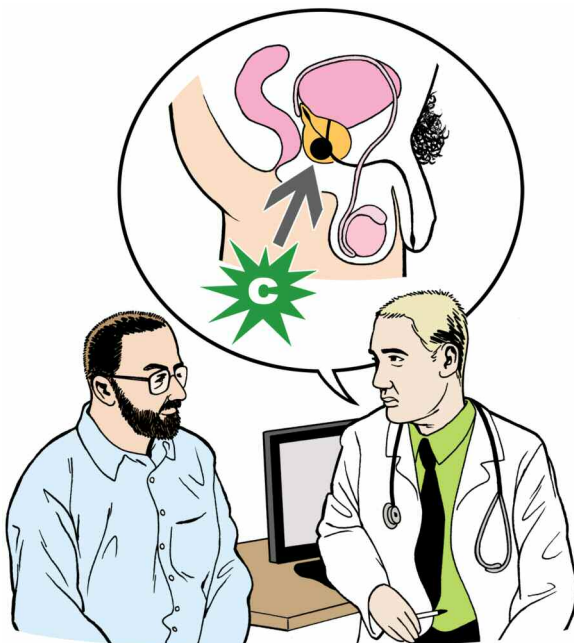
## Cells

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



## Chemotherapy

This is a treatment where you are given drugs to help kill cancer cells in your body.

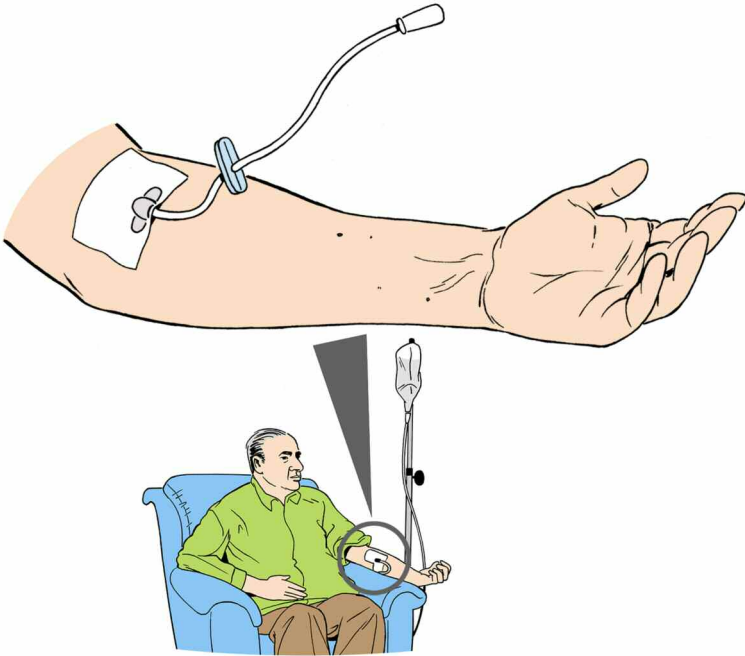


## Diagnosis

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

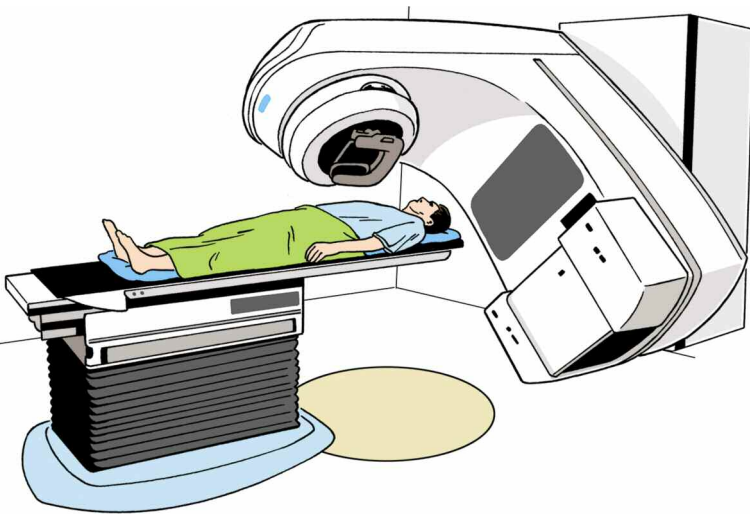


# Word Bank



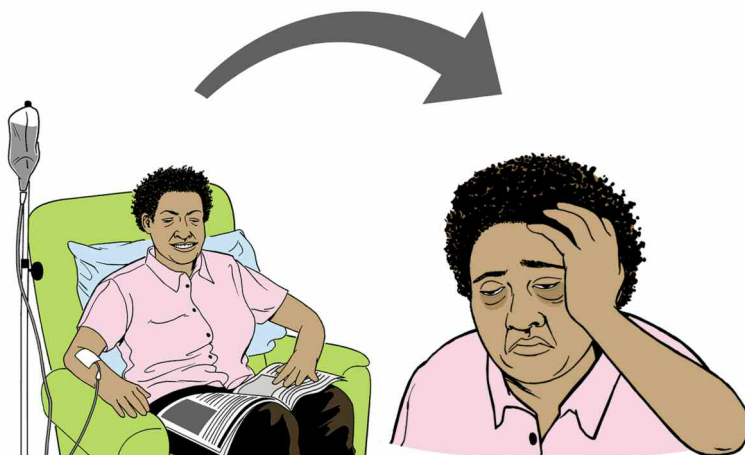
## Portacath

This is a small tube put under your skin in any part of your body. It stays there all the way through your treatment. This tube makes it easier to give you drugs without lots of injections.



## Radiotherapy

A treatment that uses powerful x-rays to kill cancer cells.



## Side effects

These are unwanted effects caused by having treatment, like feeling tired or sick.



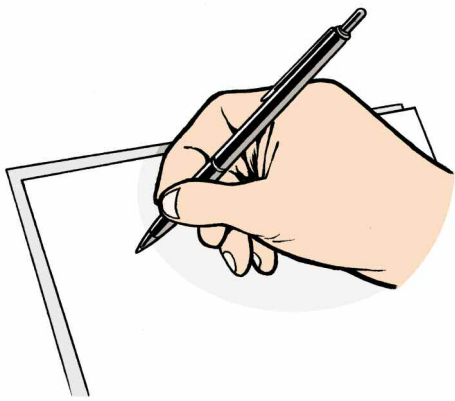
# Word Bank



## **Surgery**

This means having an operation.

## 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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://www.booksbeyondwords.co.uk)

**Phone:** 020 8877 9799

**Email:** [admin@booksbeyondwords.co.uk](mailto: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](mailto:fair@fairadvice.org.uk)

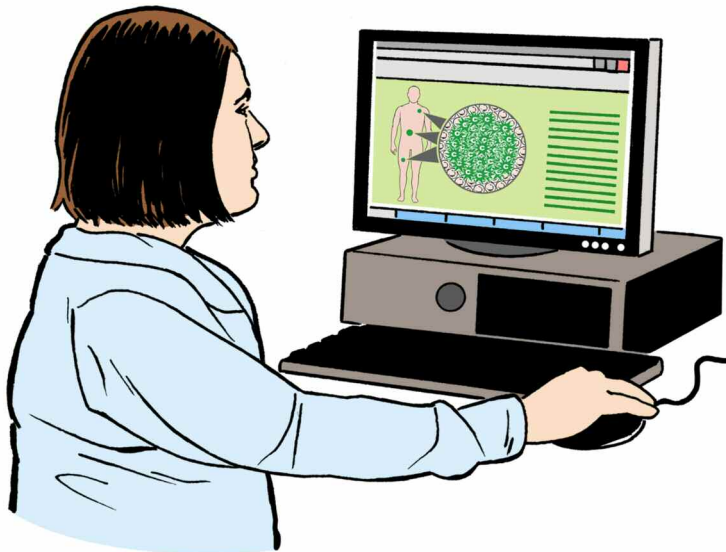
**Phone:** 0131 662 1962

**Web:** [www.fairadvice.org.uk/health-publications.php](http://www.fairadvice.org.uk/health-publications.php)



# Useful contacts

## Online help



### [www.easyhealth.org.uk](http://www.easyhealth.org.uk)

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

### [www.macmillan.org.uk](http://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.

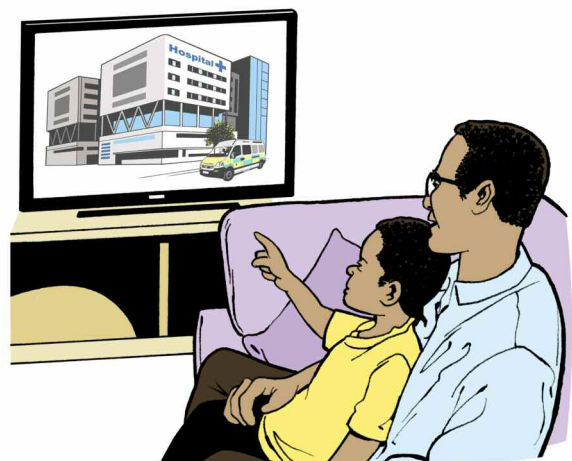
**Phone: 0113 248 4997**

**Web: [www.leedsanimation.org.uk/index.html](http://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](http://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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