

Bladder Cancer and well-being in the current Covid-19 crisis

Are you worried about your bladder cancer in the current crisis? This is a very difficult time, particularly for patients who were waiting for, or undergoing, treatment. Worry and anxiety are common problems at the best of times, and when it takes over it can become all-encompassing. We have put together this information to help you to try to manage your worry and anxiety and to know where to find support.

If you've got cancer, it's natural to feel worried sometimes and the current circumstances can make things even harder. But if you feel that it's becoming excessive and taking over your life – perhaps it's making you anxious or you're struggling to sleep – then it might be worth trying to find ways to limit the time you spend worrying and taking steps to manage your well-being. Remember, it's normal to sometimes feel a bit frightened or anxious when you're diagnosed with and being treated for cancer - even at the best of times. If you are seriously anxious or feel depressed and not able to cope – do contact your GP (most GP's are providing telephone appointments).

Talk to your specialist nurse or cancer nurse - Anxiety can often be fuelled by uncertainty - this can be helped by taking a few steps. Learning more about your illness and treatments and talking with your family and friends about how you feel can help. You may well feel a little anxious about when you'll receive your next/due check or treatment – so contact your hospital and ask your Specialist Nurse or CNS. ABC UK has a wealth of information on our website – both on bladder cancer itself as well as living with bladder cancer: [ABC UK patient resources](#)

Talk to ABC UK: Here at ABC UK we can offer you telephone or email support or put you in touch with one of our patient advisors.

You can reach us on info@actionbladdercanceruk.org or call on 0300 302 0085.

We can also signpost you to your local patient support group: [Support Group List](#) whilst support groups can't, of course, meet face to face at the moment, many of them are providing support by other means and your local contact could help.

Stay connected - try to do at least some activities that are social and involve other people. In times like these you might have to find some creative ways to do social things at a distance. Keep in touch with family and friends, just a regular phone call or online tools like Zoom, Skype, Duo, Facetime, WhatsApp or other methods.

Practice mindfulness - mindfulness can help us let go of worries and bring ourselves back to the present moment. For example, focusing on the gentle movement of your breath or the sounds you hear around you, can serve as helpful 'anchors' to focus on to help you relax and feel less anxious. You can watch this short mindful breathing exercise video on YouTube from Every Mind Matters: [Mindful breathing exercise](#)

Look after your wellbeing - with the current health situation, many of our normal routines and daily activities have changed. It can be helpful to organise a daily routine that involves a balance between doing things that give you a sense of achievement (clean out that cupboard), help you feel close and connected with others (call a friend) and things that you can do just for pleasure (read, watch a favourite film, garden). This is particularly relevant if you are having to spend more time at home.

Physical exercise helps - stay as active as possible- for example doing more rigorous housework for 30 minutes or an online exercise video or even seated exercises in your chair. If you are able to (and are not shielding) you can go outside for physical exercise with care and social distancing. Many find that being outdoors helps with mood and appropriate exercise is very beneficial. ABC UK has produced a factsheet on exercise which gives useful information here: [bladder cancer and exercise](#)

If **cancer fatigue** is an issue for you, we have a factsheet which gives hints and tips on how to manage the effects of this: [cancer fatigue and tiredness](#)

Money worries are a particular concern if you have been diagnosed with bladder cancer or if you are undergoing treatment which is affecting your ability to work. This may be even more so in the current situation. ABC UK has produced a factsheet on finances which contains links to useful organisations which may be able to assist by helping you to apply for benefits as well as one off grants: [Money matters](#)

What triggers worry - Notice and limit worry triggers. As the health situation develops it can feel like we need to constantly follow the news or check social media for updates. However, you might notice this also triggers your worry and anxiety. Try to limit the time you're exposed to what worries you each day and learn what triggers your worries. You could limit the amount of time you spend on news checking. Rely on reputable news sources and be mindful of where you are obtaining news and information.

USEFUL LINKS TO FURTHER INFORMATION

NHS Information on Coronavirus - www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/

NHS 11 online - if you have symptoms of Covid-19: <https://111.nhs.uk/covid-19/>

CANCER RESEARCH UK - information on cancer and Covid-19:
[www.cancerresearchuk.org/coronavirus and cancer](http://www.cancerresearchuk.org/coronavirus-and-cancer)

BAUS (British Association of Urological Surgeons) information for bladder cancer patients: www.baus.org.uk/patients/covid19_patient_information.aspx

Government Information - What you need to do: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

Government guidance on shielding and protecting vulnerable persons: [www.gov.uk/Guidance on shielding vulnerable people from Covid-19](http://www.gov.uk/Guidance-on-shielding-vulnerable-people-from-Covid-19); **Government guidance on social distancing:** [www.gov.uk Social distancing](http://www.gov.uk/Social-distancing)

MIND <https://www.mind.org.uk/>

RETHINK <https://www.rethink.org/>

If you have any worries or questions about your bladder cancer, ABC UK has a lot of information on our website, or you can contact us on Tel: 0300 302 0085 or E: info@actionbladdercanceruk.org

www.actionbladdercanceruk.org