

Your cancer awareness booklet

cruk.org/talkcancer

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Introduction

Thank you for coming to a Talk Cancer workshop. We hope you've enjoyed the session, and that the knowledge you've gained has made you feel more confident talking about cancer in your community.

This booklet contains all the key information you'll need to remind yourself of the topics covered in the workshop:

- tips for talking about cancer
- a recap of some key cancer information and common myths and facts
- where to signpost people for more information
- where to order free Cancer Research UK resources

Get in touch with us if you have any questions or comments:



talkcancer@cancer.org.uk



020 3469 8111



cruk.org/talkcancer

If you spot any opportunities where you think others can benefit from the Talk Cancer training please do get in touch with us. To help make the training accessible there are face-to-face and online workshop formats, as well as a bursary scheme to offer free workshops to groups who play a pivotal role in reaching people who need it the most.

Let us help you find the answers

Find information about cancer: cruk.org

Ask our specialist nurses: **0808 800 4040**

Share your experiences: cancerchat.org.uk

Remember, if you or anybody you talk to has any questions at all about cancer, our helpline nurses are here to help.

About cancer

What is cancer?

Cancer is a disease caused by normal cells changing so that they grow in an uncontrolled way. The uncontrolled growth can cause a lump called a tumour to form. If it's not treated, the tumour may cause problems by spreading into normal tissues nearby, causing pressure on other body structures or spreading to other parts of the body.

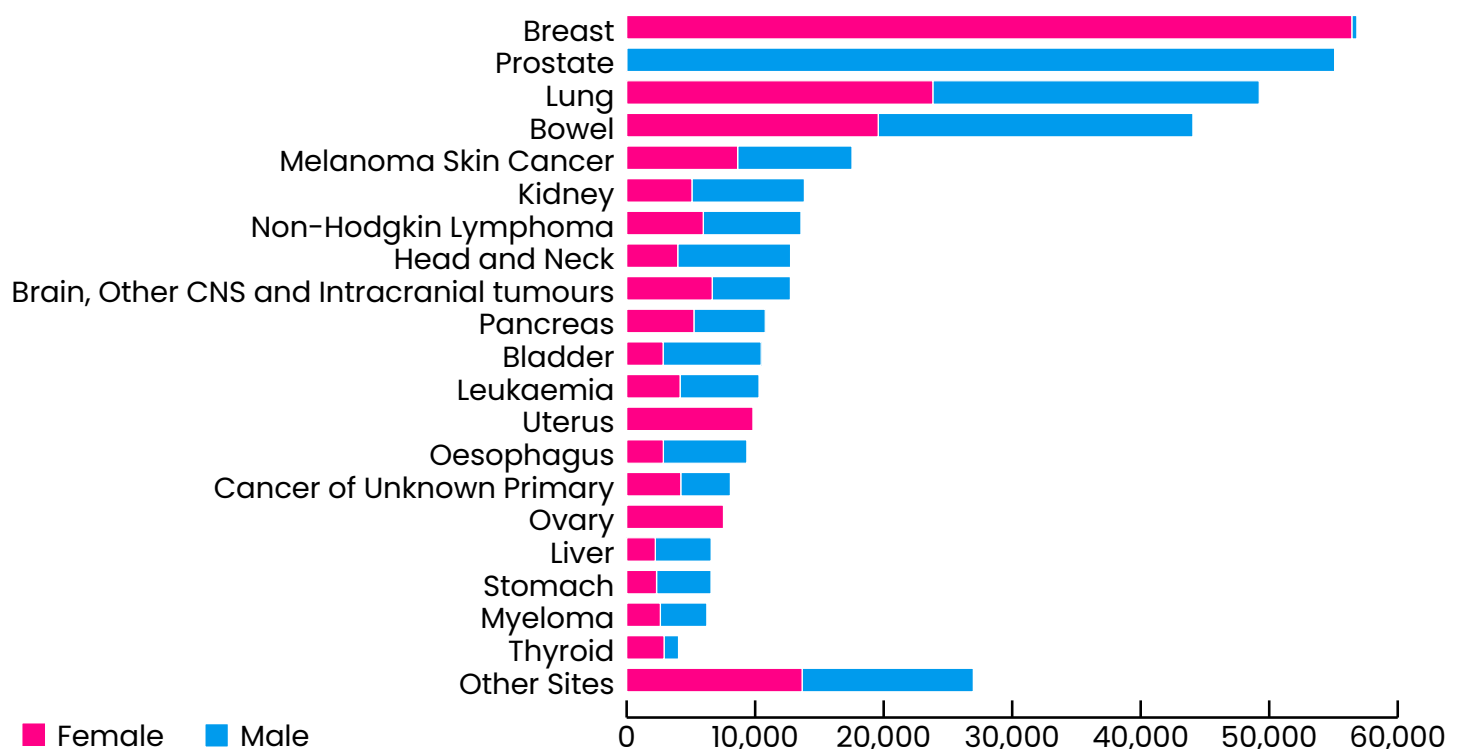
What are the most common cancers?

There are more than 385,000 new cancer cases in the UK every year – that's around 1,000 every day (2017–2019) [1]. There are more than 200 types of cancer and four of them – breast, prostate, lung and bowel cancers – together accounted for over half (53%) of all new cancer cases in the UK in 2017–2019 [2].

What are primary and secondary cancers?

The primary cancer is where the cancer started. If some of the cancer cells break away from the primary cancer and spread to another part of the body, this cancer is then called a secondary cancer. Secondary cancers are made up of the same type of cells as the primary cancer. So, if you have breast cancer that has spread to the liver, you have primary breast cancer with secondary breast cancer in the liver.

20 most commonly diagnosed cancers excluding non-melanoma skin cancer, UK, 2017–2019 [3]



Annual average number of new cases, UK

Why does cancer risk increase as we get older?

Cancer can develop at any age, but most types of cancer become more common as we get older. This is because as we age, there's more time for damage and changes in our cells to build up, making cancer more likely. In the UK, 9 in 10 (90%) cancer cases are diagnosed in people aged 50 or over (2017–2019) [4].

What are the most common treatments for cancer?

The most common cancer treatments are surgery, radiotherapy and chemotherapy. Other treatments include hormone therapy, bone marrow and stem cell transplants, immunological therapies and biological therapies. There is no single treatment for cancer and doctors will recommend which is best for each patient. They will often combine several types of treatment to increase the chance of it being successful and research is still helping to find new treatments.

How many people survive cancer?

1 in 2 people diagnosed with cancer survive their disease for 10 years or more (England and Wales). And cancer survival is improving, doubling in the last 50 years in the UK [5]. But people are more likely to survive when cancer is diagnosed at an early stage, as treatment is more likely to be successful. So finding cancer early can make a real difference.

For example, when breast cancer is diagnosed at the earliest stage (stage 1) 98% of women survive their disease for five years or more, compared with 27% of women when the disease is diagnosed at the latest stage (stage 4) in England [6]. Similarly, 91% of people in England diagnosed with the earliest stage of bowel

cancer survive their disease for at least five years, compared with 11% of people when diagnosed at the latest stage [7].

What can increase the risk of cancer?

There are some things that can increase the risk of cancer that we can't change, such as our age or the genes we inherit from our parents.

But there are lots of things you can do to reduce your risk, such as:

- not smoking
- keeping a healthy weight
- being safe in the sun
- cutting down on alcohol
- having a healthy, balanced diet
- being more active

Can cancer be prevented?

Healthy living is not a guarantee against cancer. But it does help stack the odds in your favour. For example, we know that it's possible for someone who smokes a lot to live a cancer-free life, while someone who never touches cigarettes could develop lung cancer. But if we look at the UK as a whole, we can clearly see that people who don't smoke are far less likely to develop cancer than people who do smoke.

There's more information on causes of cancer and reducing risk on our website:

cruk.org/health

for information on causes of cancer

cruk.org/cancerstats

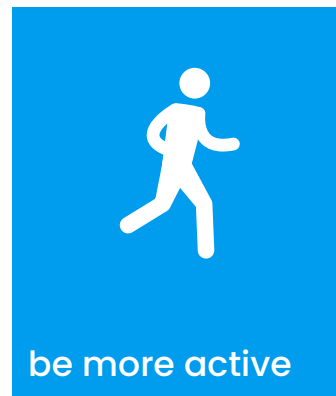
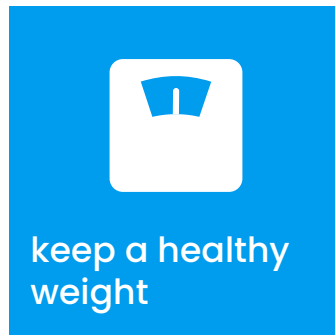
for the latest cancer statistics

cruk.org/cancernews

for the latest cancer news

Prevention and early diagnosis

To reduce our cancer risk, the most important things we can do are:

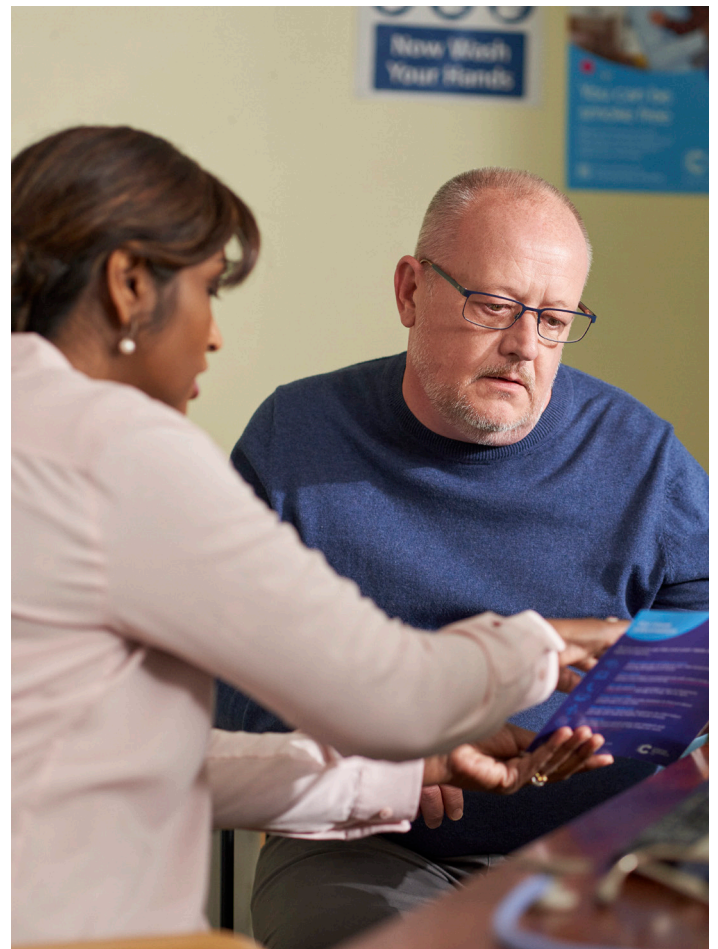


Importance of spotting cancer early

Treatment is more likely to be successful when cancer is diagnosed at an early stage. There's no need to self-check in a set way or time, but it's important to encourage people to listen to their body and tell their doctor if they notice anything that's not normal for them.

Remember, if it's not normal for you, tell your doctor.

Visit cruk.org/spotcancerearly for more early diagnosis information and resources.



Cancer myths

Myth: plastic bottles and containers cause cancer

Using plastics doesn't cause cancer. This includes drinking from plastic bottles and using plastic containers and bags to store food in. Even where plastics are heated for hours at a time, studies have shown that the food inside is safe to eat.

Myth: mobile phones cause cancer

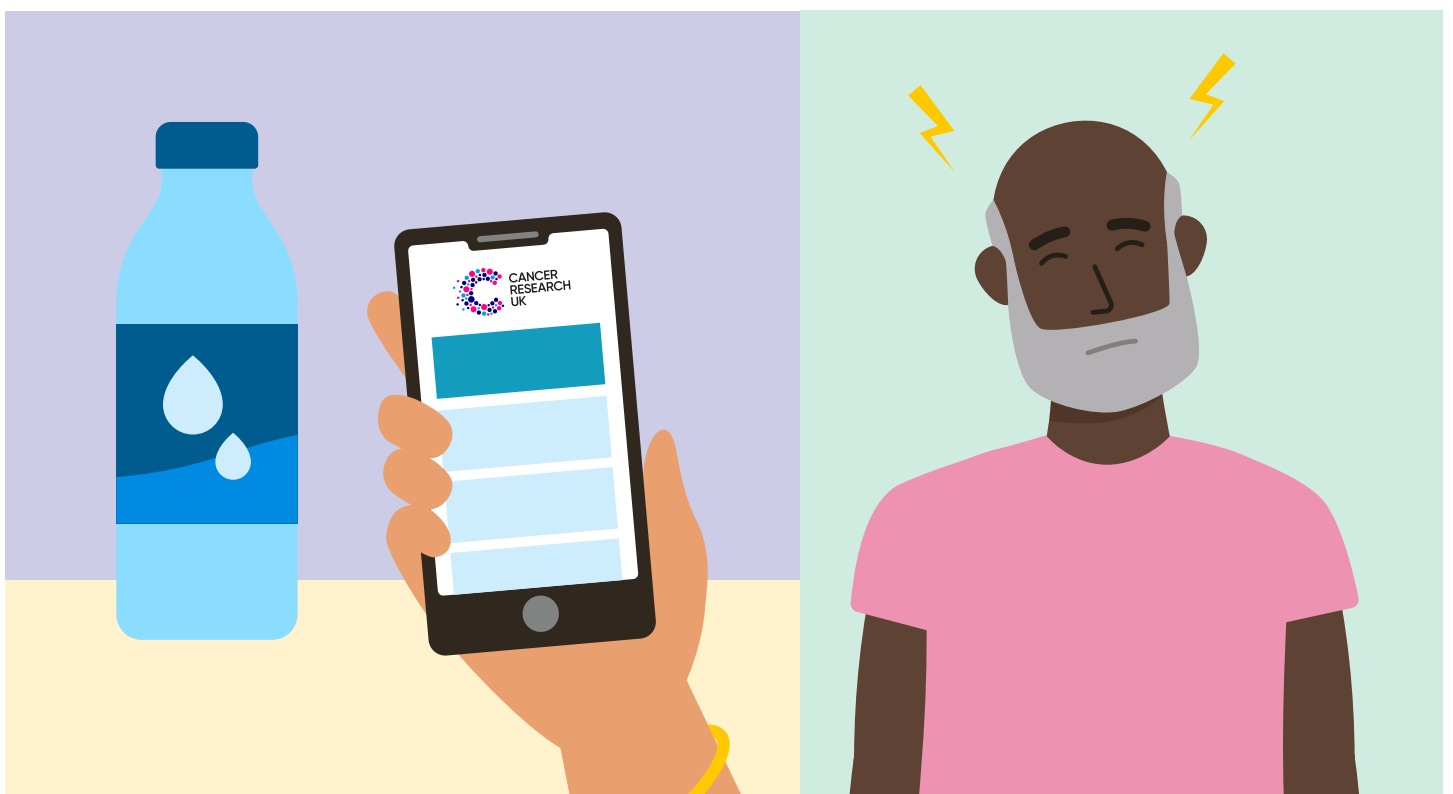
Using mobile phones doesn't increase our risk of cancer. The radiation that mobile phones and phone masts transmit and receive is very weak. It doesn't have enough energy to damage DNA, so it's highly unlikely to cause cancer.

Research is continuing to make sure there aren't any potential long-term effects of mobile phones on cancer risk, but none have been found so far.

Myth: stress can cause cancer

Stress doesn't directly increase cancer risk. But it can be harder for some people to keep healthy during stressful times. Stress can lead to changes in a person's day-to-day routine, such as smoking, eating unhealthily or drinking alcohol, which can all impact cancer risk.

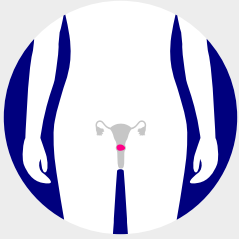
Visit cruk.org/myths to read about other cancer myths.



The national cancer screening programmes

Cancer screening can detect cancer at an early stage before there are any symptoms, and in some cases even prevent cancer developing in the first place. Cancer screening is meant for people who have no symptoms at all.

The UK has three screening programmes:



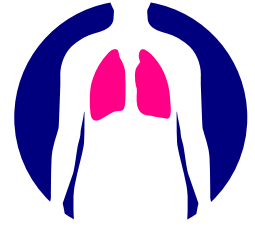
Cervical screening can prevent cancer, by testing for the human papillomavirus (HPV) and abnormal cell changes in the cervix. Abnormal cells can then be monitored or treated to prevent cervical cancer from developing.



Bowel screening aims to find cancer early or to find changes in your bowel that could lead to cancer.



Breast screening can't prevent breast cancers. Instead, it aims to pick up cancers at an early stage, when treatment is more likely to be successful.



A new targeted lung cancer screening programme is also being introduced in some areas.

All UK national cancer screening programmes have pros and cons, so it's important for people to read the information that comes with their screening invitation to make an informed decision about whether they want to attend screening or not. And remember, it's still important to listen to your body and tell your doctor if you notice any unusual or persistent changes, even if you've been for screening recently or are due to go soon.

Visit cruk.org/screening for more information on screening, including an eligibility checker that's helpful to share with people.



Health inequalities and cancer



Health inequalities are the unfair differences in health between population groups. For example, some groups are more likely to get cancer or less likely to survive the disease. It's estimated that there are more than 33,000 extra cases of cancer in the UK each year associated with deprivation [8].

Not everyone has the same pressures and opportunities in life, making it harder for some people to live healthily or increasing barriers to people seeking help for their health.

But it doesn't have to be this way. Here are some examples of how you can help certain groups of people in your community:

Some groups find it harder to stop smoking than others

You can support members of the community by providing information on the best way to stop smoking, including signposting to their free, local stop smoking service or GP.

Some groups are less likely to take up their screening invitations

You can help reduce barriers to screening by providing people with accessible information, including leaflets, easy-read materials and online resources, to help them make an informed choice. You can also encourage people to register with their GP so they receive automatic invitations.

Some groups are less likely to talk to their doctor

You may notice that a person has been complaining about a persistent sign or symptom for weeks. By asking open questions, you can find out whether they have spoken to their GP and if not, help them identify and overcome the barriers they face.

HPV and cervical cancer, and PSA testing

HPV and cervical cancer

Human papillomavirus (HPV) infects the skin and the cells lining body cavities. It's very common and spreads through close skin-to-skin contact – around 8 in 10 people will have an HPV infection at some point in their lives [9].

Usually, the infection gets better on its own without causing problems. But we know that around 13 types can cause cancer – these are called 'high-risk' types [10].

People infected with high-risk types of HPV for a long time are more likely to go on to develop cancer. Cervical cancer is the main type of cancer linked to HPV. High-risk HPV types can cause changes or abnormalities in the cells of the cervix (or other infection sites). Regular cervical screening can detect HPV and abnormal cervical cells before they become cancerous.

Vaccines are now available to help prevent infection by the most common high-risk types of HPV. All children in the UK aged 11 to 13 are offered the HPV vaccine. Because the vaccine doesn't protect against all the high-risk HPV types, cervical screening is still important for people who have been vaccinated.

The vaccine is also available to people up to the age of 25 who missed their vaccination at school, men who have sex with men and some transgender people.

Visit cruk.org/hpv for more information on HPV.

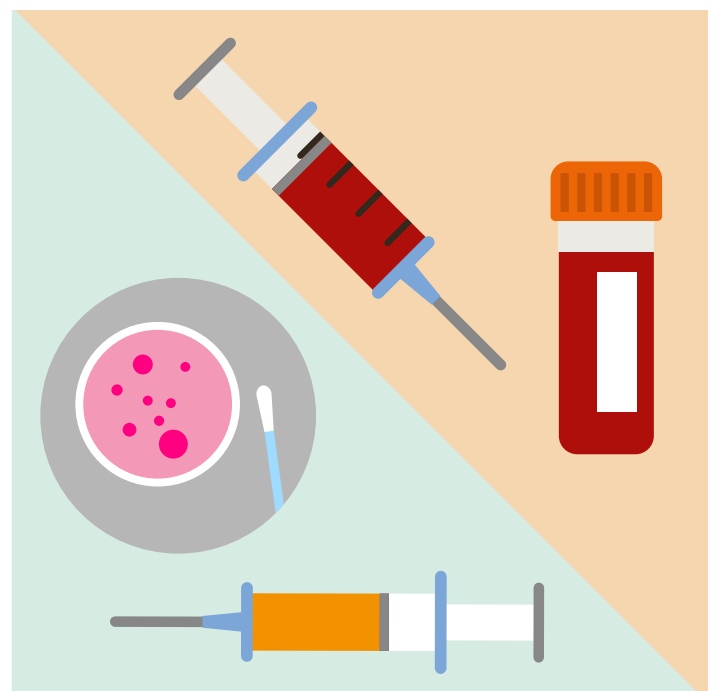
PSA testing

There is currently no national screening programme for prostate cancer because we don't have a reliable enough test.

There is a test, called the PSA test, which measures the levels of a protein called prostate-specific antigen in the blood. While it can help doctors investigate how likely a man experiencing certain symptoms is to have prostate cancer, it isn't reliable enough to use as a national screening test. Some men with prostate cancer do not have raised PSA levels, and some men with raised PSA levels do not have prostate cancer. Current evidence shows that screening men without symptoms using PSA testing doesn't save lives from the disease and because it can lead to unnecessary tests and investigations, it can do more harm than good.

Men over 50 who want to have a PSA test can ask their doctor, but Cancer Research UK doesn't recommend using the PSA test to screen men with no symptoms.

Visit cruk.org/psa for more information on PSA testing.



Top tips for talking about cancer

- 1. Ask open questions** – Start questions with ‘what’, ‘when’, ‘where’ and ‘how’. An example is ‘what has your doctor said?’.
- 2. Use simple language** – This improves understanding and removes barriers. Use familiar words and speak in short sentences.
- 3. Encourage positive action** – This can inspire people to make changes, however big or small, to reduce their risk of cancer.
- 4. Actively listen** – Give your full attention, make eye contact, and be supportive.
- 5. Repeat points back** – This encourages acting on any next steps suggested.
- 6. Normalise talking about cancer** – If we can talk about cancer like we do other diseases, it can help reduce any stigma and break down barriers for people to seek help.
- 7. Signpost** – You don’t need to have all the answers. Signpost people to places with reliable information and resources, such as Cancer Research UK and the NHS.
- 8. Refer to a doctor** – Symptoms could mean different things and not just cancer. Encourage people to speak to a doctor if something isn’t normal for them.
- 9. Be aware of your boundaries** – Starting the conversation is the important thing. You want to be comfortable and stay within your boundaries, whether professional or personal.
- 10. Support mental health** – A stressful life experience is difficult. There’s no right or wrong way to feel. Encourage people to talk to a doctor or mental health professional to get support.



If you would like more information to help you talk about cancer, check out our [article](#).

Top tips for pharmacy staff

If you work in a pharmacy you'll have plenty of opportunities to talk to customers, especially those who visit more than once.

Here's some tips for what you can do to raise cancer awareness in your pharmacy:

- Ask if they have information about cancer screening if you know their age.
- Put relevant leaflets or information cards into prescription bags.
- If a customer comes in repeatedly for over-the-counter medication for the same symptom, you could say to them, "What does your doctor say about that?" as a prompt to discuss seeking medical attention. You could then offer for them to come back and chat to you once they have seen their doctor to see how they got on.
- Display leaflets and posters somewhere people can easily see and read them such as in the window or prescription waiting area. Get creative and make your displays visually engaging so they're more likely to start a conversation. You can order these resources for free at cruk.org/leaflets
- Mention local and national campaigns in your conversations, like Better Health. The customer may already be familiar with the campaign, so the messages will be reinforced.



Cancer Research UK patient and public services

Nurse helpline

Anyone can speak to our specialist cancer nurses, Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm on Freephone **0808 800 4040**

Clinical trials database

Direct people diagnosed with cancer and loved ones to our clinical trials database to find out about clinical trials in their area cruk.org/trials

Cancer Chat

Anyone affected by cancer can share information and experiences with others in our online community cruk.org/cancerchat

Website

Find information about all aspects of cancer at cruk.org/about-cancer

Local cancer statistics

Find information about latest cancer-related statistics in local areas at cruk.org/localstats

Leaflets

Order a wide range of free resources about cancer via cruk.org/leaflets

Health webpages

Find information about the causes of cancer at cruk.org/health

Spot cancer early webpages

Find information about spotting cancer early at cruk.org/spotcancerearly

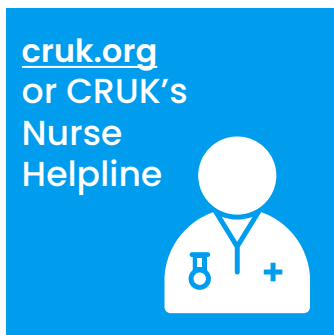
Patient involvement

Shape, influence and guide our work through our patient involvement network. Find out how to get involved at cruk.org/patientinvolvement

A quick guide to signposting

You don't need to know all the answers, remember to signpost people to accurate and reliable sources of health information or to their doctor if they have any concerns.

Examples of where to signpost people to include:



Prevention quiz answer sheet

Here are the answers to the quiz, plus some handy information.

1. How many types of cancer are linked to smoking?

- a. 2
- b. 10
- c. 15**
- d. 30

Smoking causes at least 15 different types of cancer: lung, larynx, oesophagus, oral cavity, nasopharynx, pharynx, bladder, pancreas, kidney, liver, stomach, bowel, cervix, leukaemia and ovarian cancers [11].

Smoking doesn't just mean packet cigarettes, it also includes roll-ups, cigars, pipes, shisha, chewing tobacco (also known as 'paan'), bidis and snus. There is no safe way to use tobacco.

2. Approximately how much does smoking 20 a day for 10 years cost?

- a. £10,500
- b. £17,350
- c. £32,700
- d. £54,750**

The average cost of smoking 20 cigarettes a day is around £15 (in the UK, December 2023) [12]. If someone smokes this many cigarettes for the next 10 years they will spend £54,750 [13]. Different people may have different motivations for wanting to quit smoking. Talking about it can help to work out what motivates them. If it's cost, they may find calculating potential savings helpful. This can be done at [nhs.uk/smokefree](https://www.nhs.uk/smokefree)

3. How many types of cancer are caused by overweight and obesity?

- a. 3
- b. 7
- c. 10
- d. 13**

Overweight and obesity cause 13 different types of cancer: breast, bowel, womb, oesophageal (food pipe), pancreatic, kidney, liver, stomach, gallbladder, ovarian, thyroid, myeloma (a type of blood cancer) and meningioma (a type of brain tumour) [14].

There isn't one perfect weight for everyone. But there are tools to understand healthy weight. Body Mass Index (BMI) can be used to work out if someone is a healthy weight for their height and is a useful guide for most adults. Another option is waist-to-height ratio. Find out more at [nhs.uk](https://www.nhs.uk) and [cruk.org/weight](https://www.cruk.org/weight)

A healthy balanced diet with plenty of foods high in fibre like wholegrains, fruit and vegetables, and less processed and red meat and high-calorie food and drinks can help you keep a healthy weight and cut cancer risk.

Frozen fruit and vegetables are just as good as fresh, as are tinned fruit and veg, as long as they're in natural juice without added sugar or salt. These also last longer and may cost less. Other ideas include buying reduced-price veg to make soups or sauces and then freezing them, or planning meals and snacks ahead.

Many services are available in local areas to support people making healthy changes. These may include: stop smoking services, weight management services, health trainers, walking groups, pharmacies, GP practices and more. Using them can increase the chance of success. Find what's available in your area at [nhs.uk/service-search](https://www.nhs.uk/service-search)

4. Drinking alcohol increases the risk of how many types of cancer?

- a. 1
- b. 5
- c. 7**
- d. 9

Drinking alcohol increases the risk of 7 types of cancer: mouth, pharyngeal (upper throat), oesophageal (food pipe), laryngeal (voice box), breast, bowel and liver cancer [15].

5. What are the guidelines on weekly alcohol limits for men and women?

- a. 14 units for women and 21 units for men
- b. 21 units for all adults
- c. 14 units for all adults**
- d. 21 units for women and 28 units for men

All adults are advised to drink no more than 14 units (about seven ordinary strength pints of beer or standard glasses of wine) of alcohol a week. But there is no completely safe level of drinking, as alcohol damages your body even in small amounts. So the less you drink, the better for your health.

There are many ways someone could cut down the amount of alcohol they're drinking. Such as, drink a glass of water in between each alcoholic drink and try meeting somewhere other than a pub.

Find more tips at [**cruk.org/alcohol**](https://www.cruk.org/alcohol)

6. How much physical activity is recommended by the government?

- a. 60 minutes of moderate activity a week
- b. 90 minutes of moderate activity a week
- c. 45 minutes of vigorous activity a week
- d. 150 minutes of moderate activity a week**

The Department of Health recommends at least 150 minutes (2.5 hours) of moderate intensity physical activity over a week, or 75 minutes of vigorous activity a week. Physical activity to improve muscle strength should be carried out on at least two days a week. Any amount of physical activity is good for you and is better than none. But the more you can do, the better.

7. What does moderate activity mean?

- a. Just moving to increase your activity levels
- b. Running as fast as you can
- c. Getting a bit out of breath and warmer**
- d. A gentle walk

Moderate activity is anything that gets you a bit warmer, slightly out of breath and your heart beating faster. Things like brisk walking, cycling, gardening and dancing can all count.

Find out more at [**cruk.org/active**](https://www.cruk.org/active)



Enjoy the sun safely

The last risk factor we cover in the workshop is sun.

The sun is often strong enough to cause skin damage between mid-March and mid-October in the UK, even when it's cloudy or cool. The UV index tells us how strong the sun is where you are today. If it's 3 (moderate) or above, think about protecting your skin.

Spend time in the shade, cover up with clothes, a hat and sunglasses and use sunscreen on the parts you can't cover, applying generously and regularly. And remember, sunbeds aren't a safe option. They use UV radiation which increases the risk of skin cancer.

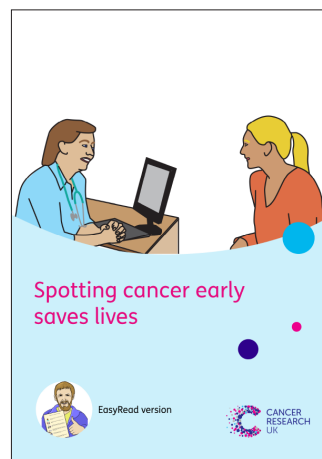
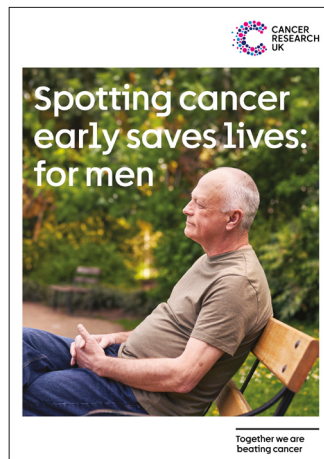
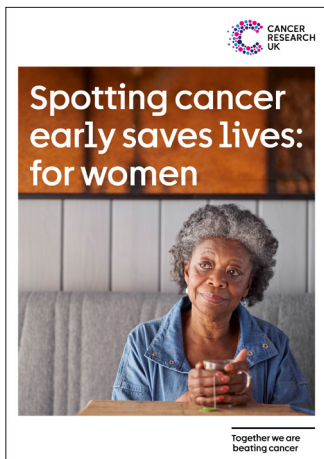
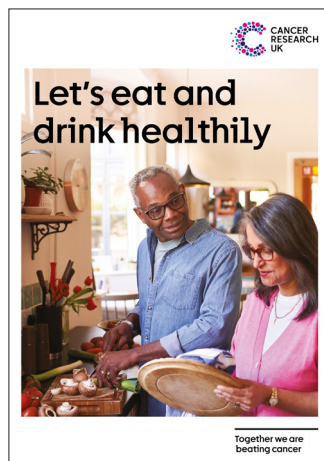
For more information on reducing your risk of cancer visit cruk.org/health

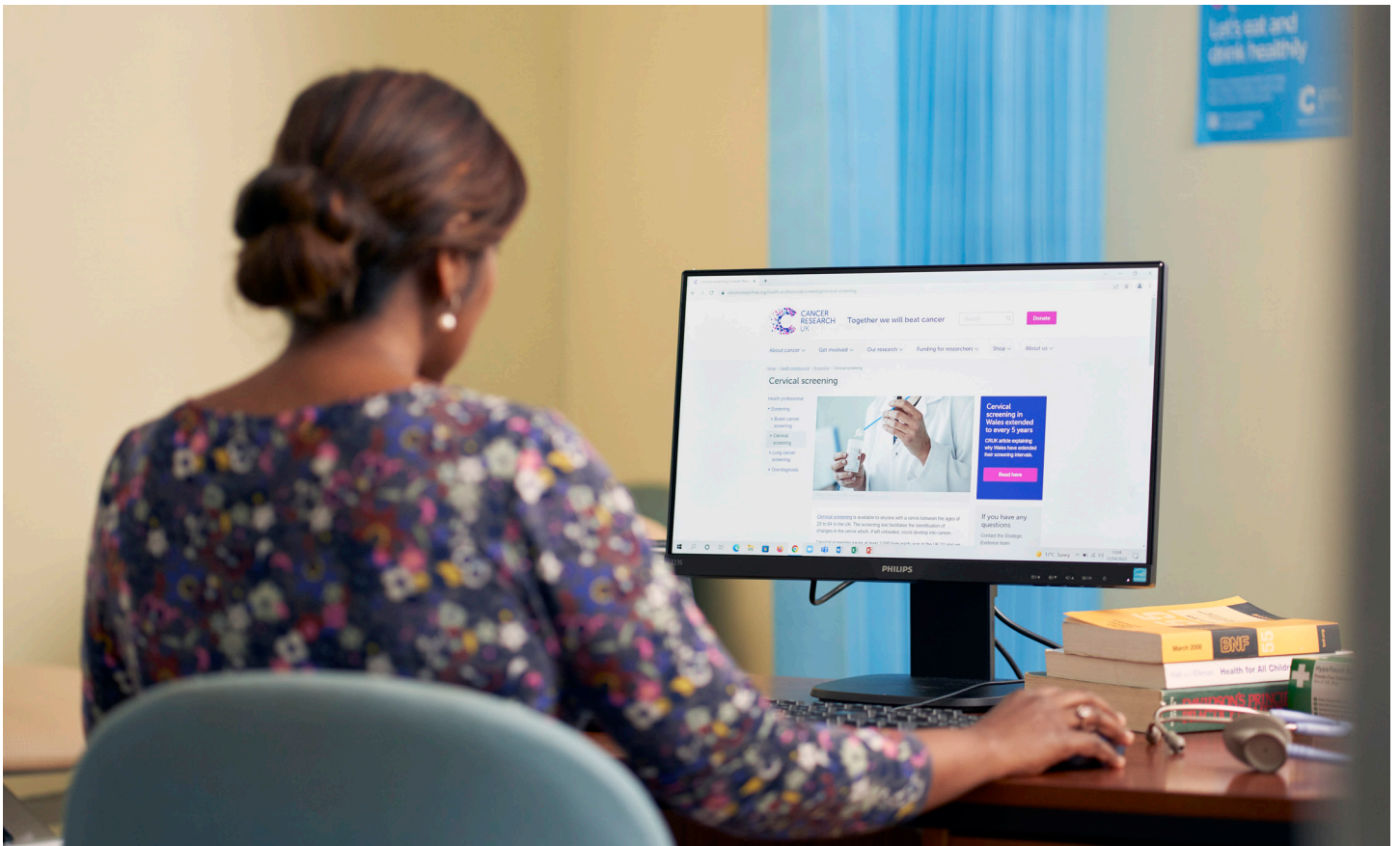
Cancer Research UK resources

There's a range of posters, fact sheets and leaflets, including easy-read and large print options, available on our website at cruk.org/leaflets. You can order physical copies to be posted to you, or download digital versions to share and print, all free of charge.

You can use these resources in conversations, in displays or to share however you like.

To give feedback on the leaflets or find out more information about the sources used to create them, email publications@cancer.org.uk





Comprehensive resources for professionals

We can help you keep up to date with the latest statistics, evidence and information on diagnosing, treating and preventing cancer.

We also offer professional tools and early diagnosis campaigns and activities that can support your work.

Find out more at cruk.org/health-professional

My Talk Cancer action plan

Thank you for taking part in our Talk Cancer workshop.
Here's an action plan to keep a record of how you'll use what you've learnt.

1. What one thing will I do differently or more often after coming to a Talk Cancer workshop?

For example:

- Encouraging people to talk to a doctor about anything that isn't normal for them
- Tip: remind them to write down any worries or questions before their appointment
- Support someone to think of a manageable change that could improve their health

My ideas:

2. What useful questions could I ask during a conversation?

For example:

- What does your doctor say about that?
- Do you know what services are available?
- Do you know who to contact?

My ideas:

3. Where can I direct people to for more support?

For example:

- A local stop smoking service
- Another local support service
- Cancer Research UK nurse helpline **(0808 800 4040)**

My ideas:

[illegible]

4. Any other actions or reflections from the session?

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Case study

Christina is a pharmacist who attended a Talk Cancer workshop.

"I didn't think it would be very personal. I thought it would be 'just another lecture'.

I learned a lot, especially about the psychology of why people don't go to the doctor with symptoms they might be worried about. I always think about 'red flag' symptoms, but it was useful to get some tips on bringing this up with customers, and what I could say to people to encourage them.

After the training, I encouraged a man with a persistent dry cough to visit his doctor. I knew this customer quite well as he regularly visited the pharmacy for medication. Four weeks later when the man came back, the cough was now productive. The training was in the front of my mind, so I suggested it might be something more serious and worth getting checked out by a doctor.

At first he said he didn't want to bother the doctor, but I encouraged him to go. When he next visited the pharmacy, he told me he had been to the doctor. His GP had referred him for urgent tests, where he was diagnosed with a squamous cell

carcinoma of the lung. I believe he's now finished his chemo and is feeling back to normal. Hopefully he will be in the clear now.

And just the other week I had a conversation with a lady who was complaining of arm pain. I asked her if it was normal for her to have this pain and she said it wasn't, so I encouraged her to go see her doctor. I know she has since been diagnosed with breast cancer, so hopefully this was caught early.

I've also been ordering lots of Cancer Research UK leaflets about different cancer types. I try to put these in the prescription bags and have encouraged my colleagues to do the same. I think all pharmacies should have Talk Cancer training at least once a year. It really can help pharmacists to feel more comfortable talking about cancer."

If you have any stories about how you have used the Talk Cancer training, we'd love to hear from you. Get in touch by emailing talkcancer@cancer.org.uk

"I think all pharmacies should have Talk Cancer training at least once a year. It really can help pharmacists to feel more comfortable talking about cancer."





Keep your Talk Cancer knowledge fresh

Your cancer awareness journey doesn't stop after the Talk Cancer training. You can follow our social channels and sign up to our newsletter to receive regular updates on how to talk about cancer prevention and early diagnosis. This will help you keep your knowledge up to date so you can make the most of your conversations now and in the future.

You can also join our Facebook Community Group where you can interact with fellow cancer awareness champions.

These resources are available for everyone, so you can recommend them to anyone you know who wants to learn more about how to talk about cancer.

Find our Facebook Community Group at [**facebook.com/groups/cruktalkcancer**](https://facebook.com/groups/cruktalkcancer)

Follow our X channel: [**@TalkCancer_CRUK**](https://twitter.com/TalkCancer_CRUK)

Sign up to our newsletter through our webpage: [**cruk.org/talkcancer**](https://cruk.org/talkcancer)

"Being able to scroll through the Facebook feed and see cancer information and conversation tips is great as it reminds me to spot opportunities to talk about cancer, as well as encourages me to take positive action for my health and how to inform others.."

List of key organisations

Addiction

Addiction Helper

The UK's leading addiction treatment helpline, created by people in recovery.

Phone: **numbers available on website**

Website: [**addictionhelper.com**](https://addictionhelper.com)

Online chat: available on website

Email: [**info@addictionhelper.com**](mailto:info@addictionhelper.com)

Alcohol

Alcohol Change UK

Works to improve knowledge about alcohol harm, effect better policy and regulation, shift cultural norms, improve drinking behaviours, and help build more and better support and treatment.

Phone (this is not a phone line, general enquiries only): **0203 907 8480**

Website: [**alcoholchange.org.uk**](https://alcoholchange.org.uk)

Email: [**contact@alcoholchange.org.uk**](mailto:contact@alcoholchange.org.uk)

Drugs

Talk to FRANK (used to be the National Drugs Helpline)

FRANK provides friendly and confidential drugs advice and information.

Phone: **0300 123 6600** (24 hours a day, 7 days a week)

Text: **82111**

Website: [**talktofrank.com**](https://talktofrank.com)

Online chat: available on website (2pm–6pm, seven days a week)

Email: [**frank@talktofrank.com**](mailto:frank@talktofrank.com)

Age and the elderly

Age UK (formerly Age Concern and Help the Aged)

Aims to improve later life for everyone through information and advice, services, campaigns, products, training and research.

England Freephone: **0800 055 6112**
(8am–7pm, every day of the year)

Northern Ireland Freephone: **0808 808 7575**
(Mon–Fri, 9am–5pm)

Scotland Freephone: **0800 12 44 222**
(Mon–Fri, 9am–5pm)

Wales Freephone: **0300 303 44 98**
(Mon–Fri, 9am–4pm)

Website: [**ageuk.org.uk**](https://ageuk.org.uk)

Webchat and email form: [**ageuk.org.uk/contact-us/information-and-advice/**](https://ageuk.org.uk/contact-us/information-and-advice/)

Cancer information and support

Cancer Research UK

Cancer Research UK's cancer information nurses will answer any question about any aspect of any cancer. The service is confidential.

Phone: **0808 800 4040** (Mon–Fri, 9am–5pm)

Website: [**cruk.org**](https://cruk.org)

Cancer Chat online discussion/support forum: [**cruk.org/cancerchat**](https://cruk.org/cancerchat)

Email a nurse: [**cruk.org/about-us/contact-us/talk-to-our-nurses**](https://cruk.org/about-us/contact-us/talk-to-our-nurses)

Macmillan Cancer Support

Provides practical, medical and financial support and pushes for better cancer care.

Phone: **0808 808 0000** (open 7 days a week, 8am–8pm. Opening times may vary for different specialist teams)

Website: [**macmillan.org.uk**](https://macmillan.org.uk)

Online chat: available on the website (every day 8am–8pm)

Email: [**macmillan.org.uk/about-us/contact-us/ask-macmillan-form.html**](https://macmillan.org.uk/about-us/contact-us/ask-macmillan-form.html)

Breast Cancer Now (formerly Breast Cancer Care and Breast Cancer Now)

Funds research and provides information and support for anyone affected by breast cancer.

Phone: **0808 800 6000** (Mon–Fri 9am–4pm, Sat 9am–1pm, closed Sun). Can offer telephone interpreting service in 240 languages.

Website: [**breastcancer.org**](https://breastcancer.org)

Email a nurse: [**breastcancer.org/submit/ask-our-nurses**](https://breastcancer.org/submit/ask-our-nurses)

Jo's Cervical Cancer Trust

The only UK charity dedicated to people affected by cervical cancer and cervical abnormalities and their families and friends.

Phone: **0808 802 8000** (Mon–Fri, opening times vary)

Website: [**jostrust.org.uk**](https://jostrust.org.uk)

Email: [**info@jostrust.org.uk**](mailto:info@jostrust.org.uk)

Maggie's

Maggie's provides free practical, emotional and social support to people with cancer and their family and friends.

Website: [**maggies.org**](https://maggies.org)

Phone: **0300 123 1801**

Email: [**enquiries@maggies.org**](mailto:enquiries@maggies.org)

Bowel Cancer UK

The UK's leading bowel cancer charity.

Phone: **0207 940 1760** (Mon–Fri, 9am–5pm)

Website: [**bowelcanceruk.org.uk**](https://bowelcanceruk.org.uk)

Email a nurse:

[**nurse@bowelcanceruk.org.uk**](mailto:nurse@bowelcanceruk.org.uk) (response time is two working days)

Northern Ireland: Public Health Agency

The major regional organisation for health protection and health and social wellbeing improvement in Northern Ireland.

Website: [**publichealth.hscni.net**](https://publichealth.hscni.net)

Website (for screening information): [**cancerscreening.hscni.net**](https://cancerscreening.hscni.net)

Scotland: NHS Inform

Provides health information for the public in Scotland, including information dedicated to screening programmes in Scotland.

Phone: **0800 22 44 88** (Mon–Fri, 9am–5pm)

BSL users can contact NHS Inform via [**contactscotland-bsl.org/download/**](https://contactscotland-bsl.org/download/)

An interpretation service is available.

Website: [**nhsinform.scot**](https://nhsinform.scot)

Website (screening info): [**nhsinform.scot/healthy-living/screening/**](https://nhsinform.scot/healthy-living/screening/)

Wales: Screening for Life (from NHS & Public Health Wales)

Manages the screening programmes for Wales on behalf of the Welsh Government.

Website (screening info): phw.nhs.wales/services-and-teams/screening/

SimPal

Provides free and non-means-tested phones and pre-paid sim cards for people affected by cancer, allowing them to stay in contact with loved ones, doctors etc. People can apply via the website.

Website: yoursimpal.com

Email: chris@yoursimpal.com

Heart disease

British Heart Foundation

The biggest funder of heart research in the UK. Cardiac nurses and heart health advisors are on hand to help with any questions or concerns.

Freephone: **0808 802 1234** (Mon–Fri, 9am–5pm)

Website: bhf.org.uk

Email: hearthelpline@bhf.org.uk

Lung disease

Asthma + Lung UK

The UK's leading lung charity. For independent, confidential advice and support contact their Respiratory Nurses and Health Care Advisors:

Phone: **0300 222 5800** (Mon–Fri, 9am–5pm)

Website: asthmaandlung.org.uk

Email: helpline@asthmaandlung.org.uk

Diabetes

Diabetes UK

The UK's leading diabetes charity. Their helpline is for anyone with diabetes and their friends, family and carers.

Phone: **0345 123 2399** (Mon–Fri, 9am–6pm)

Website: diabetes.org.uk

Email: helpline@diabetes.org.uk

Online chat: available on website

Scotland

Phone: **0141 212 8710** (Mon–Fri, 9am–6pm)

Email: helpline.scotland@diabetes.org.uk

Northern Ireland

Email: n.ireland@diabetes.org.uk

Wales

Email: wales@diabetes.org.uk

Blood/bone marrow donor organisations

Anthony Nolan Trust

A charity that aims to save the lives of people with blood cancer who need a blood stem cell or bone marrow transplant by using their register to find matches.

Phone (general enquiries): **0303 303 0303**

Emergency phone: **0771 059 9161** (out of hours – if you're calling from a transplant centre or laboratory, you're a donor in the process of donating, or you're a courier in the process of transporting cells)

Website: anthonymolan.org

Email: patientinfo@anthonymolan.org

Eating disorders

Beat

A nationwide organisation supporting people affected by eating disorders and their family and friends. Open every day of the year, 3–8pm.

Website: beateatingdisorders.org.uk

Online chat: available on the website under online support groups.

For adults (people over 18):

Phone: **0808 801 0677**

Email: help@beateatingdisorders.org.uk

Scotland

Phone: **0808 801 0432**

Email:

scotlandhelp@beateatingdisorders.org.uk

Wales

Phone: **0808 801 0433**

Email:

waleshelp@beateatingdisorders.org.uk

Northern Ireland

Phone: **0808 801 0434**

Email: NIhelp@beateatingdisorders.org.uk

Carers

Carers Trust (formerly the Princess Royal Trust for Carers and Crossroads Care)

Works to improve support, services and recognition for anyone living with the challenges of caring, unpaid, for a family member or friend who is ill, frail, disabled or has mental health or addiction issues.

Phone: **0300 772 9600**

Website: carers.org

Email: info@carers.org

Scotland

Phone: **0300 772 7701**

Email: scotland@carers.org

Wales

Phone: **0300 772 9702**

Email: wales@carers.org

Mental health

Samaritans

Works to alleviate emotional distress and reduce the incidence of suicidal feelings and behaviour.

Phone: **116123** (24 hours a day, 7 days a week)

Website: samaritans.org

Email: jo@samaritans.org

Mind

A mental health charity that aims to ensure anyone with a mental health problem has somewhere to turn for advice and support.

Phone: **0300 123 3393** (Mon–Fri 9am–6pm, except bank holidays)

Website: mind.org.uk

Email: info@mind.org.uk

Online chat: available on website

Papyrus

A national charity dedicated to the prevention of young suicide in the UK.

Phone: **0800 068 41 41** (every day of the year, 9am–midnight)

Text: **07860 039967**

Website: papyrus-uk.org

Email: pat@papyrus-uk.org

Welldoing.org

An organisation offering information, tips and advice about mental health and wellbeing, and a directory of therapists.

Website: welldoing.org

Email: info@welldoing.org

Wellbeing and Recovery Colleges

These run throughout the country, offering educational courses on mental health, wellbeing and recovery, and life and work skills. Courses are co-created and co-delivered by people with lived experience of mental health issues and mental health professionals. Students include people living with mental health issues, their carers, their families and those working or volunteering in the field.

Website: search online for your local Recovery College

Stopping smoking

England: NHS Smokefree Helpline

Phone: **0300 123 1044** (Mon–Fri 9am–8pm, Sat–Sun 11am–4pm)

Website: nhs.uk/better-health/quit-smoking/

Wales: Help Me Quit

The NHS stop smoking service for Wales, with information in both Welsh and English.

Phone: **0800 085 2219**

Website: helpmequit.wales

Email: helpmequit@wales.nhs.uk

Text: HMQ to **80818**

Scotland: Quit Your Way

An advice and support service for anyone trying to stop smoking in Scotland. The service is run by NHS 24 and is staffed by trained advisors who'll be able to give you expert advice.

Phone: **0800 848484** (Mon–Fri, 9am–5pm)
(interpretation service available on Scotland Language Line: **0800 22 44 88**)

Website: nhsinform.scot/care-support-and-rights/nhs-services/helplines/quit-your-way-scotland

Online chat: available on website

General health

British Dietetic Association – Weight Loss

Developed for, and managed by, the British Dietetic Association (BDA), the site has easy-to-follow hints and tips to help you manage your weight for good.

Website: bda.uk.com/resource/weight-loss.html

Email: info@bda.uk.com

Better Health

A campaign to help people make simple, positive changes for a longer and happier life.

Website: nhs.uk/better-health/

Better Health: Healthier Families

Aims to help families lead healthier lives by eating well and moving more.

Website: nhs.uk/healthier-families/

Northern Ireland: Public Health Agency Services

The major regional organisation for health protection and health and social wellbeing improvement in Northern Ireland.

Website (health information):
nidirect.gov.uk/information-and-services/living-well/healthy-lives

Website (stop smoking info):
stopsmokingni.info

Wales: NHS 111

Provides information about the main types of local NHS health and social care services. There is also a health, wellbeing and support directory with details of local groups and national organisations who offer health, wellbeing, and support services.

Website: 111.wales.nhs.uk/localservices/

Sexuality, sex and gender

LGBT Foundation

A portfolio of services and initiatives aimed at meeting the needs of lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans people.

Phone: **03453 30 30 30** (Mon–Fri 9am–9pm, Sat–Sun 10am–6pm, excluding bank holidays and religious festivals)

Website: lgbt.foundation

Stonewall

Works to achieve equality and justice for lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans people through information, policy development, cultural and attitudinal change, and lobbying for legal change.

Phone: **0207 593 1850** (Mon–Fri, 9.30am–5.30pm)

England

Website: stonewall.org.uk

Email: info@stonewall.org.uk

Northern Ireland

Website:

stonewall.org.uk/northern-ireland

Email:

northern.ireland@stonewall.org.uk

Scotland

Website: stonewallscotland.org.uk

Email:

info@stonewallscotland.org.uk

Wales

Website: stonewallcymru.org.uk

Email:

cymru@stonewallcymru.org.uk

Public Health Wales: Screening For Life

A combined effort to make screening programmes more accessible and inclusive for the transgender community. Information for transgender people can be found on each screening programme's web pages.

Website: phw.nhs.wales/services-and-teams/screening/

Sexual health

Brook

Brook provides information about sex and relationships, contraception, STIs, pregnancy and lifestyle for under 25s.

Website: brook.org.uk

MSI Reproductive Choices UK

The UK's leading independent provider of sexual and reproductive healthcare services also offers information, advice and professional care.

England, Scotland and Wales phone: **0345 300 8090** (24 hours a day, 7 days a week)

Northern Ireland phone: **0333 234 2184** (24 hours a day, 7 days a week)

Booking line for consultations: **0345 300 8090** (7am–11pm, every day of the year)

Aftercare line: **0345 122 1441** (24 hours a day, 7 days a week)

Website: msichoices.org

Email: services@msichoices.org.uk

National Sexual Health Helpline

Phone: **0300 123 7123** (Mon–Fri, 9am–8pm)

Child protection

Childline

A private and confidential service for children and young people up to the age of 19.

Phone: **0800 11 11** (24 hours a day, 7 days a week)

Website: childline.org.uk

Online chat and email: available on website

Contact a counsellor through a BSL interpreter with SignVideo via the website (Mon–Fri 8am–8pm, Sat 8am–1pm)

Contact a Welsh-speaking counsellor for phone support: can be arranged via the website

Vulnerable people

Halo Project

A national project to support victims of honour-based violence, forced marriages and female genital mutilation by providing appropriate advice and support to victims.

Phone: **01642 683 045** (Mon–Fri, 9am–5pm)

Website: haloproject.org.uk

Email: info@haloproject.org.uk

Live chat: Mon–Fri 8am–10am and 6pm–9pm, Sat–Sun 10am–2pm

Housing, poverty and social isolation

Men's Sheds

Community spaces for men to connect, talk and make things to help reduce social isolation and loneliness, and empower local communities.

Phone: **0300 772 9626** (Mon–Fri, 9am–2.30pm)

Website: menssheds.org.uk

Email: admin@ukmsa.org.uk

The Trussell Trust

Supports a nationwide network of food banks to provide emergency food and support to people locked in poverty, as well as campaigning to end the need for food banks in the UK.

Phone: **01722 580 180**

Website: trusselltrust.org

Email: enquiries@trusselltrust.org

Shelter

Helps people with bad housing or homelessness through advice, support and legal services.

England and Scotland

Phone: **0808 800 4444**

Website: shelter.org.uk

Online chat: available on the website

Wales

Phone: **08000 495495** (Welsh-speaking advisers available)

Website: sheltercymru.org.uk/get-help

Money and legal advice

Citizens Advice

Helps people resolve their legal, money and other problems by providing free, independent and confidential advice, and by influencing policymakers.

Website: citizensadvice.org.uk

Online chat: available on website

England:

Adviceline: **0800 144 8848** (Mon–Fri, 9am–5pm)

Text relay: **03444 111 445**

Northern Ireland

Phone: visit citizensadvice.org.uk/about-us/northern-ireland for a directory of local advice agencies

Scotland

Phone: **0800 028 1456**

Website: citizensadvice.org.uk/scotland

Wales

Advicelink: **0800 702 2020** (Mon–Fri, 9am–5pm)

Website: citizensadvice.org.uk/wales

Relay UK – if you can't hear or speak on the phone, you can type what you want to say: **18001** then **0800 144 8848** for England or **0800 702 2020** for Wales

Local services

NHS

The UK's largest health website with thousands of articles, videos and tools to help you make the best choices about your health. Also has a service directory to help you find local services in your area, like NHS doctors and dentists.

Website: nhs.uk

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Notes

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Reference: TCTRBOOK.

January 2024.

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