

42. Unable to express feelings

It's natural to have many different thoughts and feelings after a cancer diagnosis. Some people feel upset, shocked or anxious, while others feel angry, guilty or alone. There is no right way for you to feel.

Emotions can be difficult for you, and people close to you, to deal with. You may find that some feelings pass with time, while others last longer. It's impossible to know how you will react to a diagnosis of cancer so try to find a way of coping that suits you.

Common feelings include:

- shock and disbelief
- anger
- avoidance
- guilt and blame
- a loss of control, independence and confidence
- sorrow and sadness
- withdrawal
- loneliness and isolation
- fear and anxiety

There are many ways to manage your emotions. Sharing your thoughts and feelings is often a good place to start. Try talking with someone close. Remember, help is always available if you need it. Speak to your doctor, family or friend if you are struggling to cope.

It can be hard to know what to do when you feel low. Knowing where to start can be especially daunting.

One of the best things to do is to talk about how you feel with someone close. Family and friends often know you best and will usually understand your feelings.

It's really important to take care of yourself. Try to eat well and exercise regularly. You may not feel like it at the time, but getting up and dressed each day can really help.

It's normal for your feelings to build up. If you feel like they are getting too much, there are ways to release your tension. Complementary therapies may help you to relax, while support groups allow you to share your experiences. Some organisations provide counselling and emotional support, if you feel this would help.

It may take a while for you to know what works and what doesn't. Advice and support is always available if you are finding it difficult to cope.

Living With and Beyond Cancer Information Sheet

42. Unable to express feelings - Resources/Information

Local Resources:

<p>Cancer Care Counselling Service The Fern Centre North Devon District Hospital Raleigh park Barnstaple Devon EX32 4JB</p>	<p>Jess French, Lead Macmillan Cancer Care Counsellor Tel: 01271 334472 (ext. 5672) Email: jess.french@nhs.net Web: https://overandabove.org.uk/fern-centre/ Self referral or though your CNS or keyworker</p>
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National Resources:

NHS 111	Offers medical help and advice from fully trained advisers supported by experienced nurses and paramedics. Available over the phone 24 hours a day.
NHS Website	Online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you take control of your health and wellbeing.
Samaritans https://www.samaritans.org/	When people feel listened to, it can save a life ‘, confidential support for people experiencing feelings of distress or despair Tel: 116 123(free 24hr helpline)
Macmillan Cancer Support Line www.macmillan.org.uk Call 0808 808 00 00 — Monday – Friday 9am—8pm	Calls are free of charge from all consumer landlines and mobile phones plus all mobile networks. Please note that calls to this number are not free when made from outside the UK. If you are calling from outside of the UK call on +44 207 091 2230
Macmillan on-line Community	Online support— to share experiences or vent your emotions find others who understand—join today!
Marie Curie Support Line — Living with a terminal illness and looking for support www.mariecurie.org.uk/help/support/marie-curie-support	Calls are free of charge from all consumer landlines and mobile phones plus all mobile networks. The Support Line is open 8am – 6pm Monday to Friday and 11am – 5pm Saturday

Other Resources :

Macmillan Booklets:	Life after cancer treatment— MAC11661_E12_N
	Managing the symptoms of cancer MAC11671
	How are you feeling? PDF— MAC11593_E05_N
	Understanding chemotherapy MAC11619_E15
	Cancer and relationships— MAC17643_E01_N
	Talking about cancer and your feelings— MAC11631_E09_N