

# Living with Mesothelioma

## A Quick Guide

### Contents

This is a brief summary of 'Living with mesothelioma' from our website. You will find more detailed information on there. In this information there are sections on

- Coping with mesothelioma
- Living with advanced cancer
- Questions for your doctor
- Mesothelioma organisations

You can view this information in a larger print on our website.

### Coping with mesothelioma

It can be very difficult coping with a diagnosis of cancer, both practically and emotionally. You are likely to feel very confused and upset at first. Mesothelioma is often diagnosed at quite an advanced stage. As well as coping with your diagnosis, you may be trying to cope with the news that your cancer is very difficult to treat and unlikely to be curable.

As well as coping with the fear and anxiety that a diagnosis of cancer brings, you have to work out how to manage practically. There may be money matters to sort out. Who do you tell you have cancer? There may be children or grandchildren to consider.

The coping with cancer section of our website contains lots of information you may find helpful. There are sections on:

- Your feelings
- Talking to people: who and what to tell
- Talking to children
- How you can help yourself
- Who else can help you
- Sick pay and benefits: coping financially

### Living with advanced cancer

Finding out that you have been diagnosed with an advanced cancer, or that your cancer has come back, can be devastating. Having advanced cancer means your cancer cannot be cured, but there are treatments available that can slow your cancer down. You will need to talk very carefully to your own specialist to understand what the diagnosis means for you, what treatment is available, and how treatment may help you.

It is important that you feel as well as you possibly can. If you haven't already been referred, ask your hospital doctor or GP about a specialist palliative care team. Specialist cancer nurses can help control your cancer symptoms and improve the quality of your life. If you are having any physical difficulties in coping at home your specialist cancer nurse or a district nurse can talk to you about ways you may cope more easily.

If you are having problems with breathlessness, there is information on coping with this in the 'living with lung cancer' section of our website. And the 'death and dying' section has information about coping with cancer symptoms, strong emotions and other difficulties that you may have during the last few months of life. There is also information for carers, friends and relatives.

### What to ask your doctor about living with mesothelioma

- How long will it take me to get over my treatment?
- What precautions will I have to take while I am recovering?
- What practical help is available?
- Can I go back to work?
- Can I take up my usual hobbies and sports again?
- Can I go abroad on holiday?
- Can I drink alcohol?
- Can you put me in touch with a counsellor?
- How much will counselling cost?
- Can you help me with claiming compensation for my illness from my former employers?

### Mesothelioma organisations

#### Cancer Research UK

Website: [www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer](http://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer)  
Cancer Information Nurses phone: 0808 800 4040

#### British Lung Foundation

Phone: 03000 030 555 (Helpline open Monday to Friday, 9am to 5 pm)  
Website: <http://www.lunguk.org/>

#### Mesothelioma UK

Website: [www.mesothelioma.uk.com/](http://www.mesothelioma.uk.com/)  
Helpline: 0800 169 2409 (Helpline Monday to Friday 8.30am-4.30pm)

**For more information**, visit our website <http://www.cruk.org/about-cancer>

You will find a wide range of detailed, up to date information for people affected by cancer, including a clinical trials database that you can search for trials in the UK. Our information is based on the best current scientific evidence and reviewed regularly by leading clinicians and experts in health and social care.

For answers to your questions about cancer call our Cancer Information Nurses on 0808 800 4040 9am till 5pm Monday to Friday.

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