

## Accessing Support: Anticipatory Nausea

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Anticipatory nausea refers to a feeling of sickness before starting a chemotherapy session. This can develop after repeated experiences of nausea and vomiting during previous chemotherapy sessions. Anticipatory nausea occurs as the feelings of nausea or sickness caused by previous chemotherapy begin to be associated with cues, such as the smell of the ward, the sight of a drip, or even just the thought of having chemotherapy in the near future.



Anticipatory nausea is worth discussing with your treating team to see if a (different) course of anti-emetic (anti-sickness) drugs might work for you. However, anticipatory nausea is a learned response which means it has a significant psychological component that you may wish to try and address.

Below is a list of organisations who may be able to offer you some support, as well as some resources that you may find helpful to read/listen to. The range and quality of services/support available from such organisations may vary. This list has been gathered as signposting only, and The Royal Marsden cannot guarantee the accuracy of the information provided by an organisation listed or the quality of their services.

If you have any questions or would like further advice/guidance about where to seek specialist help in your local area, you can speak with a member of your Royal Marsden treatment team or the Adult Psychological Support Service.

### Beyond Blue – Relaxation exercises

This website provides breathing exercises, muscle relaxation, visualisations and more. If you are feeling anxious about receiving chemotherapy, and the nausea that might accompany this, it could be beneficial to try some of these exercises.

Website link: [Self-guided relaxation exercises for anxiety, depression and wellbeing management - Beyond Blue](#)

### Cure – Anticipatory Nausea and Vomiting

A brief resource that can be used to acquaint yourself with what anticipatory nausea is and what causes it.

Website link: <https://www.curetoday.com/view/anticipatory-nausea-and-vomiting>



## Help Guide - Body Scan Meditation

Relaxation or guided imagery exercises can help manage the anxiety that often goes hand in hand with anticipatory anxiety. A body scan exercise has been selected, which might support you in keeping your focus on yourself and how you are feeling, rather than on the potential triggers of the environment around you, but you can also search for your own relaxation or guided imagery exercises to see if these suit you better.

Website link: <https://www.helpguide.org/meditations/body-scan-meditation.htm>

## Healthline - Is Ginger a Safe and Effective Treatment for Nausea?

Whilst it is not effective for everybody, some people find consuming ginger helps them with feelings of nausea. However, it is important to note that even natural remedies such as ginger can sometimes interfere with chemotherapy, so please contact your treatment team before consuming ginger to help with nausea.

Website link: <https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/ginger-for-nausea#other-remedies>

## Macmillan – Nausea and Vomiting

Information on the causes of nausea and vomiting during cancer treatment, and methods and support for managing it. Despite not being specific to anticipatory nausea, the strategies outlined might still be helpful.

Website link: <https://www.macmillan.org.uk/cancer-information-and-support/impacts-of-cancer/nausea-and-vomiting>

## Mind – How can I distract myself?

In the lead up to chemotherapy, some people find it helpful to distract themselves so that they do not focus on the things that can induce feelings of nausea. You may have your own ideas for what might work for you, but this website provides suggestions for activities, websites and games which others find useful when they need to distract themselves.

Website link: <https://www.mind.org.uk/need-urgent-help/how-can-i-distract-myself/>

## The Royal Marsden – Acupuncture

Acupuncture involves the insertion of thin needles at certain sites in the body in order to stimulate particular nerves and muscles. Some people find it beneficial in managing chemotherapy-related nausea symptoms. The link takes you to The Royal Marsden's acupuncture website which has useful resources and contact information. Please note that you will need to be referred by your medical team to receive acupuncture at The Royal Marsden.

Website link: <https://www.royalmarsden.nhs.uk/your-care/supportive-therapies/acupuncture>



## The Royal Marsden - Complementary treatments and therapies for nausea

A guide to non-pharmacological interventions offered through The Royal Marsden that might help you manage nausea symptoms.

Website Link: <https://www.royalmarsden.nhs.uk/your-care/living-and-beyond-cancer/coping-nausea/complementary-treatments-and-therapies-nausea>

## The Royal Marsden – Coping with anxiety and worry

This downloadable resource explores some simple techniques which can be employed to manage anxiety and worry, which may in turn help your nausea. There are some psychological models such as the ‘Worry Tree’ which can help you organise and understand things that are making you anxious and plan how you will manage them, and some techniques to help you let go of worry, such as grounding exercises.

Website link: <https://patientinfolibrary.royalmarsden.nhs.uk/coping-anxiety-and-worry>

## YouTube – Meditation for nausea

There are some free resources to guided meditations that some people find helpful in managing nausea, such as the link below.

Website Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pD247fIEWgI>

## Other APSS Information and Resources

The Adult Psychological Support Service has a range of signposting information sheets on topics such as: coping at different stages of the cancer pathway, supporting your physical and emotional wellbeing, relationships, and information specific to certain types of cancer.

You can view the signposting information sheets on The Royal Marsden’s [Patient Information Library](#) and the [Adult Psychological Support Service Website](#) (under ‘Further information and resources’). You can also request a copy of these by emailing [Psychological.SupportAdmin@rmh.nhs.uk](mailto:Psychological.SupportAdmin@rmh.nhs.uk) or telephoning **020 7808 2777** (Chelsea) / **020 8661 3006** (Sutton).

## Additional support services

### Cancer Care Map

An online database of cancer support services. You can search by postcode or by particular themes e.g. cancer type.

Website link: <https://www.cancercaremap.org/>



## Maggie's Cancer Centres

Cancer care centres with multiple locations, including The Royal Marsden Hospital, Sutton and Charing Cross Hospital, West London. Workshops, groups, information and one-to-one counselling available.

Website link: <https://www.maggies.org/>

Phone number: **0300 123 1801**

## NHS Talking Therapies

NHS website to help you find your local psychological talking therapies service based on your GP address. Your local NHS talking therapies service can be helpful if you would like psychological support for cancer when you are no longer regularly coming in for appointments at The Royal Marsden, as well as for concerns unrelated to cancer or that predated your cancer and have become worse due to it.

Website link: [Find NHS talking therapies for anxiety and depression - NHS](#)

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If you need any specialist and personalised advice about your cancer treatment, symptoms or side effects, please contact The Royal Marsden Hotline. This hotline is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week on **020 8915 6899**.

The Royal Marsden's Adult Psychological Support Service offers short-term, cancer-specific psychological and psychiatric support. You can either self-refer or ask somebody in your Royal Marsden healthcare team to refer you. For more information, visit [Adult Psychological Support Service | The Royal Marsden](#). Alternatively, contact us directly on **020 7808 2777** (Chelsea), **020 8661 3006** (Sutton), or email [Psychological.SupportAdmin@rmh.nhs.uk](mailto:Psychological.SupportAdmin@rmh.nhs.uk).



If you have ideas for other signposting or information sheets, or if you would like to be involved in working with APSS to improve the service we offer, please scan the QR code to see more about our patient and public involvement, or email [Psychological.SupportAdmin@rmh.nhs.uk](mailto:Psychological.SupportAdmin@rmh.nhs.uk) or telephone **020 7808 2777** (Chelsea) / **020 8661 3006** (Sutton) with your ideas.

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