

## Accessing Support: Breast Cancer

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Breast cancer can bring about various emotional challenges and it is important to look after your mental health as you navigate life with your diagnosis. Below are some resources aimed at enhancing your understanding of breast cancer and how other patients have dealt with the associated practical and emotional challenges. You might quite understandably like to receive some support at times. For some people family and friends can be supportive, but you might also wish to contact one of the many organisations/services that can provide information or support to those with breast cancer. It is important to recognise that life with breast cancer can be challenging at times, and to allow yourself to seek help if you feel you need it.



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.

### **BreastCancer.org - Podcasts**

#### [Sexual Side Effects of Breast Cancer Treatment](#)

This informative podcast discusses the sexual side-effects of breast cancer treatment, and potential solutions to manage the side effects.

#### [Controlling Pain During and After Breast Cancer Surgery](#)

This podcast discusses pain during and after breast cancer surgery, the types of medications used to assist with pain, side effects of pain medications and alternate methods to assist with pain without medication.

#### [Chemo Brain Update: Cancer-Related Cognitive Decline](#)

This podcast explores the term 'Chemo Brain', explains cancer-related cognitive changes and decline, and what steps people can take to manage problems in thinking and memory.



## Breast Cancer Now

A UK-wide charity that provides support to those affected by breast cancer.

The Breast Cancer Now helpline is staffed by breast care nurses and can be contacted for free at: **0808 800 6000**. The nurses can answer specific queries, help you talk things through, and assist you in finding further support.

**‘Someone Like Me’** is a peer support service where you can get matched with a trained volunteer who has been through a similar situation to you. They will offer support, answer questions or listen to your concerns about diagnosis, treatments, or life after breast cancer: [Someone Like Me | Breast Cancer Now](#)

There is also a guide to coping with breast cancer emotionally, which provides advice and links to the various types of support available through the charity: [Coping with breast cancer emotionally | Breast Cancer Now](#)

## Breast Cancer Now - "After Breast Cancer: What Now?"

Details what happens in the period immediately after the main hospital-based treatment finishes including information on follow-up care and monitoring for signs of recurrence.

Website link: [After breast cancer treatment: what now? \(BCC169\) | Breast Cancer Now](#)

## Breast Cancer Now – Moving Forward

‘Moving Forward’ offers in-person and online courses for individuals who have completed hospital treatment for primary breast cancer, and are coping with the shock of diagnosis, treatment, side effects, and worries about the cancer coming back. This course aims to provide a supportive, open and confidential space to connect with people, to feel confident, empowered and in control with the tools acquired through the course.

Website link: [Moving Forward | Breast Cancer Now](#)

## Breast Cancer Now – Younger Women Together

‘Younger Women Together’ is a service for women aged up to 45. It provides a space for you to meet other women your age who understand similar problems that you are facing. There are talks and information on topics like relationships, fertility, exercise, and more. This service can be accessed [in-person](#) , [online](#), or both.

## Breast Cancer Now – Speakers Live

‘[Speakers Live](#)’ events give an opportunity to learn more about relevant topics from professionals, over Zoom. Topics include healthy eating, exercise, hormone treatment, sleep, emotional impact of breast cancer, fertility, returning to work after breast cancer treatment and many more. If you would like to ask a question, you can either send it to them beforehand or type it in the chat box during the event. No cameras or microphones are on during the event.



## Breast Cancer Now – Secondary Breast Cancer

The ‘Living with Secondary Breast Cancer’ service runs [online](#) and [in-person](#). It gives people a chance to meet in groups, or attend talks from facilitators who are qualified counsellors, in topics such as wellbeing, side effects, exercise and more.

## Breast Cancer Now – News and Podcast

Breast Cancer Now’s collection of text posts and podcast episodes on news and personal stories from breast cancer patients. It can be helpful to hear tips from others, or even just to get a feeling that there are people out there going through similar experiences to you.

Website link: [https://breastcancernow.org/about-us/news-personal-stories?field\\_news\\_get\\_involved\\_tid%5B0%5D=549](https://breastcancernow.org/about-us/news-personal-stories?field_news_get_involved_tid%5B0%5D=549)

## Breast Cancer Now – Here for You

A service which aims to teach people who have been newly diagnosed with breast cancer about the different information and support available through Breast Cancer Now. Please note that this service requires you to be referred via a healthcare professional.

Website link: <https://breastcancernow.org/get-involved/here-you>

## Cancer Research UK

Includes information about living with breast cancer, what to expect following a diagnosis and what to expect from treatment. They also have a freephone nurse helpline, as well as an online forum called [Cancer Chat](#), to connect with others affected by cancer.

Nurse helpline: 0808 800 4040 (9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday)

Website link: <https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/breast-cancer/living-with>

## Coppa Feel

A breast health awareness charity that does not offer direct, individual support (e.g. therapy) but have a large amount of different information including resources for trans and non-binary breast cancer patients.

Website link: <https://coppafeel.org/>

## Flat Friends

A charity dedicated to supporting women who have had single or double mastectomy surgery without breast reconstruction. The Flat Friends website offers information, both on specific issues around reconstruction, and on practical tips for adjusting to life with a mastectomy.

Website link: <https://flatfriends.org.uk/>



## Future Dreams

A dedicated breast cancer support centre, based in central London. They offer workshops online and in-person on topics such as menopause, lymphoedema, fatigue and side effects of specific treatments; individual counselling; holistic therapies including meditation, mindfulness, hypnotherapy, acupuncture, to name a few. You can drop in to find out more about how they may be able to support you (Monday-Friday 10am – 4pm, and last Saturdays of each month from 10am – 4pm), visit their website - <https://futuredreams.org.uk/>, call **020 4558 2950**, or email [info@futuredreams.org.uk](mailto:info@futuredreams.org.uk)

Future Dreams also run a podcast “And Then Came Breast Cancer” hosted by Victoria Derbyshire: <https://futuredreams.org.uk/our-podcast/>

## Lobular Breast Cancer

A lobular breast cancer diagnosis can be physically, emotionally, and mentally challenging. This charity can provide personalised guidance in terms of the professional and patient support services available for those with lobular breast cancer.

Website link: <https://lobularbreastcancer.org.uk/support/>

## Look Good Feel Better

This charity aims to support the physical and emotional wellbeing of individuals affected by cancer through free online and in-person workshops, and video resources. The underlying principle of this organisation is that, through self-care and taking care of one's appearance, it is possible to improve your self-confidence following physical changes due to cancer. They have materials tailored to men, women and teenagers, and work to assist people of all skin colours, ages, and cancer variations. Workshops include skincare, nailcare, grooming, oral care, shaving, hair loss and wigs, make-up, and advice on nutrition and fitness. They work with people up to one year post active cancer treatment. They also run the [HeadWrappers Service](#), offering a range of workshops and classes that provide practical advice on caring for your scalp and hair before, during and after cancer treatment. They also demonstrate useful scarf tying techniques, provide complimentary gift bags with headwear, and also help people connect with each other in a welcoming and safe space.

Website link: <https://lookgoodfeelbetter.co.uk/>

## Make 2nds Count

A charity specifically for those who are living with secondary (metastatic) breast cancer, with information on where you can access help across the UK.

Website link: <https://www.make2ndscount.co.uk/support/2ndssupporthub/>

There is also an online support group via Facebook:  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/2ndstogether>



## O-Wise

A breast cancer support app to help you manage and monitor your treatments, medication and physical and mental wellbeing.

Website link: <https://owise.uk/>

## The Primrose Centre

A breast cancer centre in Orpington, Kent which offers holistic therapies and treatments for breast cancer patients. The centre offers talk therapy, mindfulness, lymphatic drainage, scar therapy, counselling, acupuncture, and reflexology sessions amongst other therapies.

Website link: <https://www.primrosecentre.org.uk/>

## Support for men

Breast Cancer Now provides information and support for men with breast cancer. They have information, tips, and resources as well as an online forum. They also have a “Someone Like Me” service to match you with another man who has experienced breast cancer, who may be able to provide advice and support. In addition, there is a virtual meet-up group for men to share information, raise awareness, and support each other.

Website link: <https://breastcancernow.org/information-support-men-breast-cancer>

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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