



# Further help and support for breast cancer patients

## Information for patients from the Breast Care Team

Being diagnosed with breast cancer can feel overwhelming, particularly as there is a lot of “information giving” at and soon after diagnosis. Although there is lots of information available about breast cancer, particularly on the internet, it can be misleading or confusing. A good place to start is a reliable charity, such as Breast Cancer Now or Macmillan. This leaflet summarises the main support services available to our patients.

- **Breast Cancer Now** (<https://breastcancer.org/>)  
Telephone: 0808 800 6000
  - Helpline support: 0808 800 6000
  - **“Here For You”** is a personalised referral service. It supports people affected by breast cancer by offering continued support throughout treatment and beyond.
  - **“Someone Like Me”** is a service that matches you with a trained volunteer, who has had a similar experience to you.
  - **“Younger Women Together”** is tailored support for women aged 20 to 45.
  - **“Moving Forward Course”**. Following completion of your main “hospital-based” treatment, meet face-to-face or online for supportive, open, confidential conversations. The aim of these conversations is to help you cope with the shock of diagnosis, treatment, side effects, worries about breast cancer returning, re-adjusting to the everyday, and moving forward with your life.
  - Forums, information, and booklets in various formats.
- **Macmillan Cancer Support** (<https://macmillan.org.uk>)  
Helpline: 0808 808 0000 (7 days a week, 8am to 8pm)
  - Cancer Information Nurse Specialists who give advice / support to people living with cancer.
  - Online chat, email, and telephone.
  - Macmillan **Telephone Buddies** provide support via a weekly call or visit by a trained Macmillan Buddy.

- Macmillan With Bupa **Counselling**. Provides up to six free specialist sessions for people struggling emotionally, because they are living with cancer.
- Help with money, cost of living, work, health and well-being, and will writing.
- Information booklets, videos, and audios, which are also available in other languages.
- Details on support groups, fundraising events / campaigns, and becoming part of the Macmillan team.

- **Local Breast Cancer Support Group**

“**Just Our Breast Friends**” breast cancer support group. This group meets the first Tuesday or Wednesday of the month, from 6.30pm to 8.30pm (except August) in either Ashford or Canterbury. Contact your Breast Cancer Care Team on 01227 868666 for further information.

- **Macmillan Crossroads Care Kent Volunteer Service** (<https://www.crossroadskent.org/macmillan-service>)

Telephone: 0345 0956701, select option 3

Helps people living with cancer and their carers by providing free, practical, emotional, and companionship support.

- **East Kent Hospitals' Cancer Counselling and Support Services for Cancer Patients** (/east-kent-hospitals-counselling-and-support-services-for-cancer-patients) leaflet

Contact your Breast Cancer Care Team on 01227 868666 for further information and to discuss being referred.

- **Kent & Medway Prehab** (<https://www.kentandmedwayprehab.org/>)

Email ([info@kmprehab.org](mailto:info@kmprehab.org))

A clinically-led pre-rehabilitation programme that offers tools to fortify physical and emotional resilience for people preparing for cancer treatment. The support continues during and after treatment, and is proven to improve health-related quality of life.

- **Breast surgery support / advice**

Should you undergo breast surgery, a Breast Nurse Specialist will provide you with post-breast surgery supportive literature and aftercare advice. This includes recommended gentle arm / shoulder exercises.

Please speak to your Breast Cancer Care Team for advice on post-breast surgery bras.

- **East Kent Hospitals' Protheses Clinic**

A breast prosthesis is an artificial breast shape that sits inside your bra to replace all or part of your breast. Our protheses clinic is held two to three Mondays a month at Kent and Canterbury Hospital by an experienced breast protheses fitter. Please contact your Breast Cancer Care Team on 01227 868666 to arrange an appointment.

- **Flat Friends** (<https://flatfriends.org.uk/>)

Email ([support@flatfriends.org.uk](mailto:support@flatfriends.org.uk))

Supporting women who have had single or double mastectomy surgery without breast reconstruction.

- **Menopausal symptoms and breast cancer**

Some breast cancer treatments, such as chemotherapy and hormone therapy, can cause menopausal symptoms. For further information and support please speak to your Breast Care Team, or ask for a copy of the Breast Cancer Now booklet Menopausal symptoms and breast cancer (<https://breastcancernow.org/about-breast-cancer/treatment/hormone-endocrine-therapy/menopausal-symptoms-and-breast-cancer/>).

- **The Harmony Therapy Trust** (<https://theharmonytherapytrust.org.uk/>)

A charity who provide up to six free sessions of supportive / complimentary therapies for patients living with and beyond cancer and other long-term health conditions. Contact your Breast Cancer Care Team on 01227 868666 for further information and to discuss being referred.

- **Look Good Feel Better** (<https://lookgoodfeelbetter.co.uk/>)

Telephone: 01372 747500

Email ([info@lgfb.co.uk](mailto:info@lgfb.co.uk))

A cancer support charity helping boost the physical and emotional wellbeing of people undergoing cancer treatment.

- **Hair loss**

Should you undergo chemotherapy as part of your treatment and wish to talk about wigs, ask for further information, including the possibility of an NHS voucher towards the cost of a wig, at your pre-chemotherapy assessment appointment.

- **One You Kent** (<https://www.kentcht.nhs.uk/service/one-you-kent/>)

Telephone: 0300 123 1220

Email ([kentchft.oneyoukent@nhs.net](mailto:kentchft.oneyoukent@nhs.net))

Healthy changes start with little changes. Whether you want to lose weight, get active, quit smoking, or just feel better about life, One You Kent is here to support YOU.

- **Useful Apps**

- Breast Cancer Kent: Patient Journey App (<https://www.breastcancerkent.org.uk/about-us/patient-journey-app/>)
- Breast Cancer Now: BECCA breast cancer support app (<https://breastcancernow.org/information-support/support-you/becca>)
- CALM App (<https://www.calm.com/>) for meditation and sleep.
- Headspace (<https://www.headspace.com/>) for meditation and mindfulness.

- **Other organisations for information and support**

There are many other organisations / charities that offer further support and information. For a comprehensive directory of these, please visit the Cancer Care Map (<https://www.cancercaremap.org/>) web site. Or for further help, please contact your Breast Cancer Care Team on 01227 868666.

**If you have any questions or concerns about your health or need advice, please contact us via the Cancer Care Line: 01227 868666.**

**This leaflet has been produced with and for patients.**

**Please let us know:**

- If you have any accessibility needs; this includes needing a hearing loop or wanting someone to come with you to your appointment.
- If you need an interpreter.
- If you need this information in another format (such as Braille, audio, large print or Easy Read).

**You can let us know this by:**

- Visiting the Trust web site (<https://www.ekhuft.nhs.uk/ais>).
- Calling the number at the top of your appointment letter.
- Adding this information to the Patient Portal (<https://pp.ekhuft.nhs.uk/login>).
- Telling a member of staff at your next appointment.

**Any complaints, comments, concerns or compliments**, please speak to a member of your healthcare team. Or contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service on 01227 783145 or email ([ekh-tr.pals@nhs.net](mailto:ekh-tr.pals@nhs.net)).

**Patients should not bring large sums of money or valuables into hospital.** Please note that East Kent Hospitals accepts no responsibility for the loss or damage to personal property, unless the property has been handed into Trust staff for safe-keeping.

**Further patient information leaflets** are available via the East Kent Hospitals' web site (<https://www.ekhuft.nhs.uk/patient-information>).

Reference number: Web 520

First published:  
February 2021

Last reviewed:  
June 2024

Next review date:  
July 2027

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