

Live your Life

Living with and beyond lymphoma
Workbook to accompany workshops

Module 4: Diet and nutrition





Ah food! It was wonderful when my appetite returned after chemotherapy and radiotherapy. I had lost a stone and a half during treatment and was still a bit of a 'reluctant' eater. The Diet and nutrition module covers the current guidelines on what to eat and drink. I still use my mental picture of the Eatwell Guide to help plan my daily meals. I do believe eating healthily has been a major factor in my recovery after treatment.

Gill, in remission and enjoying life after stage 4 follicular lymphoma





The Live your Life workshop allowed us all to explore and reflect on our diet before, during and after cancer treatment. The information on the Eatwell Guide gave me a great insight into how much diet has changed and the balance required for healthy eating.

Laura, diagnosed with diffuse large B-cell lymphoma

Module 4: Diet and nutrition

This module is one of a series taken from our workbook 'Live your Life - living with and beyond lymphoma'.

There are five modules in total:

- Know your lymphoma
- Coping with the emotional aspects of lymphoma
- Exercise and staying active
- Diet and nutrition
- Practical aspects of living with lymphoma

You can download all of the modules, or the complete workbook, at www.lymphoma-action.org.uk/lylworkbook



Use this space to transfer your notes from **Module 4** of your **Live your Life** workshop



Action plan

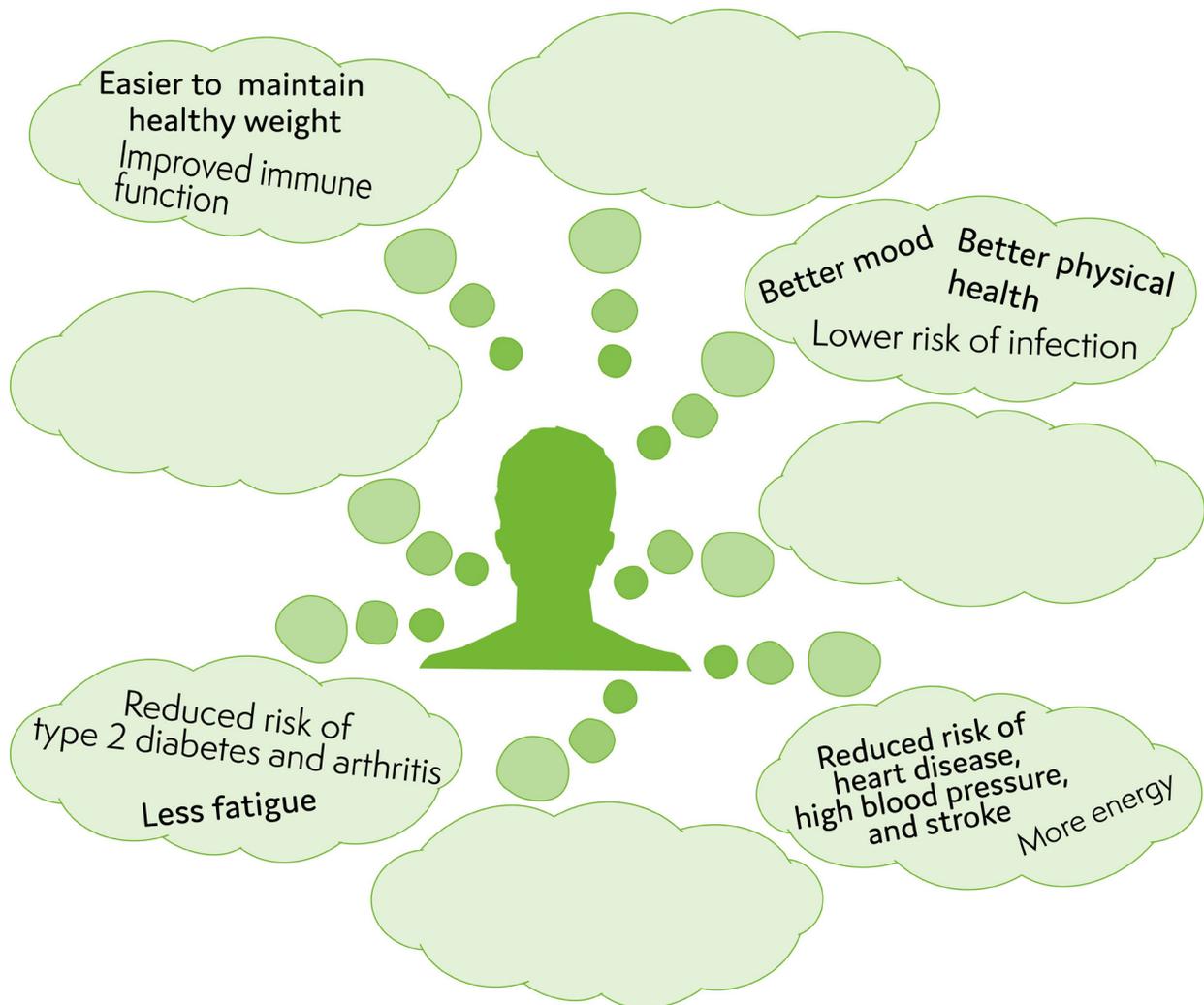
Action	How often
<i>Example: Eat 5 portions of fruit and vegetables</i>	<i>Every day</i>

People who can support me:

Who I'd like support from	How they can support me

The benefits of a healthy diet

A balanced diet is essential for good health. Although there are no foods that can cure lymphoma, eating well can help you to cope with treatment and support your recovery. A healthy diet is just as important once you complete your treatment for lymphoma as it is during treatment. The benefits of good nutrition include:



Use the figure above to write down any other benefits of a healthy diet you can think of.

What is a healthy diet?

A healthy diet is made up of different food groups.

- **Fruit and vegetables** are good sources of vitamins and minerals. Vitamins and minerals help keep your immune system, bones, teeth and skin healthy.
- **Potatoes, bread, rice, pasta and other starchy carbohydrates** are your body's main source of energy.
- **Beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other proteins** are important for your body to grow and repair. You may need more protein than usual to help your body heal during and after treatment for lymphoma.
- **Dairy and dairy-alternatives** provide calcium (important for bone health), zinc (a mineral with various functions, including helping wounds heal) and protein.
- **Oils and spreads** are a source of energy and provide useful vitamins.

Fibre helps to keep your heart healthy and your digestive system working well. Although it is not classed as a separate food group, you should aim to eat 30g of fibre each day. It is found in foods that come from plants, for example fruits, vegetables, cereals and potatoes.

The Eatwell Guide shows what proportion of each food group should make up your daily diet.

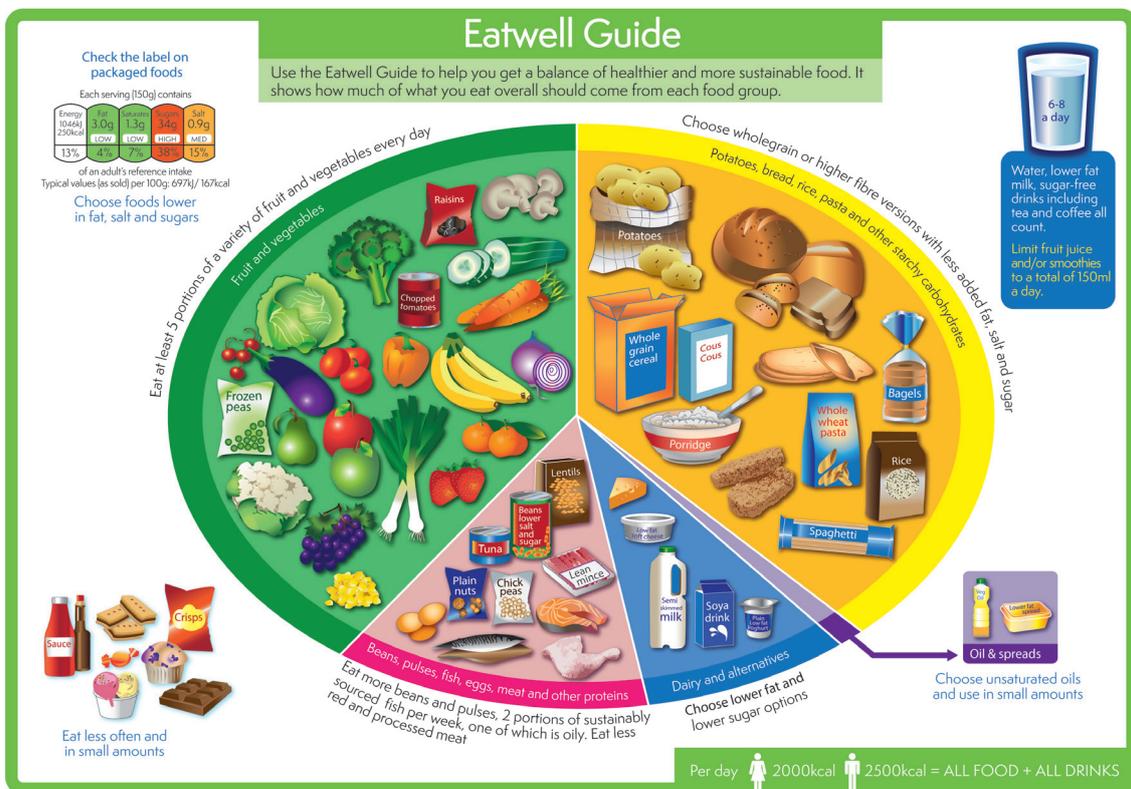


Figure: The Eatwell Guide

Eating with and beyond lymphoma

If you struggle to eat and drink during treatment for lymphoma, you may need to alter your diet to help you get enough calories. This might include dietary supplements, fortified foods or foods high in protein and fats. Your medical team can give you advice or refer you to a dietitian for support tailored to your individual nutritional needs.

If your treatment has ended, your appetite is good and your weight is normal, you should follow the same dietary recommendations as people without lymphoma.

If you are neutropenic, ask your medical team for advice about which foods to avoid and what precautions to take to help prevent infection.



Tips on maintaining a healthy diet when you are well

- Make changes to your diet gradually.
- Set realistic goals and track your progress.
- Swap unhealthy snacks for fruit or vegetable sticks.
- Swap full-fat dairy products for lower fat alternatives.
- Reduce your portion size.
- Give yourself time to register if you're full before taking second helpings.



- Search 'healthy living after cancer' at www.wcrf-uk.org to download a printable guide on healthy choices for people with and after cancer.
- Search 'healthy eating' at www.macmillan.org.uk for dietary advice and recipe ideas specifically tailored for people with cancer.
- Search 'eating well' at www.royalmarsden.nhs.uk for information about nutrition for people with cancer, including advice on how to deal with common difficulties related to eating.
- Search 'food controversies' at www.cancerresearchuk.org to find the scientific facts about foods that are alleged to increase or decrease the risk of cancer.
- Search 'cancer myths' at www.cancer.gov for information on common cancer myths and misconceptions.
- Talk to your CNS about being referred to a dietitian if you would like help with your diet.



Use this food diary to record your typical weekly diet.

	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Snacks	Drinks
Monday					
Tuesday					
Wednesday					
Thursday					
Friday					
Saturday					
Sunday					

Healthy weight

Body mass index (BMI) is a measure of your weight in relation to your height.

If you lost weight during treatment, your BMI may be below the healthy range. This increases your risk of immune system problems, nutritional deficiencies, fertility issues and fatigue. Try to gain weight gradually to a healthy range.

A BMI above the healthy range can increase your risk of heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes and some cancers. Even if you have a healthy BMI, you are still at risk if you have too much tummy fat. Try to lose weight if your waist is more than 94cm (37ins) if you are a man, or more than 80cm (31.5ins) if you are a woman.

The best way to lose weight is through a combination of diet and exercise.



Tips for gaining weight if your BMI is too low

- Aim to gain weight gradually.
- Eat a healthy diet that provides the right amount of calories for you.
- Eat regular meals and occasional snacks.
- Choose healthy foods that are high in energy, such as unsalted nuts, dried fruit, full-fat dairy products and starchy carbohydrates.
- Don't rely on high-calorie foods full of saturated fat and sugar.

Tips for losing weight if your BMI is too high

- Aim to lose 1lb to 2lb a week by reducing your calorie intake.
- Be more active.
- Plan your menu: eat regular, healthy meals based on the Eatwell Guide.
- Use a smaller plate.
- Drink plenty of water and cut down on alcohol.
- Avoid junk food.



- Use the NHS online BMI calculator at www.nhs.uk/live-well
- Search 'NHS weight loss plan' at www.nhs.uk for a free, 12-week diet and exercise plan that promotes safe and sustainable weight loss.



Use this chart to record your BMI. Label each entry with the date to track your progress.

My height: _____ Healthy weight range for me: _____ .

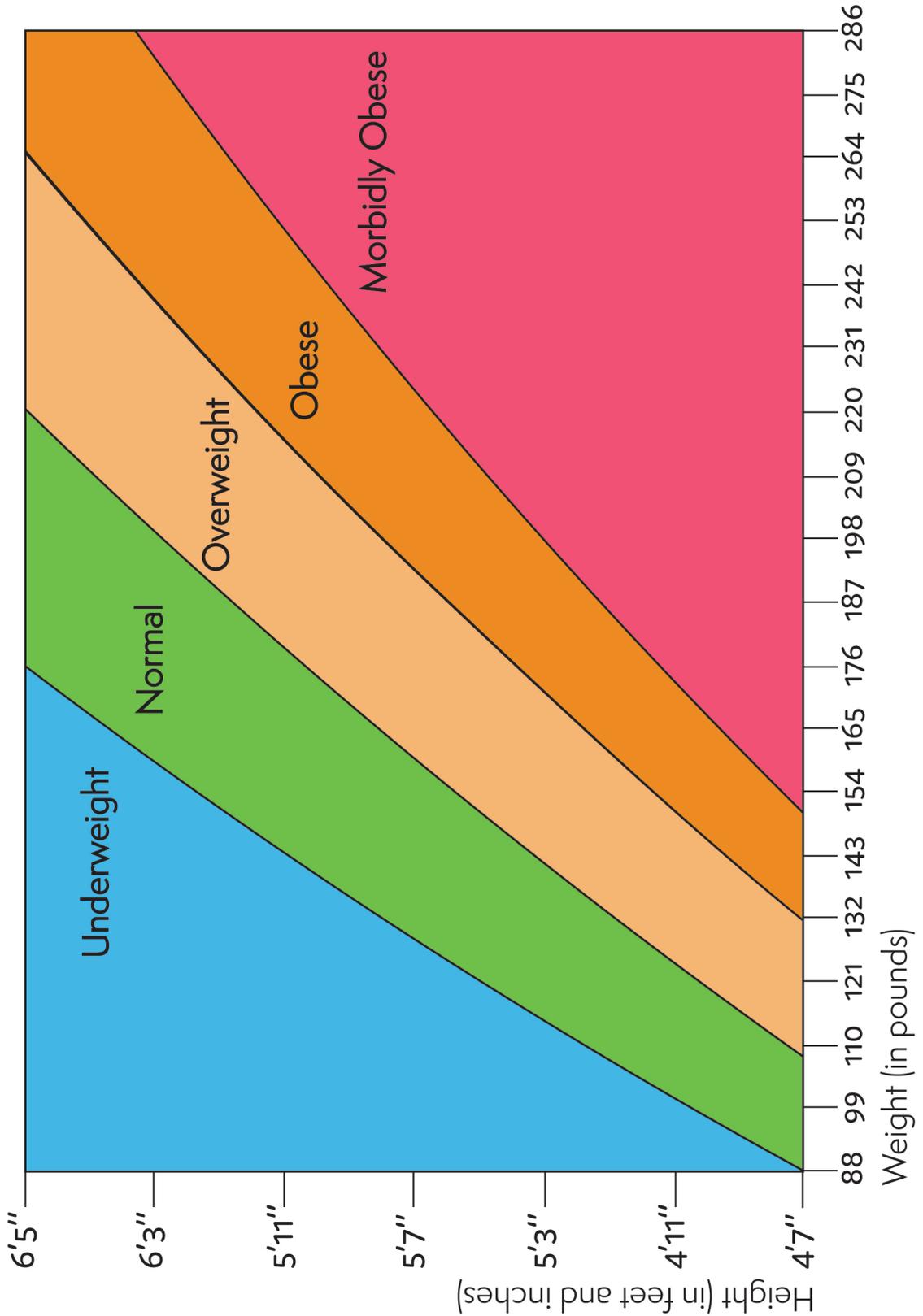


Figure: BMI chart

Alcohol

Drinking more than 14 units of alcohol a week increases your risk of weight gain, difficulty sleeping, impotence, low mood, liver disease, some cancers, heart disease and stroke. To keep these health risks low, it is safest not to drink more than 14 units of alcohol a week and to spread your units evenly over three days or more.

The guidelines are the same for men and women.

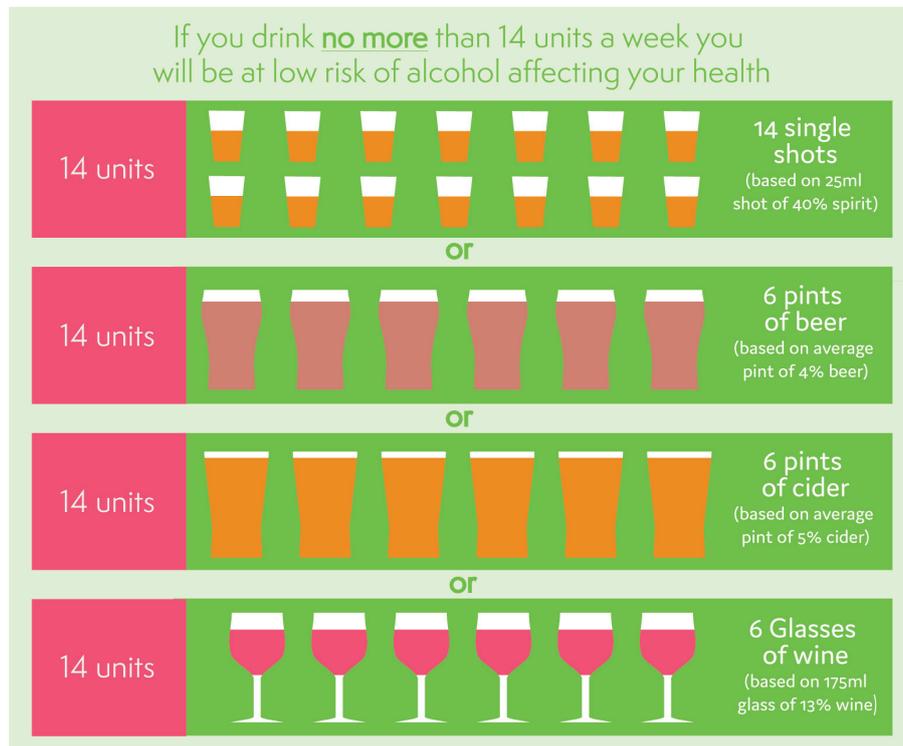


Figure: Weekly alcohol intake guidelines



Tips for cutting down on alcohol

- Have several drink-free days a week.
- On an evening out, alternate alcoholic drinks with soft drinks.
- Choose lower strength drinks.
- Swap pints for half-pints and choose smaller glasses of wine.
- Try topping-up wine with soda or beer with lemonade.



Visit www.drinkaware.co.uk for more information on alcohol and its effects, and tools and guidance on how to cut down the amount you drink.

Smoking

Smoking can slow your recovery from lymphoma and increase your risk of lung infections, second cancers and other late effects of treatment such as heart disease, lung disease and stroke. Stopping smoking reduces these risks, gives you more energy and improves your life expectancy.

Quitting smoking is hard. You're much more likely to be successful if you get help and support, either from your GP, a local Stop Smoking service or online.



Tips for stopping smoking

- Talk to your GP, join a local stop smoking service or find online support.
- Make a plan: list your reasons to quit and set a stop-smoking date.
- Tell people close to you that you're trying to quit.
- Consider using nicotine-replacement therapy or e-cigarettes.
- Find new ways to unwind.
- Avoid alcohol and other triggers.
- Keep your hands and mouth busy.
- Clear away anything that reminds you of smoking.
- **Keep trying.**



If you smoke, make a list of reasons to quit and set your stop smoking date

Reasons to quit	Stop-smoking date



- **Smokefree at www.nhs.uk/smokefree is an NHS service that provides free online, mobile, telephone and face-to-face support to help you quit.**
- **Search 'stopping smoking' on the NHS Choices website www.nhs.uk for information and advice to help you quit smoking.**
- **Search 'how to stop smoking' at www.cancerresearchuk.org for more information on the methods you can use to give up smoking.**
- **Talk to your GP or other healthcare provider about stopping smoking.**

Useful organisations

Cancer Research UK provides comprehensive information on all types of cancer. Call **0808 800 4040** or visit **www.cancerresearchuk.org**

Citizens Advice provides free, independent and confidential advice on benefits, housing, consumer and other problems. Call **03444 111 444** (England), **03444 77 20 20** (Wales) or visit **www.citizensadvice.org.uk**

CLIC Sargent provides specialist support for children and young people with cancer and their families. Call **0300 330 0803** or visit **www.clicsargent.org.uk**

Depression UK is a self-help organisation for people with depression. Visit **www.depressionuk.org**

Drinkaware is an independent charity that helps people make better choices about drinking. Call **0300 123 1110** or visit **www.drinkaware.co.uk**

Macmillan Cancer Support provides support and information for people with all types of cancer. Call **0808 808 00 00** or visit **www.macmillan.org.uk**

Maggie's Centres provide free support for people with cancer and their family and friends. Call **0300 123 1801** or visit **www.maggiescentres.org**

Mind provides advice and support to anyone experiencing a mental health problem. Call **0300 123 3393** or visit **www.mind.org.uk**

Moodjuice offers information, advice and self-help resources to people experiencing troublesome thoughts, feelings and actions. Visit **www.moodjuice.scot.nhs.uk**

NHS Choices provides comprehensive health information to help you make the best choices about your health and lifestyle. Call **111** or visit **www.nhs.uk**

NHS Smokefree provides motivation, information and support for smokers who want to quit. Call **0300 123 1044** or visit **www.nhs.uk/smokefree**

Shine Cancer Support offers support for adults in their 20s, 30s and 40s who have a cancer diagnosis. Visit **www.shinecancersupport.org**

The Mental Health Foundation is a UK charity that helps people understand, protect and sustain their mental health. Visit **www.mentalhealth.org.uk**

The UK Government information service outlines what benefits you might be entitled to and how to claim them. The enquiry line is no longer available. Visit **www.gov.uk**

Working with Cancer is an organisation that helps people with cancer get back in to work or to find work. Visit **www.workingwithcancer.co.uk**

Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge the continued support of our Medical Advisory Panel, Lymphoma Nurse Forum and other expert advisers as well as our Reader Panel. In particular, we would like to thank the following expert for her assistance with this booklet:

- Charlotte Bloodworth, Lymphoma Advanced Nurse Practitioner, Cardiff and the Vale University Health Board.

This booklet has been part-funded by the Big Lottery Fund and Bristol Myers Squibb.

References

These are some of the sources we used to prepare this information. The full list of sources is available on request. Please contact us by email at publications@lymphoma-action.org.uk or phone on 01296 619409 if you would like a copy.

- Action on Smoking and Health. ASH fact sheet: Smoking and cancer. July 2017. Available at: ash.org.uk/category/information-and-resources/fact-sheets/ (Accessed April 2018).
- Goodhart F, Atkins L. The cancer survivor's companion: Practical ways to cope with your feelings after cancer. London: Piatkus, 2011.
- Hatton C, et al. Lymphoma: Fast facts. 2nd edition. 2014. Health Press, Oxford.
- Koornstra RHT, et al. Management of fatigue in patients with cancer – A practical overview. *Cancer Treatment Reviews*, 2014. 40: 791–799.
- Macmillan Cancer Support. Travel and Cancer. Available at be.macmillan.org.uk/be/p-287-travel-and-cancer.aspx (Accessed June 2018).
- National Cancer Survivorship Initiative. Living with and beyond cancer: Taking action to improve outcomes. Department of Health, 2013.
- Ng AK, et al. Hodgkin lymphoma: Late effects of treatment and guidelines for surveillance. *Seminars in Hematology*, 2016. 53: 209–215.
- Rock CL, et al. Nutrition and physical activity guidelines for cancer survivors. *CA: A Cancer Journal for Clinicians*, 2012. 62: 242–274.
- Swerdlow AJ, et al. Risk of premature menopause after treatment for Hodgkin's lymphoma. *Journal of the National Cancer Institute*, 2014. 106: 207.
- Vannorsdall TD. Cognitive changes related to cancer therapy. *Medical Clinics of North America*, 2017. 101: 115–1134.

About our information

Lymphoma is a complex type of cancer. Our award-winning information and publications can help you better understand your diagnosis, treatment and life beyond lymphoma.

Lymphoma Action's booklets give information on broad topic areas (for example they might cover all low-grade non-Hodgkin lymphomas and the types of treatment often given). They are professionally printed and bound and most are A5 size.

We offer our lymphoma information to you free of charge (UK only). If you live outside the UK, we recommend that you contact the lymphoma patient and carer organisation in your country as treatments and healthcare systems vary overseas. You can find a list of which organisations might be of help in your country on the Lymphoma Coalition website www.lymphomacoalition.org.

Lymphoma Action is committed to the provision of high quality information for people with lymphoma, their families and friends. We produce our information using nationally recognised guidelines, including the DISCERN tool for information about treatments, the NHS Toolkit for producing patient information and the Campaign for Plain English guidelines. Lymphoma Action is a certified member of The Information Standard independent quality assurance scheme, which is supported by the Department of Health.

Our publications are written by experienced medical writers, in close collaboration with medical advisers with expertise in the appropriate field. The most relevant references are listed in the publication. A full list of sources is available on request.



Information and support

If you'd like to talk to someone about anything to do with lymphoma (including how you feel), get in touch.



Call our Information and Support team Monday to Friday on 0808 808 5555. You can also use Live Chat on our website



Come to one of our support groups. Find one near you at www.lymphoma-action.org.uk/support-groups



Join our online forum to chat with others who are affected by lymphoma



Get in touch with a buddy, someone affected by lymphoma



Visit www.lymphoma-action.org.uk/TrialsLink to find clinical trials that might be suitable for you



Like us on Facebook



Follow us on Twitter



Check out our YouTube channel



Follow us on Instagram

How you can help us

We continually strive to improve our resources for people affected by lymphoma and are interested in any feedback you might have about this booklet. Please visit our website at www.lymphoma-action.org.uk/Book-Feedback or email us at publications@lymphoma-action.org.uk with any comments. You can also call our Information and Support team on 0808 808 5555.



We produce other publications that give information about lymphoma and what to expect from treatment. Visit our website at www.lymphoma-action.org.uk or call 0808 808 5555 for more information.

Disclaimer

Lymphoma Action shall hold responsibility for the accuracy of the information it publishes under The Information Standard and neither the Scheme Operator nor the Scheme Owner shall have any responsibility whatsoever for costs, losses or direct or indirect damages or costs arising from inaccuracy of information or omissions in information published on behalf of Lymphoma Action.

However, although we make reasonable efforts to ensure the content of our publications is accurate and up-to-date at the time of going to press, we make no representations, warranties or guarantees, whether express or implied, that the content is accurate, complete or up-to-date, particularly in relation to medical research which is constantly changing.

The content of this publication has been developed for people living in the UK and is provided for general information only and primarily for personal and educational use. It is not intended to amount to advice on which you should rely. You must obtain professional, medical or specialist advice before taking, or refraining from, any action on the basis of the content of this publication. Lymphoma Action cannot accept liability for any loss or damage resulting from any inaccuracy in this information or third party information referenced in it.

©Lymphoma Action 2018.

Go to www.lymphoma-action.org.uk/Legal for permitted use and reproduction of this booklet.

Check our website for the most up-to-date details of our services, including opening times.



This booklet has been researched and written by Lymphoma Action, the only UK charity dedicated to those affected by lymphoma.

We would like to thank our incredible supporters whose generous donations enable us to offer all our essential support services free of charge. As an organisation we do not receive any government or NHS funding and so every penny received is truly valued. From everyone at Lymphoma Action and on behalf of those affected by lymphoma, thank you.

To get involved in fundraising for us or to make a donation towards our work please visit www.lymphoma-action.org.uk/Donate

This workbook complements the Live your Life workshop. It provides practical advice and information about living with and beyond lymphoma and has space for you to record information about your own lymphoma experience.

Lymphoma Action is a charity that has been providing information and support to people affected by lymphoma for over 30 years. We're here for you.



Helpline freephone **0808 808 5555** (Mon to Fri, 10am to 3pm)



Email **information@lymphoma-action.org.uk**



Visit **www.lymphoma-action.org.uk**



Live Chat via our website (Mon to Fri, 10am to 3pm)

Lymphoma Action
PO Box 386
Aylesbury
Bucks HP20 2GA
General enquiries 01296 619400

Inform | Support | Connect

Registered company in England and Wales (03518755). Registered charity in England and Wales (1068395) and Scotland (SCO45850).
LYM0248LiveYourLife2018ed1

© Lymphoma Action 2018
1st edition produced November 2018
Next revision due November 2021

