


How do I adjust after MY TREATMENT HAS ENDED?



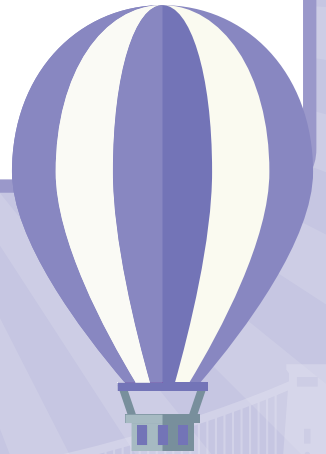
Sometimes following any treatment, it can take a period of time to adjust and find your new normal. You may find yourself experiencing a range of different feelings. These often include relief. However, you might also have worries or questions about what will happen next. For most people, it can take time to adjust, if you notice that your feelings are getting in the way of your life, there are lots of things that you and others close to you can do to help.



How can you use this toolkit?

This toolkit is designed to provide you with information about some of the things that you can do if you are feeling concerned or worried about whether your illness will return in the future. At the end of the toolkit there are also links to further information if you wish to explore this area in more detail and gain more support to do so.

There is a separate toolkit for how to manage concerns relating to receiving a diagnosis that your illness has come back. If you have received a diagnosis that your illness has come back, please refer to the toolkit titled 'My illness has come back, what can I do?'



Top tips and strategies

Here are some techniques that you can try to help reduce your anxiety:

- 1 Identify what triggers there are for your worries**
e.g. do you worry more at certain times of day or when in certain situations, e.g. at night when trying to sleep, or when you notice a twinge in your body?
- 2 Identify what factors help you to feel less worried,**
or what is happening at the times when you do not notice being troubled by worries about recurrence. – this can help you to plan in helpful strategies (see bullet #4).
- 3 Notice the difference between worries about the future and actual current problems** – i.e. is this a problem which is happening now that you can do something about? E.g. seeking advice from medical team about a new symptom which is concerning you. Or is this a hypothetical concern, e.g. “what if my illness comes back in the future”. In the case of hypothetical worries, remind yourself that it is understandable to be having the worry, however the worry is just an automatic thought, and not an automatic fact.
- 4 Use your helpful strategies to plan** in regular times throughout your week where you know you can be engaged in something enjoyable and meaningful for you. Focus on what is important to you and what you value, e.g. family and friends, creativity.
- 5 Are there other worries or fears you are facing which could be making you generally more anxious,** thereby making you feel more worried about illness coming back?
- 6 Help to reduce the physical effects of worry by calming your body**
through relaxing your muscles and slowing your breathing. You can practice breathing relaxation and a technique called progressive muscle relaxation (links available in this toolkit to free resources on these relaxation exercises), as well as activities such as meditation and yoga. There are links to free resources about these techniques at the end of this toolkit.
- 7 Write down your worries and challenge your unhelpful thoughts** by trying to create alternative, more balanced perspectives. Imagine that you are speaking to a family member or friend who had a similar concern, how would you suggest alternative thoughts to them? (it can often be easier to identify more balanced thoughts when we are thinking about other people than ourselves).

WHAT SUPPORT IS AVAILABLE?

1 **Speak to your healthcare team** if you feel concerned about your condition or other things that may be going on in your life – they may be able to direct you to services where you can access guidance and support.

2 **Some teams in the hospital have a psychologist and/or counsellor as a member of their team,** who can speak to patients and their families if they feel low or depressed – ask a member of your healthcare team who knows you well, such as your clinical nurse specialist, if they can make a referral on your behalf.

3 **If you are a patient or family member of a patient of the Bristol Haematology and Oncology Centre (BHOC),** there is an information and support centre in the main entrance which has lots of leaflets which can help you if you need some more information and advice, there are also counsellors who can speak to you individually to offer further support.

There are additional toolkits on the UH Bristol website for managing common concerns, such as overcoming stress, insomnia and low mood, please refer to these guides for more information and support.

4 **There are additional resources on the UH Bristol website** for managing common concerns, such as overcoming low mood and worry, please refer to these guides for more information and support.

Links to appropriate resources

1. Northumberland Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust have created a self-help guide for managing anxiety, which includes more information and coping techniques that you can use:

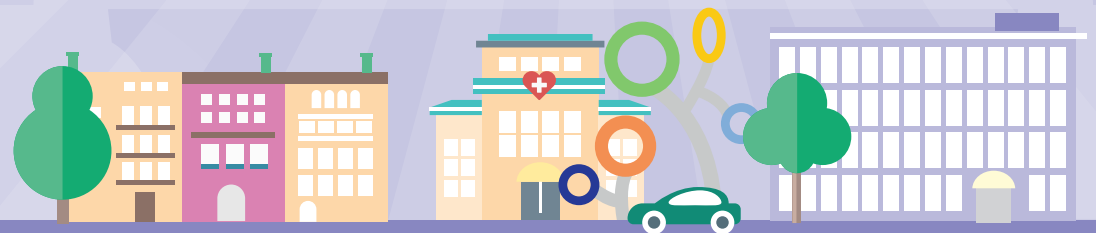
Anxiety: <https://web.ntw.nhs.uk/selfhelp/leaflets/Anxiety%20A4%202016%20FINAL.pdf>

2. King's College Hospital NHS Foundation trust has developed a range of self-help materials designed for people who have been affected by health conditions. These include:

Living with health problems: <http://www.kcl.ac.uk/ioppn/depts/pm/research/impacts/Quick-links/Self-Help-Materials/Living-with-Health-Problems.pdf>

The mind-body link: <http://www.kcl.ac.uk/ioppn/depts/pm/research/impacts/Quick-links/Self-Help-Materials/Mind-Body-Link.pdf>

3. 'Moodjuice' website and downloadable self-help guides are produced by Choose Life Falkirk and the Adult Clinical Psychology Service, NHS Forth Valley. There are various guides for improving wellbeing, including managing anxiety: www.moodjuice.scot.nhs.uk/anxiety.asp



These toolkits have been written by NHS clinical psychologists and neuropsychologists working for University Hospitals Bristol. They have been co-designed with service users and healthcare staff. These toolkits are only intended to provide general advice and information. Please discuss your individual needs with your doctor or specialist nurse. If you would like more information about psychology services please go to:

<http://www.uhbristol.nhs.uk/patients-and-visitors/support-for-patients/psychological-health-services/>

We would like to thank patients and other healthcare staff for their contributions to this toolkit.

For access to other patient toolkits please go to the following address:

<http://www.uhbristol.nhs.uk/patients-and-visitors/support-for-patients/psychological-health-services/resources/>

For this leaflet in large print, audio or PDF format, please email patientleaflets@uhbristol.nhs.uk

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