

**your
PR.i.VATES**

Coping with Diagnosis & Treatment



ORCHID 
FIGHTING MALE CANCER



www.yourprivates.org.uk

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Coping with Treatment

Most people feel overwhelmed when they are told they have cancer even if the chance of cure is very high. Many different emotions can arise which can cause confusion and frequent changes of mood. Men may experience feelings such as fear, resentment and anger. This does not mean, however, that they are not coping with the illness.

Reactions differ from one person to another; there is no right or wrong way to feel. These emotions are part of the process that many people go through in trying to come to terms with their illness. Partners, family members and friends often experience similar feelings and frequently need as much support and guidance in coping with their own feelings too.

Some men may feel that they may benefit from counselling. There is no shame in asking for counselling and talking to a qualified health care professional. Counselling will often help a person adjust more quickly to their current situation and life after treatment. The healthcare team should be able to give men the contact details of a specialist counsellor in their region.

Contacting a support group run by men who have been in a similar situation is also one of the most beneficial ways of receiving support, tips and guidance.

The surgery was on the 19th of August and it's now the 21st. The first night was bad but I think that was probably the anaesthetics.

My groin is very tight in my bikini line and the cut is just below my belt line on the fat pad above the penis. My girlfriend being a nurse changed the dressing and was very pleased with the cut as it was very neat and clean. When she removed the dressing a lot of belly hairs were coming off but I could not feel a thing as the wound area was still numb.

I can walk around today but cannot fully extend yet as my groin is very tight and painful. The numbness is starting to wear off and the wound is starting to itch a bit. I am sleeping on the sofa at the moment to make it easier to go to the toilet and just in case I get knocked in my wound or groin while we are asleep. Still not tried stairs yet or showered. Going to try stairs later today and shower tomorrow morning. I had to explain to my 2 year old daughter to be careful as she does like to use me as a human bouncy castle!

One thing I think men would worry about is feeling like less of a man. I would tell them that I feel no different in any way, except for the fact that I have a nice scar.

Message to partners. I think you have the hardest job of all. Men are strange to get your head around! You'll help us most by listening and being around during the major treatment stages.

I was scared to death. I thought I was going to be a freak and never get a girlfriend. I decided to take one step at a time and not look too far ahead. This helped me to not worry about future events that were not within my control. Plan on what you are going to do after finishing treatment, treatment is hard but it can be made all the easier if you feel you have something to look forward to after treatment.

Do it together - or, at least, do it the way that will work for you. Every cancer is different so don't go looking on the internet too much and only speak with fellow sufferers if you think it will be a good thing for you...

... Stay strong, be positive and be true to yourself. Don't worry about the days when you are low and be honest about how you feel.

I'd like to say that I'm now travelling the world in sandals, preaching to everyone how my life has changed after Cancer. But in reality, it only changed it for a couple of months and then you always seem to get back in the same routine you had previously.

Now, over 7 months later, it's beginning to take a more prominent role in my life as I am now realizing how lucky I am to be a survivor when so many don't manage that. I only wish that I was a radically different person now, to who I was before my diagnosis, and I do feel guilty that I don't feel that it happened that way for me like it does for so many others affected.

Maybe I just haven't really come to terms with it yet and just need to talk to someone professional about why I feel like that, because I've never really had the opportunity to delve into it with

someone that way. Or maybe it's just my way of coping with it.

I got through my experience by talking to my family and friends about what I was going through. The worst thing you can do is bottle things up and not talk.

To lose a big part of your masculinity is a major shock, however by being honest and talking openly about my feelings not only helped me get through it, but it also helped my family and friends come to terms with my illness. Throw in a little bit of humour as well with your mates and believe me, this is a perfect way to deal with the emotions that are associated with having cancer. I know it's an old cliché, but laughter really is the best form of medicine.

It's a long, bumpy journey but one in which you will get through and one which there will be a light at the end. There are no words that can take the pain and anguish away but hopefully the thought of family and loved ones can be the support to help pull you through.

Do not bottle things up and try to be a hero. Talk to your family or partner! Get your feelings out in the open; you will feel a lot better.

Useful Contacts

Check Me Lads

www.checkmlads.com



Email: philly@checkmlads.com

A website with a large Facebook forum with many men sharing their experience and providing helpful tips on how to cope with treatment.

Macmillan

www.macmillan.org.uk

Helpline: 0808 808 00 00

Tel: 020 7840 7840

Fax: 020 7840 7841

A huge source of information for anyone who has been affected by cancer including support services.

Maggie's Cancer Caring Centres

www.maggiescentres.org

Tel: 0141 341 5675

Email: enquiries@maggiescentres.org

Help centres, run by professionals, who can discuss any aspect of cancer. Also run support groups and weekly sessions in relaxation, stress management, nutrition and health.

Penny Brohn Cancer Care

www.pennybrohncancercare.org

Tel: 0845 123 23 10 (Mon-Fri, 9.30am-5pm)

Email: helpline@pennybrohn.org

Switchboard: 01275 370 100

Provides a programme of complementary care.

Tenovus (Wales) Cancer Charity

www.tenovus.com

Helpline: 0808 808 10 10

Tel: 02920 482 000

Provide an information service on all aspects of cancer, and practical and emotional support for cancer patients and their families. Freephone Cancer Helpline staffed by nurses, social workers and counsellors.

Northern Ireland Action Cancer

www.actioncancer.org

Tel: 028 9080 3344

Fax: 028 9080 3356

Email: info@actioncancer.org

A charity which offers one to one counselling.

The Ulster Cancer Foundation

www.ulstercancer.org

40-44 Eglantine Avenue, Belfast, BT9 6DX

Tel: 0800 783 3339 (helpline)

Tel: 028 9066 3281 (admin)

Email: info@ulstercancer.org

Provides a cancer information helpline, information and resource centre, public and professional education. Rehabilitation programmes and support groups for patients and relatives.

Irish Cancer Support

www.cancer.ie/support/

Irish cancer website, with numerous links to support and information.

Regional Charities/Support

Bristol



It's in the Bag

www.uhbristol.nhs.uk/itsinthebag

Email: hello@itsinthebag.org.uk

Tel: Sue Brand 0117 342 3472

Tel: Pete Styles 07771710733

Brighton



Talking Testicles

www.talkingtesticles.org.uk

Contact: Ryan Walshe

Mob: 07886 178 069

Email: info@talkingtesticles.org.uk

Colchester



The Robin Cancer Trust

www.therobincancertrust.org

Email: therobincancertrust@gmail.com

Manchester



The Mark Gorry Foundation

Email: info@themarkgorryfoundation.co.uk

Norwich



www.itsontheball.org

Tel: 01603 288115

Email: info@itsontheball.org

Nottingham



Ballboys

www.ballboys.org.uk

39 Oakdale Road, NG3 7EL

Tel: 0845 6062225 (lines open 9.30am-4:30pm,
Monday-Thursday)

Guernsey



The Male Uprising (Guernsey)

Charitable Foundation Reg No. 1, 1st Floor, Lefebvre Place,
Lefebvre Street, St. Peter Port, Guernsey GY1 2JP

Email: trevor.kelham@me.com

Tel: 07911 721 614

Wales



www.tenovus.org.uk

Scotland



Email: info@cahonasscotland.com

America

Testicular Cancer Resource Centre :(TC-NET)

www.acor.org/TCR

A huge international (American), resource website covering all aspects of testicular cancer. Some information will be slightly different than the UK.

Blogs

www.philstoker.com/blog

mytesticularcancerblog.blogspot.co.uk

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www.yourprivates.org.uk



Orchid National Male
Cancer Helpline

0808 802 0010

helpline@orchid-cancer.org.uk