

24. Bathing and/or Dressing

Some people may find bathing and/or dressing difficult when they have cancer. This can be for a variety of reasons, including the effects of the disease itself, or as a result of certain types of treatment for cancer (e.g. weakness after surgery, exhaustion during chemotherapy or radiotherapy, etc.). In addition, patients may be in pain or feeling discomfort, mobility may be decreased, shortness of breath may be a factor, or there is simply a lack of help in the home.

How can I manage my problems bathing and dressing?

- You are not alone with these issues, people with cancer commonly experience difficulties with bathing and dressing.
- It is important to use the support that may be available from family and friends to help you when you most need it.
- If the problem is associated with pain, fatigue or breathing difficulties, further information in this directory on these topics may be of help.
- An occupational therapist (OT) may be able to assess your needs. You might be able to manage better with the use of equipment or aids that are available from an OT. Occupational therapists may be able to come to your home to assess which aids may be helpful for you. Referral to an occupational therapist can be made by your GP or hospital doctor.
- Assistance can be sought through social services or other charitable organisations to help with your bathing and dressing.

Local Resources

Resource	Contact Details
<p>Social Services – Adult Social Care Assessment of need is carried out to assess the level of care required</p>	<p>Contact Centre – Customer Services Plymouth City Council, Plymouth, PL1 2AA 01752 668000</p>
<p>Plymouth Online Directory (POD) Provides information regarding domiciliary care agencies as well as many other services. Here are some services available through the Directory:</p>	<p>www.plymouthonlinedirectory.com</p>
<p>Nurse Plus/Home Care Plus Home Support Services Specialise in domiciliary care providing people with the care and support to help them remain in their own home. Including assistance with personal care, appearance and other needs</p>	<p>www.nurseplusuk.com email: Plymouth@nurseplusuk.com General enquires: 01752 266802</p>
<p>Creative Living Care Services Provide home care or live in service working in partnership with the local authority and NHS. Including assistance with bathing, dressing and other needs</p>	<p>The Gloucester Suite Waters Park House 17 Stockford Place Stoke Plymouth PL1 4QQ 01752 565565 admin@creativelivingcareservices.co.uk</p>
<p>Network Care at Home Comprehensive service which provides a wide range of care needs including washing and dressing. You can have anywhere between a 30 minute visit through to live-in care depending on need</p>	<p>Network Health Care – Care at Home First Floor Prideaux Court Palace Street Plymouth PL1 2AY 01752 604600 www.networkcareathome.co.uk</p>
<p>Mustard Tree Cancer Support & Triangle Drop In Centres Ask questions, share concerns, offers a range of services including benefits advice. Support, advice and information for cancer patients and their carers</p>	<p>Mustard Tree, Derriford Hospital: Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm 01752 430060/01752 431468 Kingsbridge: Tuesdays 10am to 4pm 01548 852349 Liskeard: Thursdays 10am to 4pm 01579 373500 Tavistock: Fridays 10am to 4pm 01822 615935</p>
<p>Other Resources</p>	<p>Your GP, Oncology Doctor, Specialist Nurse, District Nurse, Occupational Therapist or Social Worker.</p>

National Resources:

Resource	Contact Details
Macmillan Cancer Support Provide comprehensive advice and information on all aspects of cancer.	www.macmillan.org.uk 0808 808 0000 (Mon-Fri, 9am-8pm)

Further information:

Macmillan Cancer Support booklets: – available free from the Mustard Tree Macmillan Centre
Controlling cancer pain
Controlling the symptoms of cancer
Coping with fatigue
How are you feeling?
Understanding chemotherapy
Understanding radiotherapy
Understanding lymphoedema