

# Cancer of unknown primary

## Acute Oncology Service

### Patient Information Leaflet

#### Introduction

This leaflet gives information on what cancer of unknown primary is, how it is treated and what support is available to you.

#### What is cancer of unknown primary?

Cancer of unknown primary (CUP) is a term used when a person is diagnosed with cancer that has spread within the body but the place in the body where the cancer started (the primary site) cannot be found, even after all the suitable tests have been carried out. CUP accounts for approximately five per cent of cancer diagnoses.

## Why can't the primary cancer be found?

There are many reasons why the primary cancer cannot be found such as:

- It may be too small to be seen on a scan.
- It may have disappeared although it has already spread. This can happen because it was unable to maintain its own blood supply or your immune system may have destroyed the cancer in the primary site, but not the cancer that has spread to other areas of the body.

## What is the treatment for cancer of unknown primary?

The most common treatments are chemotherapy, radiotherapy and hormonal therapy but this will depend on your unique situation. Treatment for most cancers of unknown primary may help control the disease but will not cure it.

## What support is available?

If you are diagnosed with CUP, you will be referred to the Acute Oncology Service.

People who have suspected and confirmed cancer of unknown primary may have a lot of questions and concerns due to the uncertainty around it. It is sometimes hard to make sense of what is happening to you and it can be difficult to explain to other people. As well as dealing with this, you may have difficulty dealing with symptoms of the disease or the treatment.

The Acute Oncology Service is here to help answer your questions, address your concerns and support you through this difficult time. Throughout the investigation phase, you will have a key worker from the Acute Oncology Service. This means you can contact them for any problems or questions you may have.

**Your key worker is .....**

Contact number: 01384 456111 ext. 3425 (8.30am to 4.30pm, Monday to Friday). We do not work on weekends or Bank Holidays.

## **Can I find out more?**

You can find out more from the following weblinks:

### **Cancer of Unknown Primary Foundation/Jo's Friends:**

[www.cupfoundjo.org](http://www.cupfoundjo.org)

This is a group that exists to offer information and support to CUP patients, their families and friends.

### **Macmillan Cancer Support:**

[www.macmillan.org.uk](http://www.macmillan.org.uk)

If you have any questions or if there is anything you do not understand about this leaflet please contact:

Clinical nurse specialists, Ruth Mitchell or Tina Wilkinson on 01384 456111 ext. 3425 (8.30am to 4.30pm, Monday to Friday). We do not work on weekends or Bank Holidays.

Russells Hall Hospital switchboard number: 01384 456111

### **This leaflet can be downloaded or printed from:**

<http://dgft.nhs.uk/services-and-wards/oncology/>

If you have any feedback on this patient information leaflet, please email [dgft.patient.information@nhs.net](mailto:dgft.patient.information@nhs.net)

**This leaflet can be made available in large print, audio version and in other languages, please call 0800 073 0510.**

للحصول على هذه النشرة بحجم أكبر، وعلى شكل إصدار صوتي و بلغات أخرى، الرجاء الاتصال بالرقم 08000730510.

此宣传单可提供大字版本、音频版本和其它语言版本，请拨打电话：0800 073 0510。

Ulotka dostępna jest również w dużym druku, wersji audio lub w innym języku. W tym celu zadzwoń pod numer 0800 073 0510.

ਇਹ ਪਰਚਾ ਵੱਡੇ ਅੱਖਰਾਂ, ਬੋਲ ਕੇ ਰੀਕਾਰਡ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੋਇਆ ਅਤੇ ਦੂਸਰੀਆਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਹੋ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ, 0800 073 0510 ਤੇ ਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ ਜੀ।

Aceasta broșura poate fi pusă la dispoziție tipărită cu caractere mari, versiune audio sau în alte limbi, pentru acest lucru vă rugăm sunați la 0800 073 0510.

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