



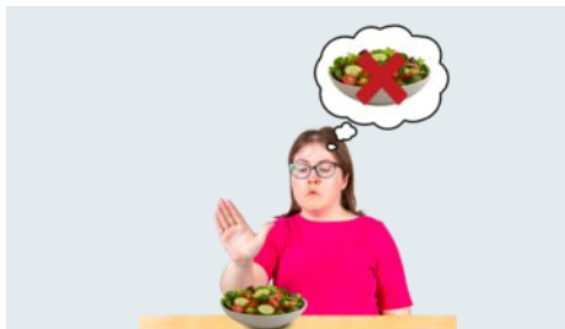
Easy read newsletter

Number 20 – November 2025

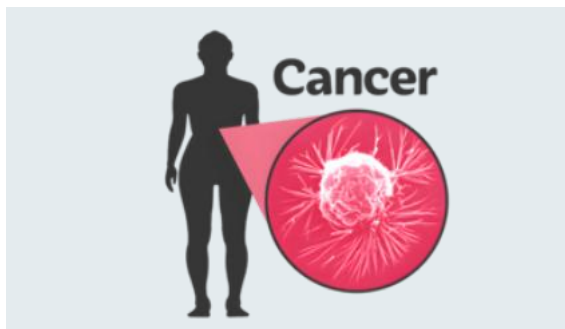
This newsletter includes information about:



Constipation



Eating disorders in autistic people



Lung cancer



Pneumonia

Who should read the newsletter



People with a learning disability and autistic people with a learning disability.



Families, carers, and advocates.



Community groups, charities and advocacy groups who can explain to their members any difficult ideas and use these for information sessions.

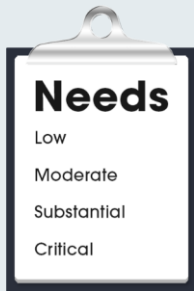


You may find some of the information in this newsletter upsetting, so please make sure you can talk to someone, if you need to.



We have included links to webpages so you can find out more.

Words we use



The newsletter is for people who have different needs and skills.



It can be difficult for some people to understand health services.



We try our best to use words that people know.



Hard words are in **bold** and **purple**. We explain the hard words.



If you don't understand any words, ask someone to explain them to you.

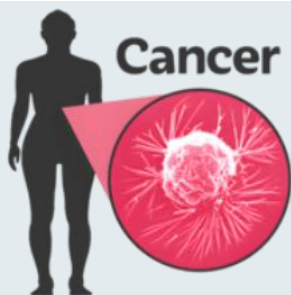
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Constipation



Constipation is when you find it hard to poo or poo less often than you normally do.



People with a learning disability are much more likely to:



- get constipation



- have their symptoms missed



- die from constipation

Constipation



Taking some types of medication mean you may be more likely to get constipation.



These are some of the signs you may be constipated:



- sore tummy when you try to poo



- it hurts when you poo or try to poo

Constipation



- hard or lumpy poo



- runny poo



- pooing less than usual



If you are worried you may have constipation, speak to your GP.

Constipation



You can keep your poo healthy by:



- eating a mixture of different foods, including fruit and vegetables, if you can



- drinking plenty of water and being more active

Eating disorders in autistic people



Many autistic people find food and eating difficult.



An **eating disorder** is when you have a difficult relationship with food which can affect and be caused by your mental health.



Autistic people can get eating disorders and need hospital treatment more than people who are not autistic.



Some autistic traits might mean that autistic people are more likely to have eating disorders, these include:



- sensory differences, preferences for routines, and difficulties identifying emotions and body signals like hunger

Eating disorders in autistic people



Autistic people might also be more likely to have eating disorders because they:



- have stomach problems



- may be very strict about following rules about healthy eating, this is called **orthorexia**



- may use hunger to cope with stress from things happening around them

Eating disorders in autistic people



Some autistic people may have avoidant restrictive food intake disorder (ARFID).



ARFID is when you avoid certain types of food. This can lead to eating very little or not eating at all.



It is important to tell your GP or doctor if you think you have an eating disorder.



However, many autistic people can find it harder to get treatment.

Eating disorders in autistic people



Services should provide reasonable adjustments.



A **reasonable adjustment** is a change that a service can make to help someone with a disability.



The PEACE Pathway (pathway for eating disorders and autism developed from clinical experience) can help with eating disorder treatment for autistic people.

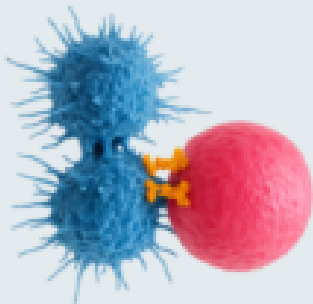


You can see their free resources on their website [PEACE Pathway - Resources](#)

Lung cancer



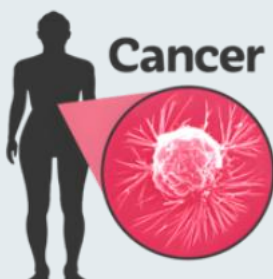
We have two lungs in our chest to help us breathe.



Your body is made up of lots of tiny pieces called cells.



Sometimes these cells go wrong. They can grow into a lump called a **tumour**.



Lung cancer is one of the most common types of cancer.

Lung cancer



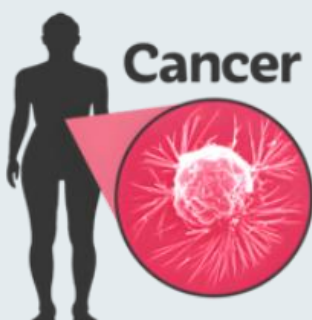
Lung cancer is often caused by smoking, but a small number of people get lung cancer even though they have never smoked.



For help to stop smoking, see the NHS website [quit smoking](#)



You cannot catch lung cancer from anyone else, and you cannot give it to anyone.



Lung cancer can be treated well, if you find it early.

Lung cancer



Some signs of lung cancer are:



- a cough that does not go away



- finding it harder to breathe or it hurts when you breathe



- losing weight without trying



- seeing some blood on your tissue when you cough

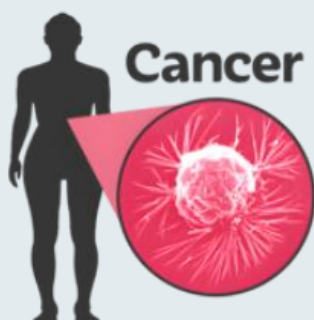
Lung cancer



If you are worried that you may have the signs of lung cancer, speak to your GP.



GPs may ask you to have some tests.



There are treatments that can help, especially if lung cancer is found early.



For more information about lung cancer, see this easy read [lung cancer guide](#)

Pneumonia



Pneumonia can be more serious for people with a learning disability than people who don't have a learning disability.



Pneumonia is a type of chest infection that makes it hard to breathe.



You are more likely to get pneumonia in the winter and if you get the flu first.



For more information on the signs of pneumonia, read this easy read [pneumonia guide](#)



If you are worried you may have the symptoms of pneumonia, speak to your GP.

How to help avoid pneumonia:



- don't smoke



- keep active



- wash your hands often



- get your flu vaccine



- get your **pneumococcal** vaccine if you are 65, or older and have not had it before

Pneumonia



The pneumococcal vaccine is a vaccine that is used to help protect against pneumonia and some other illnesses.



You may also be able to have the pneumococcal vaccine at any age.



This is if you have another illness that makes you more likely to be very poorly if you get pneumonia.



If you are not sure, ask your GP (doctor).

How to get support and speak up



If you are worried about the care and treatment the NHS is giving you, tell someone you trust straight away.

The image shows a light blue form titled 'Please fill in this easy read form'. It features three input fields, each with a small icon: a person for 'Your name', a house for 'Address', and a mobile phone for 'Phone'. The text 'easy read' is written in a stylized font next to the title.

The NHS has made an easy-read form. It helps you tell staff or a service what you think could be done better.



Find the form by visiting www.speakup.org.uk and click on projects and search for 'Ask, Listen, Do'.



Ask someone to help you fill in the form if you need to.

People who can help you



An **Advocate** can help you to tell people what you need to try and get you the right health and social care support.



Find out more about advocates on the [NHS website](#)



The NHS Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) can support with healthcare queries or problems. If you are in hospital, you can ask staff how to contact PALS.



Or visit [What is PALS \(Patient Advice and Liaison Service\)? - NHS](#) to find out more and your nearest PALS office.

People who can help you



Your local Healthwatch can help with questions about your GP, hospitals, dentists, pharmacies, care homes or other support services.



To find out more about Healthwatch visit [Healthwatch easy read](#)



National Network of Parent Carer Forums
'Our Strength is our Shared Experience'
www.nnpcf.org.uk

If you are a parent carer, you can contact your local parent carer forum. Parent carer forums can help services in their area meet the needs of disabled children and young people and their families.



[Find your local parent carer forum](#)

Keep updated



This newsletter was created by the NHS England learning disability and autism programme, with member representatives from our [advisory group](#)



The newsletter used [photosymbols](#) from their library. 'Photosymbols' agree that NHS England can use them.



Get in touch if you want to tell us anything about this newsletter.



You can either phone us on 0113 824 9686 or email us at engage@nhs.net

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