

Support nationwide



## Introducing the OPA

The Oesophageal Patients Association (OPA) is a national charity, providing quality information for patients, their carers and family affected by oesophageal or gastric cancers.

Whatever stage of your illness - recently diagnosed or some years on, facing treatment by chemotherapy, radiotherapy, surgery or palliative care - we can help. We fully understand your worries and fears and can give the support you need in order to achieve the best possible quality of life.

The OPA was founded on the principle of patients helping each other by sharing their experiences. This leaflet gives you details of your nearest support group and the help that is available locally.



**The Oesophageal Patients Association**

Registered Charity No. 1062461

Please visit the OPA website for more information:-

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

Support locally

## OPA Leeds Support Group

We welcome patients and carers from across Yorkshire. Our regular meetings take place at venues around the county.



**Steve Jarratt** (based in York)

**Patient Support Co-ordinator**

t. 01347 823047

e. [jarratt312@btinternet.com](mailto:jarratt312@btinternet.com)

Steve arranges patient guidance and support, and can put you in touch with a local group member who is recovering (or has recovered) from a similar condition to your own.

**Sol Taylor** (based in Leeds)

**Secretary and Carer Support**

m. 07759 735552

e. [leeds@opa.org.uk](mailto:leeds@opa.org.uk)



We understand that it's not just patients that need support. Carers, family members, friends and loved ones also benefit from sharing experiences. Sol is on hand if you're a carer seeking information or guidance.



**John Taylor** (based in Leeds)

**Group Co-ordinator**

t. 0113 2267250

e. [leeds@opa.org.uk](mailto:leeds@opa.org.uk)

John oversees the Group's activities and is the host and chair for our meetings. John is also a Trustee of the OPA and helps with the charity's activities at a national level.

Please visit the OPA Leeds group page for more info:-

[www.opa.org.uk/regional-shop/leeds.html](http://www.opa.org.uk/regional-shop/leeds.html)

# Living with oesophageal or gastric cancer?



## We're here to help

OPA Leeds Support Group



## One to one support

### Someone to talk to

From personal experience, we know that the first few weeks and months before (and after) treatment can be challenging.

Most patients find it helpful and encouraging to talk to someone who has experienced similar symptoms and has undergone the same course(s) of treatment.

Our volunteers (all of whom are current or former patients themselves) are on hand and willing to offer you support, encouragement and reassurance.

Whilst we do not offer counselling or medical advice, we can offer general guidance and suggestions based on our own experiences. From questions to ask of your GP, to tips on what to eat... plus a lot more.

We'd be happy to put you in touch with someone local to talk to, or alternatively, you can contact our national helpline on:- **0121 7049860**

*"It has been very reassuring to talk to patients who had the same operation as me many years ago, and to see them leading a normal life"*

**John - Former patient**



## Group support

### Informal meetings / drop-in sessions

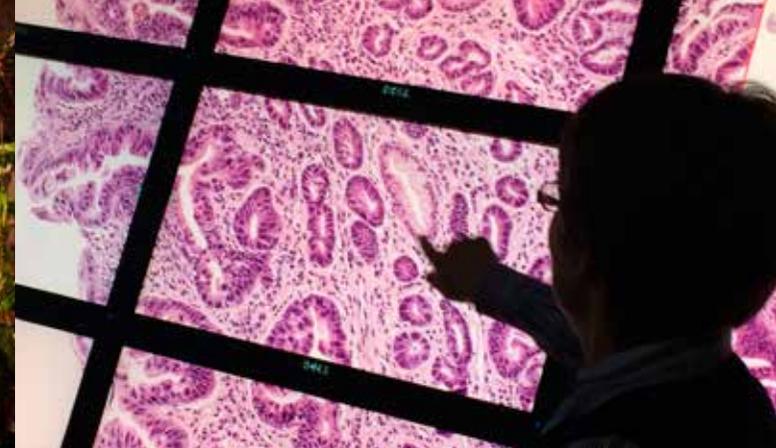
By sharing experiences and discussing our issues and problems, we are often able to help each other overcome areas of common concern.

Join us for a coffee and a chat at one of our regular drop-in sessions, or come along to one of our informal group meetings (held across the region 3-4 times a year)... where we provide education, support and encouragement for one another. Both are free to attend and everyone is welcome. No appointment is necessary (just turn up on the day).



*"My partner and I are finding the group meetings to be both informative and enjoyable. The advice and support we have received is incredibly helpful."*

**Richard - Current patient**



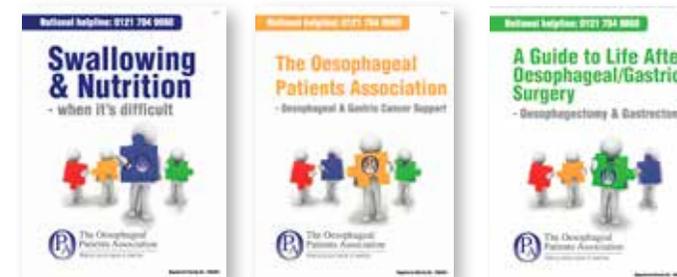
## Additional support

### Group visits and education

As well as our regular meetings, we also organise ad-hoc visits to places of mutual interest. These include treatment centres, cancer research laboratories and catering colleges.

### Information booklets

The OPA Head Office supplies a range of printed materials for patients and carers, and these are freely available at both our meetings and drop-in sessions (electronic versions can also be downloaded from the OPA website).



*"I found the support materials supplied by the OPA to be very useful. From tips on improving appetite to simple recipes, they have everything covered"*

**Kath - Carer**