



## Breast Cancer Support Group Sussex

### Dates For Your Diary

Hello Ladies

Hope you are all well and enjoying this beautiful weather we are now having.

As you know we will not be meeting this coming Monday due to the fact that it is Easter Monday. Lots of you will have planned your Easter break so I hope you will really enjoy the lovely four days holiday.

Last Month we had Paul from Cancervive come along to our group and give us a talk on his group and how it could be of help to many of our loved ones that are watching us go through different stages of being diagnosed with breast cancer and then having to face treatments as well. Paul's group, Cancervive will be joining us on the same evening as we meet, every third Monday of the month at the same time only in a different room from us. So if any of you would like to bring your partners, children or any family members along where you can informally discuss your feelings and emotions in your own group, then please feel free to come along.

Next Month, for our May meeting, we have Dr Richard Simcock coming along to talk to our group about many changes that have happened over the past two years since he last came. I know many of you will be interested in coming along as we have always had vast numbers turnout to listen to Richard and also the opportunity for you to ask him lots of questions. So that meeting is on **15<sup>th</sup> May**. So hope to see many of you then.

### **Pink Stall in June at Blakers Park**

Please don't forget '**pink things**' and also we need helpers for wrapping and helping on the day at the stall

So ladies, have a wonderful Easter and we really look forward to a really big turnout on **May 15<sup>th</sup>** to welcome Dr Richard Simcock who is also giving up his time after working all day at the Cancer Centre at the Royal Sussex.

Best Wishes

Joyce x

### **April 17**

There will be no meeting tonight due to Easter

### **May 2**

Moving Forward Course starts in Worthing – see inside for details

### **May 15**

Our Monthly Group Meeting with speaker with Dr Richard Simcock

**NEW** - Family & Friends **Support Meeting** with Cancervive

### **June 19**

Our Monthly Group Meeting with Breast Reconstruction Nurses from Queen Victoria Hospital

Our Group Meetings are held at the **Macmillan Horizon Centre**, Bristol Gate (opp A&E at the RSCH)  
**6.30pm to 8.30pm**



Paul Huggett

FOUNDER/CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Personal experience showed me that there was a huge gap in the service, support and advice available to people who are themselves closely involved with supporting others with cancer. So if you are family, friend, carer or colleague or know someone who has cancer and you need someone to talk to then we are the people to contact. We can offer you help and support from personal experience.

## Paul's story

In November 1990, my wife, Pam and I were living in Hurstpierpoint with our two daughters, (aged 4 and 15 months) and we were living a normal family life and looking forward to the future. Then, overnight our whole world turned upside down. Pam had found a lump in her breast which was later diagnosed as breast cancer. Pam had a full mastectomy followed by chemo and radiotherapy.

I worked nights so I could take Pam to all her hospital appointments. As a family, we felt very alone and I was trying to keep a happy household for Pam and the children. It was then that I wanted to talk to someone who had been wearing the same shoes as I was putting on but sadly there was no organisation around to fill my needs.

Sadly, Pam passed away and 5 years later I met and married Bridget, where my girls had a stepmother and we were a family again.

A year later Bridget developed Breast Cancer and passed away in June 2007.

In August 2007, I set up **Cancervive** with the help of 7 volunteers who have all been affected by cancer in one way or another. We are not counsellors, we are people who have worn either the carers or patients shoes.

We are now in our 10<sup>th</sup> year and are growing stronger each year. 80% of our clients are signposted or referred by Macmillan.

**Cancervive** provides emotional support and practical help for people affected by cancer. When someone close to you is diagnosed with cancer it can be an overwhelming experience. Through face to face sessions and 24/7 Nationwide telephone support, we help our clients to cope with this life changing news.

We support patients, their family and friends through:-

- 1) 1-2-1 support sessions at the clients home or at our office.
- 2) Support Groups.
- 3) 24 hour phone helpline and
- 4) An online forum.

Please look at our website [www.cancervive.org.uk](http://www.cancervive.org.uk)

Email:- [info@cancervive.org.uk](mailto:info@cancervive.org.uk)

Telephone:- 01273 834912

## **FAMILY & FRIENDS SUPPORT MEETINGS**

Whilst we at Breast Cancer Support Group offer support to our members, sadly we haven't had support services available to family and friends. Some ladies find it difficult to talk about their experience and those closest to us also need help and support with understanding what their partner, mother, sister, friend are going through and indeed their own emotions in coming to terms with this illness. We are delighted to announce that Paul and his team at **Cancervive** will be available to family and friends of our Members in the Canteen at The Horizon Centre every month from May at the same time as our meetings. Please pass this information on to your friends and family and invite them to drop in and have a cup of tea. If you have children (of any age) who wish to come, please let us know in advance so that Paul's daughters can be on hand

# **SOUTH COAST MIGHTY HIKE**

**10/06/2017**



## **Join us**

Hike from Brighton to Eastbourne along the stunning South Downs Way and take in the far-reaching views of Britain's finest unspoilt coastline from the chalk cliffs of Seven Sisters Country Park.

You'll be fully supported on this amazing challenge. In return for raising £250 you'll have a fabulous day with:

- free buffet lunch and hot food at the finish
- regular check points with free drinks and snacks
- clearly marked route
- medical assistance
- finisher's medal and bubbly

Challenge yourself against the infamous Beachy Head and raise vital funds for Macmillan. Sign up today!

[www.macmillan.org.uk/get-involved/fundraising-events/event-detail/1301/southcoastmightyhike](http://www.macmillan.org.uk/get-involved/fundraising-events/event-detail/1301/southcoastmightyhike)

# OUR SPEAKER IN MAY

## DR RICHARD SIMCOCK



### **Main Speciality**

Oncology

### **Sub Speciality**

Breast Cancer  
Head and Neck Cancers

### **Clinical interests**

Technical advances in radiotherapy  
Biological therapies in cancer treatment  
Survivorship and rehabilitation  
Acupuncture therapy

### **Current memberships**

Oncology Committee of the British Institute of Radiology  
European Society of Radiation Oncology  
British Medical Association

## Professional Profile

Dr Richard Simcock has been a Consultant Clinical Oncologist at the Sussex Cancer Centre since 2004. Previously he had worked at the Sydney Cancer Centre, Australia and before that had completed five years of postgraduate specialist training in Oncology in London and the South East including Guys and St.Thomas', Charing Cross and Mount Vernon Hospitals. He graduated from Guys and St.Thomas' hospital in 1993.

Working closely with the surgical and nursing team Dr Simcock sees and treats patients diagnosed with early or advanced breast cancer. He advises on the role of radiation, chemotherapy, hormone, biological, and experimental treatments.

Dr Simcock prescribes and supervises courses of chemotherapy delivered by the team at The Montefiore or by home healthcare teams. In addition he prescribes, plans, and supervises radiotherapy treatment at the Royal Sussex County Hospital or at Spire Portsmouth (CPUK).

He is also involved in enrolling patients in trials of new therapies as well as trials of improved radiation therapies.

As a Head and Neck Oncologist Dr Simcock treats cancers of the larynx (voice box), tongue, tonsil and other rarer sites. He supervises, prescribes and plans curative treatments with radiotherapy and chemotherapy as well as giving post-operative radiotherapy treatments. Intensity Modulated radiotherapy is used as standard in these cases.

## Personal Profile

As well as his clinical roles Dr Richard Simcock works a Consultant Medical Advisor for Macmillan Cancer Support. He has been the online advice as part of Macmillan's 'Ask The Expert'. He provides advice to 'Mummy's Star' a charity providing support to women diagnosed with cancer during pregnancy.

He has been the national Chief Investigator for trials of acupuncture therapy in cancer patients and is a qualified acupuncture therapist.

He is also a Trustee of the important local charity 'Cancervive' which provides peer support to the family and friends of those with cancer. [www.cancervive.co.uk](http://www.cancervive.co.uk)



He tweets regularly on issue related to cancer treatments as [@BreastDocUK](https://twitter.com/BreastDocUK).

Dr Richard Simcock has three children at local schools and is a governor at one of them. His wife is a local GP.

# RECIPE

## Lamb, harissa & mint koftas



- Preparation time: 15 minutes
- Cooking time: 20 minutes
- **Total time: 35 minutes** 🌙

Makes: 8

### Ingredients

#### FOR THE KOFTAS

50g Waitrose Love Life Quick Cook Wholewheat Bulgur

500g lamb mince

1 small red onion, cut into chunks

1 clove garlic, crushed

1 tsp ground coriander

28g pack coriander

2 tsp ruby rose harissa paste

## FOR THE SALAD

½ cucumber

300g cherry tomatoes, halved

1 small red onion, thinly sliced

25g pack flat leaf parsley, finely chopped

½ x 25g pack fresh mint, leaves only, finely chopped

2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil

Juice of 1 lemon

## TO SERVE

6 wholemeal pitta breads, warmed and split open

300g pot houmous

Cooks' Ingredients Ruby Rose Harissa Paste, to taste

## Method

1. Put the bulgur wheat in a bowl and pour over boiling water to cover. Place clingfilm over the top and stand for 10 minutes until tender. Drain off any excess water.
2. Put the lamb in a food processor with the onion and garlic. Add the ground and fresh coriander, and the harissa paste. Season. Whizz for 30 seconds until well blended. Mix in the cooked bulgur wheat.
3. Preheat the grill. Divide the mixture evenly into 8 ovals and press each around a metal skewer to form a 15cm kofta, pressing together well. Put the koftas under the grill and cook for 7-8 minutes until browned, then turn over and grill for a further 7-8 minutes until thoroughly cooked through.
4. To make the salad, halve the cucumber lengthways and remove the seeds with a teaspoon. Slice the cucumber and place in a large serving bowl with the remaining salad ingredients. Season and toss together well. Serve in the warmed pittas, with the houmous, extra harissa and the koftas.

# Book review: Chemo Cookery Club



Chemo Cookery Club by Penny Ericson contains over 150 recipes and is aimed at people having treatment for cancer and their families or carers. Breast Cancer Care gave a copy of the cookbook to Vita reader Joanne Little who was diagnosed with breast cancer and had chemotherapy in 2010. She tried a few of the recipes and delivered her verdict.

Oh how I wish I'd had this book while going through treatment!

I'm an avid cook owning many varied cookbooks. This book has a lovely introduction from Penny Ericson describing why she decided to put this book together along with quotes from medical professionals.

The recipes are clear and concise easy to put together and don't include hard-to-find ingredients. All include pictures which is helpful when maybe you're not feeling so great with no appetite and possibly a sore mouth.

The nutritional table on each recipe provides all the information you need to ensure you're giving your body the right vitamins in the right way. The easy-to-use 'thumbs up' scores are a brilliant addition.

Being the chief cook in my household making most of my family's meals from scratch I reluctantly passed those reins over to my husband when I was at my lowest going through treatment. He would have found this book invaluable as the recipes are so easy to follow.

The creamy watercress soup is packed with goodness quick to make and topped with some parmesan cheese is delicious.

Coq au vin one of my favourite all-round dishes is so flavoursome and being a slower-cooked meal can be left to cook while you rest.

Pasta is an easy fail-safe choice to fill you up and provide comfort food while not breaking the bank. The dijon and four cheese macaroni (you can substitute ready-made béchamel sauce if you like) is a hit with even the fussiest of children.

If I have one criticism it's the use of cups in a few of the recipes – very American!

[www.chemocookeryclub.com](http://www.chemocookeryclub.com)

# When worry gets out of control: 9 ways to reduce anxiety



Photo: istock.com/PeopleImages

Senior Clinical Nurse Specialist Rachel Rawson explains how to spot the signs of anxiety and explores some simple ways of coping.

Anxiety is a normal human experience that many people live with. But when it becomes very strong or lasts for a long time it can be overwhelming.

After breast cancer it's not unusual for anxiety to get worse or to appear for the first time. It can leave you with a sense of worry or dread – where hours can be spent thinking over worst-case scenarios – and gets in the way of daily life.

## When the bucket overflows

Being diagnosed with breast cancer, having treatment, dealing with side effects, then learning to find your new normal is stressful. While having a degree of stress in life is fine, when it builds up it can lead to anxiety, which can be hard to cope with on a daily basis.

The charity Anxiety UK has a useful way to think about stress and anxiety.

Imagine that stress levels are like water in a bucket. If stressors are added to the bucket, even tiny ones like the school run or commuting to work, over time the buckets fills up. Then one day, often after what seems like a trivial trigger, it overflows.

At times like this the simple things in life can seem overwhelming, and the physical and psychological symptoms that anxiety brings can be difficult to understand and cope with.

Finding a way to have a bucket with holes in the bottom can, in the long term, reduce overall stress levels and anxiety. Each one of these holes could be something positive that's done to manage anxiety.

## 1. Talk it through



Talking about what triggers anxiety with a friend or partner – someone who knows you well and you can trust – can help.

Talking to someone away from the home environment can also help. Speaking to a breast care nurse, calling Breast Cancer Care's Helpline, **0808 800 6000** or using your support group can be useful ways of knowing you're not alone.

## 2. Take a deep breath

Breathing more deeply can make you feel a lot calmer.

Breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth. Try to keep your shoulders down and relaxed, and place your hand on your stomach – it should rise as you breathe in and fall as you breathe out.

## 3. ‘Dear diary...’

Keeping a diary can help you see how you’re feeling day to day as well as what helps or triggers stress and anxiety.



## 4. Keep fit

Exercise can help you manage anxiety and panic attacks.

Thinking about exercising can be overwhelming, but just going for a short walk every day can give you some time to yourself. There are lots of different types of exercise. The important thing is to find something you enjoy.

## 5. Remember it will pass

Reassure yourself that the symptoms you're experiencing are caused by anxiety and will pass. This can help you feel calmer and less fearful of future bouts of anxiety.

## 6. Strike a pose



Yoga and mindfulness may help you relax, sleep better and manage the symptoms of anxiety and panic attacks. There are lots of mindfulness apps available, some of which, like Smiling Mind, are free.

## 7. Break it down

Big tasks can feel impossible, but breaking them down into smaller tasks can make them feel easier to complete.

## 8. Talking therapy

Talking therapies, such as cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT), are becoming more widely available. CBT focuses on changing the way you think and behave and teaches coping skills for dealing with different problems. Having access to counselling or therapy may also be useful. A trained therapist will work with you to understand the causes of your anxiety, and to find strategies to help manage it.

## 9. Medication

Certain types of medication can be helpful and these can be used in addition to other self-help strategies. Antidepressants and beta-blockers are two of the most commonly used medications.

## Recognise the signs

Physical feelings of anxiety can include a racing heart, light-headedness, headaches, churning in the pit of the stomach and, for some people, panic attacks.

The psychological signs of anxiety can be harder to identify. Experiencing a sense of dread or numbness, the mind racing, restlessness, not being able to concentrate and fearing the worst are all symptoms of anxiety.

Recognising these signs and symptoms can sometimes be difficult and seeking help and support is often the hardest thing to do. But taking this first step can be the key to breaking the cycle of feeling fearful and insecure.

## Useful resources

- [Mind](http://www.mind.org.uk) [www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk) provides information and support to anyone with anxiety or other mental health issues.
- [Anxiety UK](http://www.anxietyuk.org.uk) [www.anxietyuk.org.uk](http://www.anxietyuk.org.uk) works to relieve and support people living with anxiety and anxiety-based depression.
- [Smiling Mind](http://www.smilingmind.com.au) [www.smilingmind.com.au](http://www.smilingmind.com.au) is a free guided meditation app that can help with anxiety.

# Moving Forward Course - Worthing

## 2 May 2017

**WHEN**

2 May 2017

**WHERE**

Worthing

**TIME**

13:45 - 16:30

## 2, 9, 16, 23 May 2017 Worthing

This free four-week programme examines some of the issues that may affect you. It aims to provide information, support and professional guidance on how to cope with and adjust to life after treatment. Topics covered may include: healthy eating, exercise, managing menopausal symptoms, lymphoedema, cancer fatigue, intimacy and relationships, and adjusting and adapting after a diagnosis of breast cancer. The course is open to people who have had a breast cancer diagnosis within the last two years. We ask that you are free to attend all four sessions of the programme.

### Register your interest

If you are interested in attending this session, please register your interest at

[www.breastcancercare.org.uk/submission/events-support?field\\_import\\_admin\\_event\\_nid=10539](http://www.breastcancercare.org.uk/submission/events-support?field_import_admin_event_nid=10539)

*'I found the course very informative and reassuring. It helped to know how others deal with similar problems. Thank you to Breast Cancer Care and all the people who have helped us on the course'*