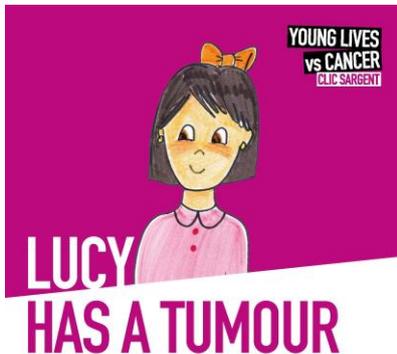


MACMILLAN
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BOOK REVIEWS

Read what people affected by cancer think about...



Lucy has a tumour (2017)

CLIC Sargent.

London: CLIC Sargent, September 2017.

36pp.

Free.

Average star rating 4.1 (out of 5)

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This book would be useful as soon as possible after a child has been diagnosed with a tumour but can also be used at later stages. The story describes a young child's experience of cancer; starting from her feeling unwell and finishing with a celebration when she finishes treatment (having experienced tests, chemotherapy, a blood transfusion, an operation and radiotherapy). It deals (briefly) with issues such as Lucy's hair loss due to chemotherapy and how her little brother feels left out when everyone makes a fuss of Lucy.

The order is logical, and the book contains plenty of information as well as some reference to how the little girl feels and the questions she asks. It is best shared with an adult, even if the child can read the text him/herself. It provides a good starting point for conversations about cancer and its treatment. A glossary provides an explanation of the technical words used, such as biopsy, broviac and portacath. The book would be especially useful if accompanied by an adult's comments relating Lucy's experiences to those of the child looking at the book.

The illustrations help to make the book more appealing as well as helping with comprehension of the text. The children mainly (but not always) look happy – a good opportunity to talk about how the characters might be feeling. Overall, the illustrations show that Lucy copes well with her treatment. The pictures are simple, and although the book has 34 pages, it has the feel of an illustrated pamphlet.

I like the way that Lucy's story is told in a matter-of-fact fashion, providing information about a tumour and its treatment in an objective yet positive manner. It would be very useful for families with young children affected with a tumour. It describes Lucy's experience in a realistic yet non-threatening way.

Retired infant headteacher with experience of families impacted by cancer (56-65) (March 2019)



This book is written and reviewed by professionals in the cancer field and so is full of accurate information. It could be read at any stage. The procedures and treatment are explained well and honestly, but without frightening a child. They are (hopefully) accurate and, because they are reviewed, up to date.

The story is clear and simple and in a logical order (with a happy ending). There are a lot of words, so it's probably best for younger children; older and more confident children could read it independently. Medical terms are explained in a glossary and discussed in simple, direct language that children could understand. The book looks ok. It looks like a book about cancer rather than a "normal" picture book.

I like the simple, direct, no-nonsense approach of this book and feel that it could be read anywhere to anyone at any time in school, or at home.

Living with cancer (MDS) and former teacher of 3-16-year olds with SEN (46-55) (January 2018)

This is a good book for a young child diagnosed with a tumour. Lucy has a stomach tumour, but the book could be used for any type of tumour as the storyline is very general. It covers diagnosis, scans, biopsy, chemotherapy and radiotherapy, which is very useful even though it might not be needed for all. It covers many issues in a very good way so that children can understand and is best read at diagnosis and through treatment. It would be a very good resource to have in a school.

I like how the story has been told. It is easy to understand. Words are explained in a glossary, but it would be better to include brief explanations in the text as well. The illustrations are bright and bold and easy to understand and appropriate for the text.

Overall, it's a useful, well-written book that will help many children. It explains things very well at a child's level. However, there isn't quite enough about radiotherapy. It would be better to Lucy on the bed with the machine and operators around. It would be useful to know that the machine moves round and that for a few minutes she will be on her own but her loved ones and staff are nearby, in a reassuring way.

Breast cancer patient with six grandchildren (46-55) (November 2017)



Lucy has a tumour is an informative book following Lucy's journey from diagnosis, through treatment, to the end of treatment. It is useful for children who will undergo the same treatment Lucy useful for adults as well, as it explains the treatment in an easy way to understand. It is perhaps not for younger children (preschool age).

The book is in a logical order and all the information needed to understand it is there. I like the way that the treatment is explained within the story in a way that children will understand but I don't like the story itself; I felt that it didn't really have a story. Lucy met many other children with different names and even as a grown up, I found it hard to follow who was who – they weren't all necessary to move the story along.

It is a bit long and I don't think children will be engaged to follow the story; there is no dialogue, for example, and the illustrations aren't captivating. It is more suited to older children. The technical or medical words explained in the glossary are suitable for children aged eight and above. Some of the terms are a bit tricky, and assume some understanding of operations, or blood cells for example.

It would be useful to share this as a child goes through different stages of treatment. I would share it in sections as we go through that stage ourselves. It is a long book, with a lot of words, and it could be overwhelming to share it all at once with a child. It might be reassuring to show the ending and that the child is ok, when first sharing it.

Parent to a child with cancer (36-45) (August 2018)

The following reviews are of earlier editions.



This is a beautiful book, perfectly written for young children; it is also useful for children up to the age of about ten or maybe older and for anyone else affected, including teachers of young children who may know a child with cancer in their class.

It is a very visually appealing book and the illustrations are delightful. The story is told beautifully, the characters come to life in the best tradition of good children's story books. There is a glossary at the end which is perfectly placed, so allowing the story to be read story. Adults can refer to the glossary as necessary.

What a lovely book, like its partners in this series, beautifully written and illustrated, a wonderful resource for families where a child has cancer. I really like how the story is incorporated as part of a real family experience in a very unthreatening and very positive way. For children (and probably parents too) the smiles on each page help a great deal in making the reading of this story a positive experience. The explanation of cancer cells is extremely well done for children.

Kidney cancer patient and retired primary head teacher (66-75) (June 2015)



Part of an excellent series of books, this one is for younger children and is straightforward, glossy and colourful. It recognises that siblings can feel left out.

It does not mention how Lucy feels and there are no talking points, e.g. a favourite toy to take to hospital, what you will eat before your operation, to encourage a child to talk about their worries. It doesn't explain how Lucy got her Wiggly and there is no idea of time; I don't know if this is an oversight or deliberate because of the target age group. One of the books in the series explains and reassures about having an anaesthetic; that would be useful here. All the books in the series would benefit from a page about the emotional rollercoaster of cancer. It's important for a child to know it's normal to feel angry or sad. But it is a wonderful resource for younger children and, while not aimed at siblings, it will answer many of their questions too.

Breast cancer survivor (46-55) (February 2010)

This book helps children to understand the process and eases fears for the family too. It is easy to understand with simply stated facts.

Parent of cancer patient (56-65) (May 2009)

This is very useful. It is easy to understand, and I definitely recommend it.

Cancer patient (46-66) (May 2009)

The following reviews were written before we introduced the star rating system.

This is a simple and clear introduction to the topic, but the description of surgery is unrealistic, and it makes treatment seem a painless, straightforward affair. It makes the experience of cancer sound somewhat trivial and plain sailing; there is no mention of any emotions. The story has a logical structure, the people are thinly sketched; however, the emphasis is on the events, not the characters.

Parent of a child with cancer (26-35) (May 2009)

This book fills a gap in information for young patients and their parents and is a good general introduction. There is a danger of giving misleading information about the diagnosis of certain cancers. The book says that the patient is referred to a hospital for tests within a few days or less. Weeks, or even months is more correct. GPs very rarely see cases of childhood cancer and the symptoms are often like other illnesses, so referral to hospital is delayed.

Parent of leukaemia patient (56-65) (March 2008)

This book is well written with colourful, child-appropriate illustrations. A child could read the book in one go even if they felt ill and had a short concentration span. It clearly follows from diagnosis, through treatment, to going home

It will be easy for children aged seven and up to read by themselves, but it will also be useful for younger children to have it read to them. It will help parents gain an understanding of how to approach the subject with the child. Siblings and friends may also find it a good resource to aid their understanding of what is happening.

Children's nurse (56-65) (March 2008)

As with the other titles in this series (*Joe has leukaemia, Mary has a brain tumour*) this sets out to explain a cancer in simple terms, without trying to cram in too much. It provides a straightforward introduction to the concept of cancer. It will help a child understand what is happening inside their body and explain what doctors and nurses will do to make them well again.

It should appeal to children aged from three to 11. The story and language are simple, and the pictures are sufficiently whimsical. It aims to convey information about tumours and their treatment and it succeeds without being boring. It also includes a touch of negativity, which many books fail to tackle; treatment takes time, chemotherapy doses are sometimes delayed, surgery leaves scars. So often these occur in real life, but books paint a rosy picture. A brilliant, well-planned little book.

Carer (46-55) (February 2008)

The title suggests that tumour isn't a scary word and that it is alright to talk about it. The book is written in a way that children will understand and that will not scare them. It is very helpful to have the glossary. The illustrations are fun, and I like the way that the different cells are given faces; the healthy cells seem happy and the damaged cells seem grumpy and sad. It could be read to any child and I would definitely read it to my daughter when she is a bit older so that she isn't scared by the word cancer.

Childhood liver cancer patient (18-25) (January 2008)

Further information

Why does Macmillan Cancer Support review books?

We use reviews to help us compile a list of suggested cancer books, the [Macmillan Core Book List](#). Cancer information centres and public libraries can use this list to select appropriate and relevant books for people affected by cancer.

We add reviews to the [Directory of information materials for people affected by cancer](#) so that people affected by cancer can see what others in a similar situation think about a book. You can also see details of all the books reviewed in the [Book reviews listing](#), which also has links to all the reviews.

We recruit most of our reviewers through the [Volunteering Village](#) and the [Cancer Voices Network](#), people affected by cancer who have signed up to help Macmillan Cancer Support in a number of ways. Volunteers are a vital part of our book review process; since 2007, over 1,500 Macmillan volunteers have written more than 6,000 reviews of over 500 different books.

If you are a health professional who would like to review books for us, please [email Sue Hawkins](#), Information Materials Researcher, Macmillan Cancer Support.

Information and support for people affected by cancer

If you are looking for support to help you live life with cancer, you may wish to contact one of [Macmillan's cancer information and support services](#). Or you can call the Macmillan Support Line free on **0808 808 00 00** (Mon-Fri 9am–8pm). We have an interpreting service in over 200 languages. Just state, in English, the language you wish to use. If you are deaf or hard of hearing you can use textphone no 0808 808 0121 or Text Relay.

You can also email us using the [website enquiry form](#). Alternatively, [visit our website](#).

Feedback

If you have any comments, please [email Sue Hawkins](#), Information Materials Researcher, Macmillan Cancer Support.

We're here to help everyone with cancer live life as fully as they can, providing physical, financial and emotional support. So whatever cancer throws your way, we're right there with you.

For information, support or just someone to talk to, call 0808 808 00 00 or visit macmillan.org.uk

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