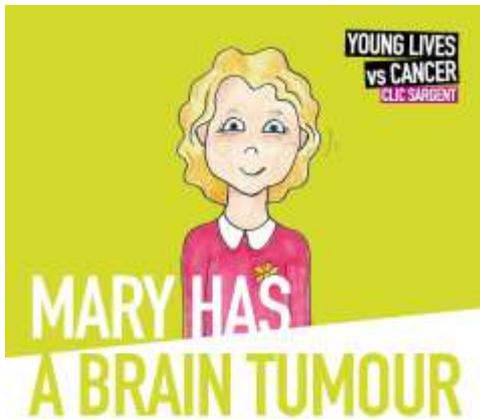


**MACMILLAN
CANCER SUPPORT**

BOOK REVIEWS

Read what people affected by cancer think about...



Mary has a brain tumour (2017)

CLIC Sargent.

London: CLIC Sargent, September 2017.

14pp.

Average star rating 4.5 (out of 5)

**Macmillan Cancer Support
89 Albert Embankment
London SE1 7UQ**

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This has just the right amount of information for a young child following diagnosis of a brain tumour. It is very suitable for parent/family member to read with them at any stage to help them to understand the treatment involved. There are excellent explanations throughout and it is written in a logical way, with a useful glossary. The illustrations are easy for a child to understand.

Essential information that can be discussed at any time following diagnosis and during procedures. Simple and to-the-point explanations for young children, whilst allowing room for further questions

Retired Macmillan Nurse (56-65) (June 2019)



A clear and simple “guidebook” in the guise of a story about a girl who has a brain tumour. There is a lot of detailed information in simple language that would be relatively easy for children to understand. The book is aimed at older children to read for themselves, but adults could read it to younger ones, taking time to explain what new words mean (helped by a clear glossary).

The story is told clearly and thoroughly in a logical order. It is easy to understand as all terms, procedures and treatments are clearly explained in child friendly language. It looks like a book about cancer but is well laid out with a good-sized font. The few illustrations have a cartoon, hand-drawn appearance that may help to make the subject less intimidating.

I like that it is written and reviewed by cancer professionals and so is up-to-date information that does not talk down to children or parents. In fact, it could also be useful for parents/relatives/friends of someone with cancer or those who want to learn more about it. It may be better if it looked more like a “normal” children’s book.

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

This is a good and useful book. I like that it covers a lot of aspects from diagnosis to final treatment, deals with feelings, and gives reassurance throughout. It is a great book for any child with a brain tumour, or friends and family. The easy, friendly style does a good job of trying to take the fear out of diagnosis and treatment.

It is easy to understand for young children. I would like to see the words explained in italics in the text as well as in the glossary. I like how the story is told; the information is in a logical order, in a way that children can understand. The cover is simple, and the illustrations are good, although the one on page 33 could be changed. The doctor is behind a desk, talking to the child on her own. The illustration of Mary having a scan (p. 8) could be better, although I appreciate it's difficult to depict. You can't see that she is going through a tube, and a young child might not understand it.

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

The following reviews are of earlier editions.



This is another beautiful book from CLIC Sargent, empathetically and carefully written and illustrated. This tells the story of a child with a brain tumour, covering her journey through her sickness logically and clearly but in the context of a story where it is easy to warm to the characters. It is useful for anyone affected and for teachers and professionals working with young children with a brain tumour. It can be read at any stage of the illness and be re-read whenever appropriate.

There is a glossary for adults and older children to refer to when necessary, but the story also incorporates technical terms very well in a way that does not detract from the story. The book is delightful, colourful and welcoming. The illustrations are extremely child friendly. I particularly like how the story of the child's illness is set within the context of family life and the optimistic approach to the whole experience.

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

This is a great book for children to understand and should be read as soon as possible after diagnosis. It gives an overview of the basic areas that need to be covered when dealing with a brain tumour and covers the condition well enough without being too complicated. It is written in such a way that it is very easy for all to understand. It is well illustrated and will appeal to younger readers.

I wish that my children had had the opportunity to read this book when their sister was diagnosed with a brain tumour. It would have made it easier to explain what she was going through. I highly recommend anyone with children who have this condition to read this book with them. It makes the whole scenario far less scary.

Parent of a child with a brain tumour (36-45) (March 2013)



This is one in an excellent series of books. They would all benefit from a page or two to cover the emotional rollercoaster of a cancer journey for the patient and their family. It's important for a child to know it's normal to feel angry or sad during treatment and even afterwards as life becomes "normal" again. This book does acknowledge that siblings might feel left out.

One of the books in the series explains in much more detail and in a reassuring way about what happens when you have an anaesthetic. I would be frightened at the thought of having to lie still and wear a mask; it would be nice, if this was recognised. It would also benefit from the "talking points" in some of the other books, e.g. what favourite toy are you taking to hospital with you. There is no idea of timescale; I don't know if this is an oversight or deliberate because of the age range.

It's hard to write a good book, these are only points that could be improved upon, though I still wonder why so many people are missing their noses?! Overall an excellent and useful resource. Well done for recognising that siblings feel left out.

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

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

Excellent! This book describes the circumstances very well. Each page relates to all that my grandson went through. It is easy to understand, even for my four-year-old granddaughter, who sat with me while I read the book.

Grandmother of a child with cancer (56-65) (May 2009)

There is enough information for everyone to get an idea of what a brain tumour is but not so much detail that young children are scared. It's easy to understand and any medical words are explained.

Teenager whose grandfather had cancer (13-17) (May 2009)

A well-written book, in a style that any child can read. It follows Mary from diagnosis, through treatment, to going home. It is easy for children of seven and up to read by themselves, but under-sevens may need it read to them. There is a good glossary. Parents will find it useful to gain an understanding of how to approach the subject with their 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)

This is a similar book to [Lucy has a tumour](#). It is a good general introduction to the subject. It fills a gap for such information, after diagnosis, for young patients and their parents. For such young children (about 3 to 5 years), they must be upbeat in tone.

However, there is a danger of giving misleading information about how diagnosis of paediatric “solid” as opposed to blood cancers is made. This book says that the patient was referred to a hospital for tests “within a few days”, or less. Weeks, or even months is more correct! GPs rarely see cases of childhood cancer and the symptoms are often very like many other childhood illnesses, so referral is delayed. It is a very serious problem that needs research and action.

Parent of a child with leukaemia (56-65) (March 2008)

This book introduces the idea of cancer in very simple terms; it would help to prepare a child or their siblings and peers for its consequences. As with all the books in this series it is clear and easy to follow. The story is a straightforward chronological tale. The language is kept simple. Technical terms appear in italics and their meanings are given at the back of the book. The book should appeal to children from about four to 11. The pictures are amusing.

Although there is some reference to the problems that can occur in treatment, I feel that, as the central character has siblings, an opportunity was missed to discuss the emotional impact on a family.

A well-thought-out book prepared by someone who understands the target audience.

Carer and teacher (46-55) (February 2008)

This is particularly useful for friends and other family members who are supporting a child and their parents. It's a nice size and easy to read. It deals with the facts simply. It doesn't deal with parents' feelings but overall, it's very useful.

Cancer survivor (46-55) (January 2008)

This is a well-presented book with nice, colourful pictures. It's very informative and easy to read. Children can relate to the pictures and most will probably be able to read the text as well. It is a pleasure to read.

Paediatric Liaison Nurse (46-55) (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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