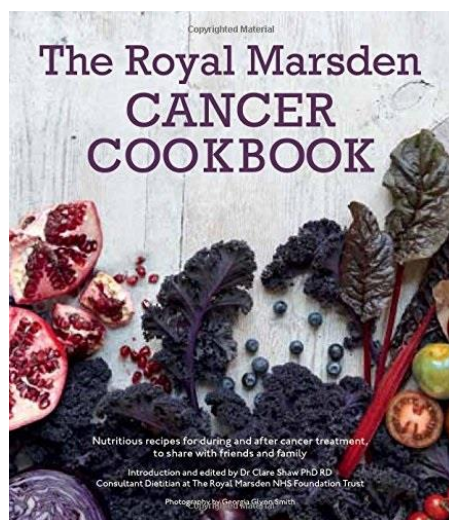


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BOOK REVIEWS

Read what people affected by cancer think about...



The Royal Marsden cancer cookbook (2015)

Shaw C.
London: Kyle Books, 2015.
256pp.
ISBN 9780857832320.
£19.99.

Average star rating 4.5 (out of 5)

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This book will be useful for patients, family or friends to understand symptoms and side effects and the best foods for them. It is useful at any stage, but ideally before treatment, so you know the changes to expect and the foods that help. It gives a good understanding of side effects that may occur during treatment and you can be prepared, as can family and friends who can make appropriate food and snacks.

It is easy to understand and the introduction is very useful, clear and concise. The index is complete and it is easy to find what you need. The recipes are easy to follow but do use ingredients that most people won't have in their cupboard; this means planning and shopping, not ideal during treatment. I would like total preparation time indicated alongside the ingredients and nutritional information. This is important when you are ill, you need something quick and convenient.

It is an attractive-looking book but the cover could be more appealing; purple and red fruit and vegetables may put off those who want comfort food; given the quality of the book, that would be a shame. The layout is particularly good, with the introduction followed by recipes in sections for different stages of treatment. The photos are good, but there isn't a photo of each recipe, which is a shame.

I particularly like the introduction; it's worth the price of the book alone and makes it more than just another cookbook. I like how the sections flow clearly and you can link symptoms to the most appropriate recipes. I recommend this book to others. Even if the recipes are not to their taste, the introduction is extremely useful and informative.

Breast cancer patient (36-45) (July 2015)

The subtitle – *Nutritious recipes during and after cancer treatment, to share with friends and family* – makes clear the target audience. The stages of cancer are not specified, but patients should find sections relevant at any stage. The recipes are divided into 'during treatment' (for times when eating is more difficult, and are designed to be high in protein and energy), and 'after treatment' (for those who are eating well, trying to lose weight or don't want to gain extra weight). But we are reminded that the recipes are for all the family. Readers need not be restricted to recipes from the 'during treatment' or 'after treatment' sections. There is plenty to appeal to the cancer survivor and the general reader.

It is very readable with easy to follow recipes. I like the how the ingredients are listed to one side of the recipe. The book pays attention to nutritional values, so it is helpful to find the energy, protein, fat, saturated fat, carbohydrate and fibre content of each dish listed below the ingredients. Some ingredients (e.g. crushed saffron threads, tamarind water, salmon, vermouth and blueberries) are expensive, particularly at times when cancer is imposing additional costs, and may not be easy to source.

However, there are plenty of recipes like *Sausage and puy lentil casserole*, *A simple fish pie* and *One-pot chicken with leeks, new potatoes and grapes* that are simple to prepare with ingredients that are easy to find. Sometimes a traditional dish like *Shepherd's pie* is given a twist, "Replacing some of the lamb with cooked lentils reduces the fat content but makes a beautifully creamy ragout, while the sweet potatoes and lentils have a lower glycaemic index value than potatoes, so carbohydrate is absorbed into your bloodstream more slowly". This was new to me, as were a good number of other dishes like *Burmese chicken and coconut curry*, *Chickpea and sweet potato Mongolian stew*, *Caramelised cardamom plums*, and *Chocolate and beetroot cake*. They make me want to find the ingredients and try them. The wonderful photographs make the dishes look very appetising.

Although I noticed no factual errors, there are rare typographical errors that should have been picked up at proofreading. As far as the subject matter is concerned, the book appears to have been carefully edited by a Consultant Dietician at the Royal Marsden, who also provides an informative introduction. There are just a sprinkling of culinary words like 'sumac' that were new to me. I had to consult a dictionary for this, but most unfamiliar words like 'Fruit leather' and 'Power balls' are explained in the recipes. There is an index and two useful pages that list the nutritional content of all the dishes, enabling the reader to choose the most nutritious meals at a glance. Two more pages list the foods to take during problems such as nausea or dry mouth.

It is a beautiful book. The cover shows nutritious and colourful foods like tomatoes, pomegranates, blueberries, and red cabbage. Recipes by some celebrity chefs also add to the book's coffee-table appeal and friends have asked to borrow it. I welcome the inclusion of 'cooking as therapy', as being both useful and interesting and I appreciate the cultural diversity evident in the range of recipes. However, it is a large and thick hardback book and frail readers may find it too heavy to hold easily.

Inflammatory breast cancer survivor (56-65) (July 2015)

This book should be on every kitchen bookshelf! It is useful for all stages. It covers the effect that treatment may have on your appetite and associated senses, tells you what foods you can substitute when nausea and other side effects are a problem, and gives a detailed description of a 'healthy' diet.

The recipes are easy to follow. I am a keen cook and love preparing food for my family, but during treatment I could not face cooking; if I'd had this book I could have prepared some of the recipes for the freezer. A favourite is the cauliflower, garlic and turmeric soup, an easy supper. The chocolate sorbet recipe (p. 233) is fabulous; I suffer from lactose intolerance so ice cream is a no-no, this is a great substitute – very rich and not for kids' palettes I believe.

The language is well suited to the intended audience. It is easy to find the recipe you want, either by ingredient in the index or by type in the contents and the table is a great addition as you can look up the recipes that are suitable for different side-effects. The general layout is fine but colour coding the sides of the book or having tabs that pull out would have made it even better (I had 'post its' in various places). I always prefer to try the recipes that have a picture first as part of eating is what it looks like and this gives you a guide as to the results you are looking for.

Thank you for letting me try the recipes in this book. It is a great favourite with my family. There is something in it for everyone; my eldest daughter read the introduction several times and found the information on food groups and the challenges to healthy eating of great interest. It has become the favourite recipe book on my shelf, overtaking even my chocolate cookbook! I wish I'd had access to it sooner; it should be available to every patient; an online version would be fantastic.

Living with breast cancer (36-45) (July 2015)

As the title suggests, this book is appropriate for cancer patients or for anyone involved in preparing their food. Although about 70% of the book is devoted to eating during treatment, it does have a section for those who want to maintain a healthy diet post treatment, and is therefore pertinent for everyone. Ideally, it would be good to have soon after diagnosis, not only to help individuals understand or be reminded about the importance of the right nourishment to help the body recover and repair from disease, but also to help cope with the rigours of treatment and deal with the needs beyond. It is not just a recipe book but a dietary reference by a knowledgeable dietitian who understands the challenges that cancer patients may encounter and includes recipes for specific needs.

It is easy to understand, and for fast reference, there is a one-page contents list at the beginning. The index enables the reader to find a topic, recipe or ingredient. The recipes are easy to follow and have been carefully selected, not just for their nutritional value; most contain everyday supermarket ingredients that are not in the premium price bracket. It is as beautifully illustrated as any cookbook I have seen. Had I come across it when I was a patient, I would have found it most informative and helpful and the photographic illustrations and recipes would have helped stimulate some decisions and encouraged me to cook when I felt able.

This is one very important book for cancer patients and people involved in cooking and preparing food for them. It is an invaluable resource that I wish I had seen before I had treatment. Advice includes charts addressing many different needs, and not limited to identifying eating problems whether taste or appetite related, or whether physical issues interfere with eating. There are also suggestions of foods to try to help relieve symptoms caused by treatments. Amongst the wealth of tips, the author touches upon food hygiene, which is sensible to observe at all times, but especially when patients may be more susceptible to infection. Usefully, each recipe has a breakdown of protein, fats, carbohydrates, fibre and calories per portion. I also like the fact that recipe adaptations are suggested.

Breast cancer survivor (56-65) (June 2015)

This is an extremely useful, 'all round' book, at diagnosis, during treatment and after, with marvellous information and recipes. It is colourful, clear and inviting – a wonderful book for cancer patients, carers, friends and family and the general public!

It is easy to understand; words are explained in the text and it is easy to find what you are looking for – it is a great idea to separate the recipes into sections. The recipes are easy to follow and the ingredients are readily available and hopefully not expensive. It looks great; the layout is good and the recipe photos are superb. The cover just jumps out at you – so appetising!

Former breast cancer patient (56-65) (May 2015)

This lovely cookbook with its tempting recipes will be useful before or during treatment. It is suitable for anyone to enjoy, although if you are on a low-sugar diet check the sugar content of recipes beforehand.

It starts with a full explanation of cancer, the treatments and how these will affect the body. The section describing the nutrients that the body needs and how best to obtain them is clear and straightforward. It briefly explains how eating can be affected by cancer, e.g. sore mouth, difficulty swallowing, and then suggests recipes that may help. Some of the desserts and cakes are suitable for celebrations so that all can take part, share the experience and not feel left out. Towards the back there is a reference and further information section with websites for more information.

The book is very attractive with a clear typeface and tempting colour photos. The recipes are fairly easy to follow and I didn't have any problems finding ingredients. I like that they are from different people and not just the author. However, I'm used to imperial measurements so found it best to convert to imperial before I got the ingredients or started baking. It may be better to show both metric and imperial. It is also quite a big and heavy book and this made it difficult to have in the kitchen to refer to as it took up so much space. Could it be put into large ring binding?

We especially enjoyed the *Chocolate and beetroot cake* – I ended up making it for family and friends instead of giving Easter eggs! I did find using a cake tin with a slightly smaller diameter made the cake deeper and gave it a nice consistency, almost like chocolate fudge brownie. Also, keep an eye on the cake after about 30 minutes as it can go very dry on the top during the latter stages of cooking.

This book would be a thoughtful present for a friend or family member who is caring for someone with cancer; it will give them some invaluable hints and tips about food types, what may work best, and how to keep up energy levels to name but a few. I just loved looking at the cook book and the photos. The nutritional information is invaluable and clearly written, simple but not patronising. It is especially useful around seeds, nuts and berries; I now use these daily for my husband's lunches and he does feel they help with his energy levels.

Spouse of kidney cancer patient (46-55) (May 2015)

My carer and I could find nothing to dislike about this book; it is captivating, interesting, different and challenging. There are suitable recipes for every stage of cancer and I am told by my carer that they are simple, easy to follow and complete.

It is a well-structured book, easy to follow with an incredible amount of information. This book feels like quality when it is touched, the presentation is superb and the whole production is appealing and professional in the extreme. The recipes we tried demand more investigation and are interesting, challenging and different.

The whole package is what one would expect from a major publisher, is beautifully presented and excellent value as a recipe book for anyone. It is first class recipe book and would remain at the forefront of anyone's bookshelf for a long, long time!

Apart from any contributions the publication makes to cancer care, this is a top-of-the-range production; I have no criticisms at all! It is well priced and beautifully presented. I recommend it to anyone and everyone – not just patients and carers - with no hesitation. Do not let the title put anyone off, it is an excellent production.

Living with prostate cancer, (Over 75) (May 2015)

This book will be hugely valuable for anyone dealing with cancer (patient, carer, friend, health professional). It provides a practical and brilliant overview and a useful structure that will help people find recipes that are relevant to their stage of treatment and concerns. It focuses on the facts and the writing style will appeal to many going through treatment. The upfront section is packed with valuable and specific information that provides targeted advice. The nutritional information is also handy, especially for those looking to monitor their food intake and make healthier choices.

It will be useful at every stage, but particularly during chemotherapy and after treatment. I found the post-treatment section really inspiring and tasty (and great for weight loss)! It should be marketed to people yet to undergo treatment so that they can prepare and see that there are solutions to some of the side-effects they may encounter. A lot of the available information on chemotherapy and cancer encourages people to eat what they can stomach rather than focusing on healthy foods that will help them feel better. This book would have been useful when I was facing taste issues and trying to eat something other than ice lollies.

It is very easy to understand and there is nothing that needs clarification. The tone is just right: no pity or sympathy, just a pragmatic approach to dealing with what can be quite upsetting and underestimated side-effects of treatment. The use of bullet points in the introductory section is good. The recipes are very easy to follow and are well laid out, but bullet points, rather than paragraphs, would help readers see the different steps. The addition of tips is helpful and makes the book feel well thought through. The ingredients are not what I would normally buy (e.g. tamarind water and quinoa), but I loved that part of the process and never struggled to find anything. I felt healthy after each meal and enjoyed matching foods (e.g. chicken livers and pomegranate seeds) that I wouldn't otherwise have put together. The meals felt like a treat! My shopping bills haven't increased as a result of trialling the recipes.

The sections (main meals, snacks etc) are not that easy to find. Because the book has two sections for main meals, for example, these need to be made clearer. For a cancer recipe book to be successful it needs to be almost intuitive to navigate for those with limited energy. Because of how it has been divided, I often find myself losing recipes. The snacks and drinks section, with its mix of drinks, then snacks, then drinks, then snacks, is a little confusing. Different fonts could make the sections easy to identify. The 'Ways with meatballs' and 'Main meals' headings are given the same treatment and this feels wrong.

The book is beautifully produced and, given the subject matter and focus, doesn't look out of place on my book shelf. The cover has universal appeal and the serif typeface is easy to read and in keeping with similar recipe books. The photography has been shot well and the meals and ingredients look enticing. Given the medical focus, the book feels well styled, in keeping with high-end recipe books. The way in which it has been put together makes it a joy to use, which I feel is hugely valuable. When going through treatment nothing is normal, so it is nice to think you don't have to resort to using a medical-looking recipe book to tackle side effects.

The celebrity contributions are an inspired touch. I really felt like I was eating well and picking up tips from the experts. The pairing of medical advice and celebrity recipes will really appeal to those wanting a bit of normal in their not-so-normal lives. I am not sure if this is possible, but I love the idea of connecting the celebrities to the content a bit more. Why did they get involved? What is the idea behind the recipe? There is a differing amount of information on each one and I would like to see a bit more personality to bring this element to life even more.

The size is about right, although I would like a few more main meal suggestions. This may be because the recipes are divided into two parts. Is this entirely necessary? I like recipes from both parts and they could work well combined with a key to indicate the importance of each recipe. The format is not dissimilar to popular cookery books, which is good when it comes to storing it on the shelf. While I love the production values, content and tone, the winning element for me is the recipe content. Each recipe I have tried is now a regular. They feel healthy, but also indulgent, a great blend. The instructions are easy to follow and it is hard to go wrong; nothing takes too long to make. I like the choice of ingredients and the emphasis on more unusual but flavoursome dishes. It is unlike any other recipe book I have. This ties in nicely with the idea that you shouldn't eat all your favourites while on chemo. It is nice to experiment with different flavours, especially if you don't know how they should taste.

I don't have any dislikes as such, but I have a few thoughts. For me, the focus is on making things as easy as possible to understand and navigate.

- Timings: the timings for each recipe should be clearer. Given that people on treatment may feel too tired to cook, the timings would help them evaluate which recipe to attempt. I found myself having to add up timings in my head.
- A key: The grid in the front section is useful for identifying recipes, but it would be great for this information to be replicated on the recipe pages to help with navigation and reinforce the usefulness of different dishes. This information could easily get lost otherwise.

- Equipment: it is good to identify equipment in the ingredients column so that the reader can see if they have the kit and the store cupboard ingredients. The ice lollies recipe is a good example. It is important to know what equipment is needed to avoid disappointment. This is hidden in the first paragraph.
- Bullet points: I would love to see the recipes split into easy to follow to steps to make those preparing them think they are simple to create.
- Section breaks: the chapter headings are not easy to find within the parts. The pages are the least attractive and don't clearly signpost the new section.
- Servings: many recipes are for several servings. Given the average age of those with cancer, I would introduce a few more recipes for two servings. I know recipes can be scaled down, but treatment is personal and, unless you are in a big family, I imagine most will be eating in small numbers.

I know this book will make the lives of those with cancer that little bit easier, inspiring them to eat well, often when they don't feel like eating at all. I just wish I'd had it during treatment. The information provided by hospitals is quite light, so it is great that there is now a book that can make you feel good about preparing meals when you don't feel like eating. It should be recommended by hospitals instead of the advice: 'just eat what you feel like during chemo to get the calories in.'

Breast cancer patient, finished active treatment (26-35) (May 2015)

This is relevant for anyone affected by cancer, family and carers, from diagnosis, through treatment, to recovery and beyond. It is also a useful resource for cancer health professionals and anyone looking to eat healthily and understand nutrition.

It is clearly written and easy to understand; the tone is informative and supportive. The contents list and index are clear and a useful guide to specific information. The introduction on eating well with cancer is extremely informative and detailed in terms of how diet can impact on cancer health, as well as tips to maintain or reduce weight. The tables giving an overview of the best recipes for different circumstances are also very useful and give clear guidance depending on your individual dietary needs.

The recipes are clear and easy to follow, often with additional advice about the speed or ease of preparation, including what is good to freeze. Most ingredients appear to be easily available and certainly within my typical weekly shop. The range of recipes means that there is likely to be something to tempt everyone. Dividing the recipes into those suitable during treatment and those for afterwards enables people to focus on their specific needs. The pictures look natural and attractive. The layout is clear and attractive. The typeface is easy to read and a good size, the bold, capital letters for recipe names contrast well with the recipe details and ingredient lists. The paper quality is high. I hope that a paperback will be available soon as £19.99 is pricey.

An excellent book; it would be so positive if this type of consideration to diet to support cancer recovery was available to you as an inpatient. It is so positive to be able to do anything to support your own recovery during cancer and the establishment of good habits in diet from the start is a significant part of this.

Living beyond womb cancer (46-55) (April 2015)

This would be at home on anyone's shelf. The introduction is informative without being too detailed and will be useful to anyone recently diagnosed and wondering what best to do with regard to diet. People having treatment, particularly those with difficulty eating or poor appetite, will also find something in here to help them.

For someone like me who cooks and loves to browse cook-books, this is great; most recipes have a colour picture to show you what to expect and the recipes are well set out and easy to follow. You don't need to be living in a city with access to exotic ingredients. It's nice to see recipes from guest chefs and I particularly like the tips accompanying many recipes, telling you what freezes well or can be made in advance (useful when you never know how you're likely to feel on any particular day). The nutritional information accompanying each recipe is useful too.

I love this book. As it's edited by a consultant dietitian at The Royal Marsden, I have faith that the information and advice are spot on.

Diagnosed with mouth cancer in 2013, treated with surgery, radiotherapy and chemotherapy. Currently waiting for restorative dentistry (56-65) (April 2015)

I love cooking so feel this would be an excellent book for someone with cancer. I would lend it to friends with cancer or those caring for someone with cancer. Equally, there are fantastic, healthy recipes for everyone. I found the freezing instructions particularly useful; for example, for batch cooking when energy levels are high or when you know you will be otherwise predisposed. Even though my cancer was nearly 15 years ago, I am finding this book useful during my current pregnancy to help me choose some balanced recipes that I can freeze ahead of baby's arrival!

It will be useful at all stages. From experience, there are some particularly useful recipes for people struggling to swallow (e.g. after radiotherapy to the throat area), such as the baked eggs. The book is separated into recipes for during and after treatment, but would be equally attractive anyone looking to make healthy choices.

The recipes are extremely easy to follow. The introduction to each recipe is interesting and useful, gives alternatives to ingredients and explains the benefits of the dish. I particularly like the 'Tip' at the end. The techniques described are simple and not too fancy. There is a good mixture of quick, non-fussy recipes – great if you are tired, have low concentration or limited ingredients in the cupboard – and more ambitious recipes if you're looking for something more challenging. I like the variety of recipes and ingredients – there's something for every palate. Most recipe books have some ingredients that people don't readily have in the cupboard (e.g. vanilla pods) but this is in the minority in this book and most ingredients seem fairly typical.

There is a good choice of colours to break up the pages and add interest. The great photos entice you to get cooking as they look so appetising. The layout is very logical to the reader, with the ingredients split into sections on the left-hand side and the recipe split into relevant sections in the main text. The font is a good size for me (I don't wear reading glasses). The headings also stand out nicely from the main text, making it easy to flick through the book and locate recipes. The tone is excellent; it doesn't make the recipe appear too daunting nor does it come across as too fussy. If

I had to comment negatively on anything it would be the layout of the index. The random bold words are a confusing and look like a heading for non-bold items below.

I like the variety of recipes in this book. There is a mixture of very easy recipes and some more time-consuming ones to suit different occasions. I particularly like the explanations of the health benefits of each dish and the tips for freezing. The introductory pages are fantastic too as they quite simply explain the importance of food in the care of those with cancer. I have already shared this book with a friend caring for a relative with cancer to help with this review.

Hodgkin lymphoma patient (26-35) (April 2015)

I would have welcomed this when I was having chemotherapy. It is very helpful if you are a patient or relative and want to broaden your knowledge about nutritious food. It can be used from diagnosis, through treatment, and beyond. It is particularly useful as it not only encourages good healthy nutrition but also explains why a well-balanced, healthy diet is important and has practical tips for those experiencing common difficulties during treatment. It could also help health professionals provide relevant health promotion. However, it is suitable for anyone.

The recipes are easy to follow and have been written in a concise step-by-step approach. Each recipe advises on quantities that can be made from the ingredients and a detailed calorific content is provided. The list of ingredients is simple to follow and items would be found in any supermarket. There is a mixture of recipes, some are standard recipes and some are more adventurous. Most recipes have a colourful picture to demonstrate how the meals will look.

The contents enable the user to find the section required and each chapter has bolder subheadings to allow you to skim to the exact section you want. There are also easy to follow charts that identify which meals are more suitable for patients experiencing problems, such as difficulty eating. There is no glossary but the book is written simply and avoids the use of technical terms.

It is a hardback and a good general size for a cookbook. The cover is eye catching, and simply states what the book is about. The paper is good quality, the font size is good and subheadings are in bold to draw your attention when necessary. The recipe photographs are very attractive and will encourage users to try out the recipes. The tone of the author is good and she demonstrates her knowledge of nutrition by providing a brief explanation of her working background within the field of oncology. The price (£19.99) seems quite high, especially when you consider that patients may have had to give up work, or rely on benefits that can take a while to sort out.

I like the fact that it has been written by a healthcare professional with demonstrable knowledge of cancer and nutrition; it is likely that the advice is evidence based.

Breast cancer patient (46-55) (April 2015)

We all know how important it is to eat well, but when you're unwell or feeling sick this is a real challenge. This cookbook sets out to try to help people affected by cancer understand how we can use food to manage changes in our body weight, appetite, ability to swallow, or how nauseous we might feel during and after treatment.

The first section explains how different cancer treatments may affect the body, why healthy eating is important, what different vitamins and minerals do in the body. I really like the tips and advice for tackling some of the side-effects of treatment, e.g. nausea, sore mouth, loss of appetite. The tables showing at a glance the dishes that will work best for different situations are handy. As someone who's struggling to lose weight after treatment, it's great to see this recognised and I'll be making good use of these recipes!

Although the recipes are divided into 'during' and 'after' treatment, they're carefully designed to be suitable for the whole family – and friends! The cookbook comes with impressive credentials; it is published by the Royal Marsden hospital in London (50% of royalties will go to The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity), and the editor, Dr Clare Shaw, is consultant dietician at the Marsden. And several people (including chefs and celebrities) have shared some of their recipes, which adds to the pleasure.

At £19.99, it is good value for a cookbook. It's well produced with great photos (so you can see how the dish you're making could look). I cook quite a lot and I'm always looking for new recipe ideas. I've made a few of these recipes and found the instructions easy to follow. It's good to offer breakfast and light meal recipes that can be eaten at any time. Some of the recipes are a bit ambitious and I'm not sure I'd have felt OK about tackling them during or soon after treatment. I'd also like to see more vegetarian dishes or suggestions for what to use instead of meat or fish. But I like the range of ingredients and the flavours – I hated the metallic taste I got during/after treatment and anything to disguise or counter that would have been welcome. I live in a city and have little difficulty getting hold of weird and wonderful ingredients but what I like in this cookbook is that the ingredients seem to be quite easy to find and not too expensive. I love the baked egg recipes, the smoothies, and the treats for the days when your appetite is not great.

I pretty much stopped cooking when I was going through treatment and in early remission: I found it difficult to follow instructions and I lost my sense of taste. The thought of choosing a dish and shopping for ingredients was sometimes overwhelming – even before cooking anything. If I'd had this cookbook it might have helped me tackle some of that because it's specifically for people during/after treatment. It feels that someone has taken the trouble to understand how we might feel and help us look after ourselves. It would also be useful for anyone close to someone during/after treatment because they could cook meals and drop them off or help us cook in our kitchens and keep us company. I wish it had been around when I was going through treatment and in early remission!

In remission from non-Hodgkin lymphoma (46-55) (April 2015)

This book has information on the importance of optimum nutrition and how best this can be deployed to improve outcomes for people with cancer. It also has practical information about how people with cancer, and those who might be cooking for them, can ensure that their diet and eating pattern will suit their circumstances. It covers everything from nutritional facts and figures, to suggestions about how to choose appropriate food and meal size to addressing different side effects, as well as drawing attention to the emotional aspects of cancer and how food and cooking might affect these. It is mainly aimed at people having treatment, but also touches on how to maintain healthy eating habits once the immediate aftermath is over.

The recipes will probably be attractive for anyone interested in healthy eating, but the structure of the book and the way in which the recipes are organised make it much more relevant to those cooking for people affected by cancer. It would be of more interest, though, to a confident and/or enthusiastic cook than to someone who customarily relies on a few tried and tested recipes, on ready meals, or on snacks. It will probably appeal most to a middle-class readership, with time to spare and an interest in cooking. It could also serve as a useful way of educating people about food and nutrition, for discussion in support groups, or as a way of involving those who may need to be coaxed into taking an interest in life when mood is low.

I have tried out several recipes and found them easy to follow. As an experienced cook, I would judge that the other recipes are as straightforward, and that the results will be more or less as illustrated. However, sometimes any errors only make their presence known when you try to cook a recipe! Having lived in the Home Counties for many years and now living in rural Scotland, I would say that, like so many 'foodie' recipes, the ingredients are much more reliably sourced in affluent, middle-class and predominantly urban areas than in small villages where there may be no shops, or just small ones with a limited range of products, particularly fresh produce. I know of several shops locally where leaf gelatine and star anise might be difficult to find, and I have been told by a local greengrocer that 'the pumpkin season' lasts only for the fortnight leading up to 31 October. In general, though, the recipes are based on simple ingredients readily available in supermarkets. There is also an emphasis on unprocessed ingredients, which tend to be nutritionally preferable and cheaper, and therefore within reach of most average budgets.

I found the book commendably easy to follow and to understand; the author skilfully highlights and juggles the culinary, nutritional and emotional aspects of food and eating to make a well-balanced whole. The index is well-structured, with an effective use of bold text and indentation to make the structure clear to the user. I was particularly pleased to see that ingredient names are privileged, so that, for example, 'Masala omelette' is listed under 'Egg', rather than, as all too often happens, under the first word of the dish's name. This complements the structure of the book, which is based on which dishes will be appropriate for people at each stage of cancer, or with different symptoms that may affect their enjoyment of food and their nutritional needs. In addition, there is a quick-reference table clearly setting out the different issues for which each recipe might be helpful.

The book is presented first and foremost as a resource for enthusiastic cooks, in a similar style and format to typed diet sheets or specialist food books for allergy sufferers. The book's appearance reinforces the message at the start: one third of

people will have cancer at some time in their lives, cancer is therefore a part of life for many of us and need not make us feel excluded in any way. Indeed, I was encouraged to see the book filed in Waterstone's alongside other books on healthy eating, rather than with books about specific health conditions.

The illustrations are appetising; the food is styled in a very achievable way (not at all 'cheffy') and so accessible to all levels of expertise, if enthusiasm is there. The list of helpful organisations is valuable. A few references to the literature might have lent extra weight to the advice presented. I have assumed that the information is evidence-based, since it conforms to so much other nutrition literature that does contain references, but adding a few here might go some way towards removing any potential doubts.

It is particularly useful to have a clear and comprehensive guide for the general reader that is grounded firmly in generally accepted evidence-based guidance on optimum nutrition and a healthy diet. People affected by cancer may, in their wish to help themselves, seize on some unconventional remedies and diets that have been shown to be ineffective, often unreliable, sometimes even dangerous. This book, written by a leading oncology dietitian, is a welcome antidote to some of these, as well as being a valuable resource in its own right.

As a CAB volunteer, I am constantly reminded of how relative the perception of cost can be, as well as choice; people who have to rely on food banks, for example, are unlikely to be able to access as many of the ingredients, and in as unprocessed form, as those who can spend money and time sourcing fresh seasonal produce. Some people do not have the money to heat the food they are given, and special packs of food that does not need heating can be specified by referring agencies. So, I would be less inclined to recommend this book to people who are not able to make use of the information, but rather to anyone campaigning for more realistic welfare benefits and a living wage, as indeed Macmillan does. In fact, I'm pressing this point because Macmillan is already aware of how cancer can adversely affect people's incomes, and a book such as this could be a useful campaigning tool.

Former Hodgkin lymphoma patient (diagnosed 1973) (56-65) (April 2015)

This is a great book for anyone touched by cancer; patients and carers can benefit from the recipes and information. Nutrition for healing is vital during and after treatment and this provides valuable ways to maximize that while minimising difficulties that arise from treatment itself. I like its comprehensive nature. It covers needs during and after treatment and the whole family can enjoy the recipes. Friends can use them to create nutritional, delicious meals for the patient.

It is very easy to understand. The explanations for the varied aspects of cancer and its treatment are clear, concise and easy to follow. The recipes are easy to follow and the ingredients easy to access. They are also not terribly time consuming – important in making them feasible to cook. The photographs are gorgeous and look delicious; they make you want to start cooking.

I have enjoyed cooking from this book and will continue to do so. The recipes have all been delicious and nourishing. I wish I had access to this wonderful resource during my treatment. Our nutritional needs are one area during treatment that we, as the patient, can have much control over – a resource like this is invaluable.

Breast cancer survivor (46-55) (April 2015)

This book would be useful during or after cancer treatment. The introduction is easy to understand but has enough depth to inspire confidence in the author's points. The index is comprehensive but easy to navigate. I particularly like the FAQ section after the introduction. The recipes are easy to follow and prepare but some have way too many ingredients, some of which would necessitate a trip to an ethnic store or a 'posh' supermarket!

The cover grabs the attention with its array of super foods. In many ways, it resembles just a 'normal' cookbook and would easily grace any kitchen bookshelf without screaming 'medical'. Many of the recipes are nicely illustrated with pictures that should inspire the reader to try the recipes. I especially like the fact that whilst the recipes are specifically designed for the cancer patient they can easily be adapted to serve the needs of, and appeal to, the whole family.

This is a great resource for patients or those looking after them. The focus is on giving the reader a balanced, easy way to ensure good nutrition when the palate may be jaded or when the sense of taste is lost, but at the same time suggesting that there is no need to cook special, separate meals – with a little adaptation the whole family can eat in the same way. This is a great book for a worthy cause!

Breast cancer patient (66-75) (March 2015)

This is an excellent addition to the increasing range of cookbooks for cancer patients, full of in-depth helpful information and recipes. The author is Consultant Dietician in Oncology at the Royal Marsden Hospital, impeccable credentials and she knows her stuff. The first part focuses on the range of problems you may have during treatment, e.g. diet, nausea, no appetite, and how to deal with these, and the kind of things to eat to maintain maximum health. The second part has recipes to keep you strong during treatment, then post-treatment recipes to maintain a healthy lifestyle. This is a cookbook for the whole family, cancer or not.

I do not like cooking (or even eating very much!) but even I found the recipes easy to buy for and follow and interesting to try. I like how Dr Shaw doesn't shy away from some of the contentious issues – dairy or not, vitamin supplements, super foods, extreme diets – most things are covered. The book is beautifully presented and has an authority missing from other cookbooks; in my view, easily the best of the crop.

Living with non-Hodgkin lymphoma (56-65) (March 2015)

This book will be invaluable for cancer patients or their carers to understand how diet can help alleviate symptoms and aid recovery, without adopting a restrictive diet. The comprehensive introduction has clear guidance on nutrition and there are excellent tables with suggestions of which recipes would be most suitable for certain eating difficulties and which provide specific nutrients.

It is very well set out with some enticing photographs. The tone of the author is factual healthy eating advice, where nothing is bad in moderation. The recipes are clear, easy to follow and use easily available ingredients. I tried several of the recipes, from salads through main courses to a delicious orange cake and have already made the couscous salad twice.

I love this book, it is almost a shame it is called the Cancer Cookbook because it is a healthy eating cookery book that includes some very sensible dietary advice, some of it directly targeted at cancer patients. Everyone should have a copy!

Carer (46-55) (March 2015)

This book has been written for everyone and achieves that aim. It provides information on eating during and after treatment that is really helpful for carers, patients and health professionals alike, and the recipes would be enjoyed by the whole family (not, as the book says, to “ghettoise” the cancer patient). It would be best given at the start of treatment, used right the way through, and into recovery. It’s not just for patients and carers, though, but a fantastic cookery book for ever more!

It is very well written, accessible for all and in plain English without too many technical words. The introductory section by Dr Clare Shaw is especially helpful in its explanations of the changes that a patient may experience to taste (even on a day-to-day basis) during and after treatment, the nutritional value of foods and a balanced diet, and the emotional changes and fatigue that treatment can cause. The recipes are very easy to follow, using common ingredients and with wonderful, mouth-watering photographs.

This is a very appealing book in terms of layout, tone, quality and photography (the front cover belies the excellence of the content and photography inside!). It is very easy to read; the recipes are divided into during and after treatment, but there is an excellent index. The photographs achieve their stated aim of looking mouth-watering and appealing to eat, and there are often variations to recipes suggested. The information on calorific and nutritional value on each recipe page is also very useful.

I like the introductory section, which does not just deal with the nutritional aspects of eating but also the emotional and therapeutic benefits that are so important during and after treatment. This also includes advice on weight gain and loss, written in a very understanding manner. I like that it has been written “to share with friends and family”, and with the aim of stimulating interest in food for patients at what can be a very difficult time. The tables that list the recipes by “eating difficulties” and “nutrition” before and after treatment are innovative and helpful and would be useful for carers wanting to prepare something for their loved one.

I recommend this book for the information, advice and recipes, especially to friends and carers; with the help of this book they can understand and give real support. Recent press coverage and has explained a little more to the background – the human story of a food photographer helping her friends with breast cancer through cooking. With the Marsden's help the book has been written with a real insight and empathy for patients and carers undergoing treatment and 'coming out the other side'. For me, the book achieves its aim of providing help, advice and wonderful recipes to stimulate all the senses, and is a book that can be used and enjoyed long after treatment by the whole family and friends.

Breast cancer survivor (56-65) (March 2015)

This is a good cook book – I shall keep mine. The recipes are preceded by a detailed section of dietary advice and nutritional information. This is clearly expert; it is expressed in simple language and answers many of the commonly held ideas about food without making any promises based on little or no evidence. Readers are advised to maintain a healthy mid-range weight, to eat a variety of foods and to take regular exercise. Advice is included to help with the eating difficulties faced by those troubled by side effects during treatment. Tables just before the start of the recipes classify them according to seven Eating Difficulties. These range from Poor Appetite to Low Energy food for those wishing to lose weight.

The recipes look good; I saw no missing items or any of the other mistakes commonly seen in recipes. They are fairly easy to follow; the ingredients at first seemed rather exotic but on second reading I realise that most are available at the corner shop. The recipes are divided into two main sections (during and after treatment), each consisting of Breakfast, Light meals, Main meals, Desserts and Baking, and Snacks and Drinks.

It is a substantial and well-presented hardback with appealing pictures. Ingredients are listed in order of use in a left-hand column and the cooking method in a wider right-hand column. There are no tables of weights and measures; quantities are either in items such as 2 eating apples, teaspoons or tablespoons or in grams and millilitres. It is an expensive book, but 50% of the royalties are donated to the Royal Marsden Cancer Charity.

I like the nutritional information, the lack of unsubstantiated promises, and the generally agreeable layout and pictures. Some of the recipes are too modern for me, but I am aware that my choice of food is becoming definitely dated, not to say old fashioned.

Living with breast cancer (Over 75) (March 2015)



When I was having treatment, I needed dietary advice about what to eat and what not to eat. This very useful handbook tells the reader what to expect from treatment AND that there is no 'special diet' for people with cancer. After being bombarded with dietary advice from friends and family, this was comforting. The fact that Shaw is fully qualified makes me feel confident in her writing. She also outlines the pros and cons of 'super foods' giving clear and sensible information. I like the focus on nutrition and wholesome food. There is nothing 'faddy' or precious about it. A table indicates the benefits of certain foods, both for during and after treatment. Thus, it is informative as well as offering recipes that would be part of the healing process.

There is a wide range of recipes for patients during and after treatment. Some recipes are easy, others are very involved and took a long time to make. I would not have been able to make some of these dishes if I was having treatment. Although the recipes said they were 'one pot' or simple, they still contained lots of ingredients. This is OK if you have someone to do your shopping for you, not so easy if you live on your own. The section on snacks and drinks is very good, as these were quick to make. The ingredients are easily sourced at most supermarkets.

It is a very well produced book with lovely illustrations, which helps when deciding whether to cook a dish or not! It will take a lot of wear and tear. Everything is clearly outlined in the actual recipes, but the index could be better – subheadings sometimes include dishes without that ingredient.

I got very frustrated trying to work out the calories per portion. Although energy, protein, fat, saturated fats, carbs, fibre were all given, it was not clear if it was per portion or for the whole dish. I presumed it was per portion, but this should have been clearer. For one recipe, the nutritional information was for two portions 'using half the compote' (p. 55) but what about the rest of the recipe! This is a major irritant and a weakness if you need to count calories due to weight gain. This information should be made explicit.

Many of the recipes I tried were time consuming, although the food was good. You often had to cook more than one dish (using lots of pots and pans) to create the meal and this took much longer than advised. Some such dishes were for the 'during treatment' phase, others for the post-treatment stage and I wondered if I could have cooked these meals during treatment and then getting my energy back, whilst trying to cope with work, life and travel – one's stamina is still very poor for several months after treatment. I was also surprised by the number of recipes for deserts, cakes and biscuits. It presumes that everyone loses their appetite and has to be encouraged to eat. Here again, the calorie input should be very clear.

I found it difficult to review this book as I felt I had to try out the recipes. However, I wish I had had it when I was receiving treatment. Many of the recipes will be in my repertoire in the future.

Living with breast cancer (66-75) (July 2015)

This is more than just a cookbook, it offers nutritional advice and recognises that cancer patients' needs change throughout treatment. I was pleased to find a cancer recipe book that understands its audience. The nutritional and treatment advice is as important as the recipes. I like how it gives the nutritional content of each recipe and that the author realises that one size does not fit all. It is easy to understand and the sections make it easy to find what you are looking for. The recipes are easy to follow and most ingredients should be readily available. It is nicely set out on good quality paper and helpfully arranged in sections for each stage of treatment as well as type of meal. The tone is caring and knowledgeable.

I was disappointed that there are no tips for quick, hot tasty snacks for patients going through treatment, when energy and time are at a premium. I find it difficult to stand for any length of time to cook and prepare dishes but still enjoy cooking. I also lose my appetite and find small, tasty, tempting snacks essential; it is so easy to eat rubbish. Many patients do not have people to cook for them or, as in my case, their husband or carer has limited cooking skills; easy to prepare meals are essential – this would have been the ideal book to supply advice on nutritional snacks.

Living with secondary breast cancer (56-65) (June 2015)

You don't have to have cancer to benefit from this book. There is a good variety of recipes that look easy to follow, although some ingredients will need to be sourced and may incur extra cost. There is additional information at the front, although there are quite a lot of words I had not encountered before. It is appealing to look at, the hardback feel gives it extra appeal and it is a good texture to hold. The recipes are printed on good quality paper. All this is useful for a cookery book in the kitchen, although it is a bit heavy to hold. I gave it four stars only because some of the ingredients are not in your everyday cupboard.

Living with ovarian cancer (36-45) (March 2015)

This is useful for someone going through cancer or who has finished treatment. The recipes are fairly straightforward and the ingredients easily available if you live close to large supermarkets. It is a nice hardback with nice photographs of the food. However, it is very heavy; someone who is frail would find it hard to hold.

It is more suited to people who eat a variety of foods. Many recipes are complicated and would put off some patients; some older people don't like 'fancy' food and regard aubergines and sweet potatoes as foreign! Many ingredients may be unavailable and expensive, especially for those in low-income households. I live in an isolated island community with one small supermarket and would be unable to buy many of the ingredients. A book of simpler, less expensive recipes would be better. The recipes could also be better labelled, e.g. suitable for vegetarians/ vegans, gluten free.

It is expensive for patients on a limited budget. However, if nothing else it is a nice coffee table book.

Womb cancer survivor (46-55) (March 2015)

This comprehensive cookbook is suitable for anyone; it is useful at all stages but especially during treatment and living with cancer. I like practically everything about it. The opening chapter about different kinds of foods and the foods to eat is very good and well thought out – good advice for healthy eating without being patronising.

The quality is excellent and unlike other cookery books has a substantial cover that draws your attention. It is heavy but so much easier to negotiate because of the well thought out layout and binding. Some recipes are expensive but others are not. I like the snacks (this is the first book on eating during cancer I have seen that includes snacks). Some recipes are not to my taste but I am on permanent oral chemo and quite a few things make me queasy. I also think I could improve some of the recipes. Some ingredients are not too good for cancer patients; for instance, smoked mackerel has a habit of repeating and making a cancer patient feel sick. However, others may disagree. The salads are well presented, though a lot of the ingredients could be expensive, and the desserts are excellent, if only I could make meringue.

Thank you for letting me review this book. It is very informative and the best I have seen of its type. I learnt a lot, especially about the value of certain foods and the non-value of others. The advice is very sound. I have already recommended it to friends who would find it useful. It is a recipe book I will be going back to again and again.

Living with secondary breast cancer (56-65) (March 2015)

This is useful for those trying to cook for themselves during treatment, or those cooking for them, who want guidance on what might be suitable. It is most useful during treatment (including long-term treatment such as hormone therapy). For those who are “cured” and not having treatment, it less useful, but it does have recipes that are generally healthy and not too complicated so it might be of general interest.

There is a good introduction on nutrition. It focuses on what to eat when you have cancer rather than what diets may (or may not) help prevent it. It includes scientific information when relevant, but in a very accessible way. All the information is clearly explained. The recipes are easy to follow. Most of the ingredients are basics that people will either have in their cupboard or are fine buying. I think some people will like the fact that a lot of the recipes are from celebrities.

It is quite a large hardback; this makes it robust, but you wouldn't want to carry it around with you. It is attractively presented with a colourful cover, lots of good quality pictures, and high quality paper. The layout is clear and easy to follow.

I recommend it to those having treatment if they eat meat and fish. As a vegetarian, I found it less useful. There are also a lot of recipes for those who need a building-up diet due to their cancer or its treatment and I am trying to lose weight on Tamoxifen. Although the book does address weight loss as well, there are less useful recipes.

Recovering from breast cancer (36-45) (March 2015)

This is full of inspirational ideas, including how to boost diet during treatment and eat a balanced diet full of nutritious meals and snacks. It begins with a very useful section on how cancer treatment can affect the patient and there are lots of tips and helpful information throughout. I really enjoyed reading and trying different recipes.

I enjoy cooking and reading cookery books; this one has a very healthy looking, appealing cover and there are lots of wonderful colourful pictures throughout. The recipes are good, easy to follow and aimed at serving the whole family. It is easy to understand and the print is clear.

This book is beneficial and interesting with good guidance on having a healthy balanced diet, including vital nutrients, and how to deal with some of the symptoms associated with cancer treatment. There is a great variety of recipes to suit different tastes. We particularly enjoyed the Sea bass (p. 216), the chicken and pumpkin curry (p. 119) and my children loved the flapjacks.

Brain tumour patient (26-35) (March 2015)



This book has three sections: the first has much information about cancer and healthy eating – very useful for those wanting to improve their diet after diagnosis or who have problems (e.g. taste changes) during treatment; the second and third sections have recipes for during and after treatment. Useful tables show which recipes are suitable for different problems, or which provide particular nutrients.

It will be useful for someone with cancer who has the motivation and energy to try new recipes, but I suspect that during treatment most patients would rather cook familiar recipes. Carers may have more inclination to try different recipes to tempt the appetite. I think it will be most useful for those who have finished chemotherapy and who are looking for ways to improve their health, and who may also be finding their energy levels improving and wanting to find something to do.

It is easy to understand. The index is comprehensive and has main ingredients with recipes underneath so you can start with an ingredient and find a suitable recipe. It's a nice book to look through. It has good photos of the recipes and it is a solid book on good quality paper. I like the pages at the beginning of each section that have ideas for other meals and serving suggestions. I also like the first section, which has a lot of information about food and cancer.

I was looking forward to trying the recipes but it was difficult to find anything simple enough and suitable for the family. I hadn't heard of some ingredients (e.g. cavolo nero) and wouldn't know where to buy them, e.g. wholemeal spelt flour, wonton wrappers. I don't think the ingredients are particularly expensive. I am put off some recipes because of the number of ingredients – in some cases a variety of spices. There is a disproportionate number of curry style dishes. I did make the ricotta pancakes, which were very nice, and the meatballs (slightly altered as I don't eat red meat). I have bookmarked a couple more to try.

Overall, it is a nice-looking book, with some excellent information but I was put off by not knowing what some of the ingredients are (I don't think I'm particularly ignorant when it comes to food). Many of the recipes have people's names in the title. I assume that this means that this is a collection of recipes rather than being ones developed by the editor. I would like to see some of these adapted to make them quicker to prepare. I would like to see information alongside each recipe stating why it is good for cancer patients. Unless someone undergoing treatment is a keen cook and enjoys trying new recipes, and has a well-stocked store cupboard, this book is probably not something that they would use. If someone else is cooking for them, then I am sure there are recipes that they would find attractive.

Living with metastatic bowel cancer (46-55) (April 2015)

This is more of a general cookbook than a specialist cancer one. The explanations of certain food groups and the effects on cancer are interesting, but a bit too wordy. The recipes are easy to follow, but many of the ingredients are not store cupboard staples, requiring a trip to the shops before each recipe. The front cover is appealing and the book is sturdy in design – the general appearance is very good. Not every recipe has a photo, which is important when deciding which recipe to try.

Overall, it's a good cookbook with some nice, unusual recipes. But I would not recommend it as a cancer cookbook. The recipes are too fancy; if it is intended for people with cancer then the recipes should be simpler, with everyday ingredients. Although I still want to cook new and different recipes, they need to be simpler and use ingredients that are easily available.

Secondary breast cancer patient (26-35) (April 2015)



I don't think this book is useful as a cookbook to anyone with cancer, a carer, relative or a health professional. The introduction (pp. 6-47) is good-sense nutritional advice and easy to read but the advice on the [Royal Marsden's website](#) is more appropriate and helpful. The section 'Eating Difficulties' in the introduction isn't particularly helpful. I trialled recipes listed under 'During Treatment' and didn't think they were in the least suitable for someone with a poor appetite, exhaustion and nausea. To some extent there appears to be little consistency between the advice in the introduction and the recipes themselves. For instance, advice is given to use home-made vegetable stock but there is no recipe for this.

It would have been helpful to have the 'balance of good health plate' in the introduction; portion sizes in the recipes frequently challenge this and I find that confusing. For instance, the *Whole pumpkin recipe* with its contradictory list of ingredients and then advice that the recipe is quite rich and the diner should use as much cheese and single cream as they can cope with.

Generally, the ingredients are readily available and not expensive and there is some helpful no-nonsense advice in the introduction for those with some interest in diets for cancer patients but the recipes aren't consistent and are consequently not easy to follow. Some are more detailed than others but some miss essential guidance, such as the consistency to expect at specific stages of preparation. The ingredients are a mix of exact quantities and 'rule of thumb' quantities. For instance, *Celeriac soup* (p. 67) calls for a 'small' celeriac and a 'big' potato with no indication as to weight. The finished product was unpleasantly thick and I had to add water to dilute which means the overall balance of complementary flavours was disrupted.

Spinach and ricotta crespelle (p 100) is not appropriate for someone on treatment or as a reasonable suggestion for a carer to prepare. It comprises four complex elements that need assembling and baking. It is very unlikely that anyone on treatment could stomach the smell of frying pancakes, let alone have the energy to make up this complex dish. The recipe for James Ramsden's Courgette Muffins needs editing. The ratio of 8 parts sugar to 10 parts flour is incorrect. Generally, a vegetable muffin will have a ratio of 2 to 3 parts sugar to 10 parts flour. The flavour of the baked courgette muffin was unpleasantly sugary. Some of the illustrations of recipes are inaccurate. The instructions for the *Pea and pancetta risotto* garnish are to 'chop' the onion and pancetta. The onions in the illustration are sliced, and the pancetta has been pulled apart, not chopped. Due to the inconsistencies of weights and measures in the recipes I find it hard to accept that the nutritional breakdown is helpful or accurate.

The book is enormously appealing with a beautiful cover and lovely photos. It would make a perfect coffee table talking point if that is what people use cookbooks for. I find it rather insulting that the recipes are drawn from stars of stage, screen and professional kitchens and not from patients or carers who are keen homely cooks and have experienced living with cancer during and after treatment; the latter could have resulted in a more practical and helpful guide to living well with cancer.

I am sad that the Royal Marsden hasn't used this wonderful opportunity to develop a cookbook to provide a range of recipes that are useful and relevant for people with cancer during or after treatment. Had this been the case, there would have been a balanced daily/weekly range of recipes that the patient may have the energy and wellbeing to cook on a good day, or that their carer/supporter could tackle. It should also have addressed the situation where the user may have little or no prior experience of cooking by including a star rating for ease of preparation. It should give the weights of ingredients in all recipes and attention needs to be given to the overall consistency of the recipe instructions. As the book draws on individual people's favourite recipes there is a tremendous inconsistency in the details given to produce a dish that resembles the photo. Some cooks like the general 'take-a-bunch-of-this-or-that' approach, others like exact directions and checks to ensure a successful outcome. There should never be an inconsistency of approach within a recipe or within a recipe book as this does not inspire confidence in an inexperienced cook.

I don't like this book because I buy a cookbook to use in the kitchen. I will be very happy if it raises a lot of money for the Royal Marsden.

Living with advanced ovarian cancer (56-65) (April 2015)

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.

Being told ‘you have cancer’ can affect so much more than your health – it can also affect your family, your job, even your ability to pay the bills. But you’re still you. We get that. And, after over 100 years of helping people through cancer, we get what’s most important: that you’re treated as a person, not just a patient.

It’s why we’ll take the time to understand you and all that matters to you, so we can help you get the support you need to take care of your health, protect your personal relationships and deal with money and work worries.

We’re here to help you find your best way through from the moment of diagnosis, so you’re able to live life as fully as you can. For information, support or just someone to talk to, call 0808 808 00 00 or visit macmillan.org.uk

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