

Celebrating 40 Years of Hope and Care: OPA Cancer Charity Marks a Milestone Anniversary

This year marks a significant milestone for the OPA Cancer Charity as we proudly celebrate 40 years of dedicated service to individuals and families affected by cancer. Since our founding, OPA has been committed to providing vital support, raising awareness, and funding crucial research to improve the lives of those impacted by this disease.

Over four decades, we've grown from a small community initiative into a trusted source of hope and assistance. Our journey has been shaped by the generosity of supporters, the courage of survivors, and the dedication of our volunteers and staff. Together, we have made a lasting difference in countless lives.

To commemorate this special anniversary, we are excited to offer an exclusive 40th Year Anniversary Badge, now available for purchase through the OPA online shop. This badge is a symbol of solidarity and a way to show your support for the ongoing fight against cancer. All proceeds help fund our programs and research efforts.

Join us in celebrating 40 years of compassion, resilience, and progress. Visit our [online shop](https://www.opa.org.uk/product-category/opa-merchandise/) to get your anniversary pin badge and trolley token to be part of this important milestone.

Click here to visit our shop: www.opa.org.uk/product-category/opa-merchandise/

Available on our online shop



Together we can make a difference

Proudly wear this OPA Cancer Charity supporter badge and stand with those facing Oesophageal and Gastric cancer. Together, we raise awareness.

www.opa.org.uk
Registered Charity No. 1194327

Celebrating our 40 year anniversary

This anniversary pin badge commemorates our commitment to supporting patients, caregivers, and their families impacted by Oesophageal and Gastric Cancer.

www.opa.org.uk
Registered Charity No. 1194327

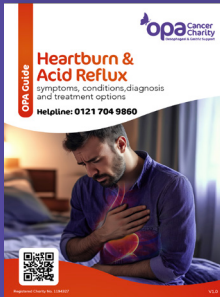




Our New Booklet

Heartburn & Acid Reflux – Symptoms, Conditions, Diagnosis and Treatment Options

We're proud to share that our new acid reflux booklet has been approved by Mr. Nick Boyle BM, MS, FRCS, founder of RefluxUK and one of the UK's most experienced surgeons in reflux treatment. He is a recognised authority in the surgical management of Gastro-oesophageal Reflux Disease (GORD). Heartburn and acid reflux affect many people, causing discomfort that can disrupt daily life. This upcoming booklet offers straightforward information about the symptoms you may experience, the underlying conditions, how diagnosis is made, and the range of treatment options available.



Inside, you'll find:

- An overview of common symptoms and related conditions
- Clear explanations of diagnostic methods
- A review of treatment choices, including lifestyle changes, medications, and other approaches
- Helpful tips for managing symptoms and improving quality of life

Whether you're experiencing these symptoms for the first time or seeking extra support, this booklet will provide valuable, easy-to-understand information to guide you.

Click here to order from our shop: www.opa.org.uk/product/heartburn-and-acid-reflux/

HealthUnlocked Community Forum

Over time, our Acid Reflux community on HealthUnlocked has grown into a vibrant and supportive space, welcoming members from all walks of life who share one common goal — finding relief and understanding. The forum has become an invaluable resource for sharing experiences, practical tips, and evidence-based advice, helping thousands navigate the challenges of acid reflux. Whether you're newly diagnosed or have been managing symptoms for years, our growing community at www.healthunlocked.com/ **opa-gord** is here to offer guidance, encouragement, and a place to connect with others who truly understand.



"It's always been an ambition of mine to run the London Marathon and the weekend of the marathon was really emotional."

London Marathon 2025!

A HUGE congratulations Danielle and Duncan, and thank you for choosing to support the OPA.

"I am very proud to have completed the TCS London Marathon 2025 and fundraised for the OPA.

In 2022, I was diagnosed with oesophageal cancer and underwent curative treatment which involved 5 weeks chemoradiation followed by an oesophagectomy.

I ran before I had cancer and needed a challenge to regain my fitness to a level close to before I was ill. I was thrilled when the OPA chose me to fundraise for them and represent them at the London Marathon. The OPA's literature on eating and nutrition after cancer surgery and resources and information on recovery were really helpful to my own recovery and this charity will remain forever close to my heart.

Having a really good reason to run motivated me through the training and fundraising. I organised a fun run with a raffle for my Scout group where I am a leader. I got married in February and my husband Paul and I had a guess the first dance songsweep stake. I got local newspapers to write about my journey to spread awareness of oesophageal cancer. I really enjoyed the process and even the longer 20mile + training runs.

It's always been an ambition of mine to run the London Marathon and the weekend of the marathon was really emotional. I'd just reached my fundraising target before the

weekend and I felt good having raised all that money for a good cause. I fulfilled a dream to run among the crowds and see all the famous London landmarks and I felt really grateful to have survived the cancer and still be fit and healthy enough to do this. The atmosphere was amazing and my favourite part was when a DJ along the route played the YMCA and all the runners and supporters did the arm actions! The first half of the marathon felt really good but I tired in the second half as it was a really hot day but the crowd energy and determination to finish got me through the second half. I was so happy to see my husband and my kids at the 25 mile mark cheering me on and being proud of me and then have the most iconic section of the run to complete with the London Eye, Big Ben, Houses of Parliament, Buckingham Palace and the Mall to run down. I managed a heel kick down the finishing straight to celebrate too. I will never forget this experience.

Thank you OPA for giving me the opportunity to run the London Marathon. A really big thank you to everyone who supported me and helped with my training and the upper GI at St James Hospital Leeds who gave me such excellent treatment and who were really supportive of my running and advised me on nutrition and hydration to help me run after my oesophagectomy. It's a slow long recovery but you can have a good life and do amazing things after this cancer treatment. We need more of the population to be aware of symptoms so it can be caught at early stage for treatment. Keep up the good work, OPA xxxx"

Danielle Germaine

Duncan's Story

"This was my third London Marathon, and for the first time, I secured a spot through the ballot—without any obligation to run for charity. However, after losing my dad suddenly last year to Oesophageal cancer, I felt compelled to do something meaningful. I researched the OPA Cancer Charity and knew immediately that raising awareness and funds for this devastating disease would be the right cause. The crowd support throughout the course was absolutely world-class—every detail was so well-organized, from the start to the finish line. And, as a bonus, the sun was shining!

I definitely had to dig deep around mile 20, but when I reached mile 24, seeing my daughter and partner waiting for me was a moment I'll never forget. We shared a few memorable moments together before I crossed that finish line.

I know Dad/Grandad would have been incredibly proud, looking down on us.

Now, I'm looking forward to a few days of rest before diving back into my fitness training routine!"

Duncan McLaren



Spotlight on Digestive Health: Two Key Campaigns this November



Join Us in Spreading the Word

This November, we're leading the charge in supporting these vital campaigns. Across our platforms, we'll be delivering expert advice, launching engaging initiatives, and providing free, high-quality resources you can order to help amplify the message. Together, we're driving awareness, sparking conversations, and making a real difference in improving digestive health.

Gastric Cancer Awareness Month

Gastric (stomach) cancer remains one of the most challenging cancers to detect early, often because symptoms can be vague or mistaken for common digestive issues. Awareness is key to encouraging early diagnosis and improving outcomes. Throughout the month, the OPA will be sharing information on the importance of knowing the signs and understanding risk factors.

Acid Reflux Awareness Week: 24th–30th November

Closely linked in public understanding, Acid Reflux Awareness Week shines a spotlight on gastroesophageal reflux disease (GORD) and related conditions that can significantly affect quality of life. Frequent acid reflux can sometimes mask more serious digestive issues, making it crucial to seek medical advice if symptoms persist. Since 2020, the OPA has proudly joined forces with our friends in the USA to mark Thanksgiving Day – not just with gratitude, but with purpose. Each year, we use this occasion to raise awareness of the dangers of acid reflux and its related conditions, reaching audiences on both sides of the Atlantic. From the USA to the UK, our campaign continues to grow, spreading knowledge, encouraging early action, and empowering people everywhere to take charge of their digestive health.



Click here to order from our shop: www.opa.org.uk/product-category/literature/page/2/



“I’m still working in and around the fire service to this day and fingers crossed I will for a few more years and carry on being there on the end of the phone for the buddy service I do for the OPA.”

Ron Lumb: My Journey Through Gastric Cancer

So, my story begins in 2004/5 when a routine check-up because I was having difficulty in swallowing some foods i.e. bread steak etc was causing me some concerns, I still felt very fit and at 42 and in the fire service we were sure it wasn't too much to worry about. But I was sent for an endoscopy to make sure, when the results came back and I went into the hospital for a chat about my results I was taken into a room with 4 other staff members in attendance to be told the results weren't good and I had a tumour stage 4 oesophageal cancer very aggressive.

No chance of surgery at this stage, but to start chemotherapy straight away. I felt totally numb and was sure they had made a mistake as I felt perfectly fit and went on duty for my afternoon shift that day not quite sure of the information, I'd been given that morning. When I arrived home that evening my wife asked me how I got on at the hospital? I proceeded to tell her what they had said and then the realisation hit home, and I was left feeling totally numb, the prognosis was that if we couldn't shrink the tumour my time was 12 months to live. As you can imagine being married with 3 young children was too much to bear and it all seemed like a bad dream and how

could I tell my kids their dad had 12 months to live? The pain was unbearable just thinking about it. My only hope was to rely on my fitness and hope the chemotherapy worked. But thankfully after many bouts of chemo the tumour had shrunk to a size that enabled them to carry out surgery which was the Ivor Lewis surgery removing my oesophagus and replacing with half my stomach.

So after 2 weeks in ICU & HDU and keeping my fitness I came home 4 stone lighter and struggling to keep any food down at all , but with perseverance and a lot to live for my weight slowly returned and I returned to work in my role as a firefighter, but a year later whilst on duty I collapsed and had to be rushed into hospital by ambulance. The following morning when I woke up the surgeon told me the operation to correct my problem had been resolved but unfortunately the cancer had spread to my liver and being stage 2 no chance of surgery with a prognosis of 12 months at best.

So back on the chemotherapy treatment I'd had for my oesophagus as I faired quite well on it last time and hoped for a miracle, approximately a year later my doctor called me into he's room at the hospital and showed me my latest scans and said he thought we had a chance of surgery as the tumour had shrunk considerably and if I consented he would be happy to carry out the procedure to remove the left lobe on my liver . So, we agreed to the operation which I had the following May, and the surgery was completed, and all biopsies came back saying all clear no signs of any cancer.

That was over 20 years ago now and I did get to see my children grow up and now I have 3 lovely grandchildren and I'm still working in and around the fire service to this day and fingers crossed I will for a few more years and carry on being there on the end of the phone for the buddy service I do for the OPA.

We're Proud to Promote the UK's No.1 Carers Card & App

Caring for others is one of the most important and often overlooked roles in our society. Whether you're a paid professional or an unpaid family member providing essential support, your contribution deserves recognition, support, and appreciation.

That's why we're proud to promote the Carers Card UK – a trusted resource that offers carers across the country access to vital tools, meaningful discounts, wellbeing support, and a sense of community. With emergency ID, exclusive offers, and a dedicated app, it's designed to make life a little easier and more connected for those who spend so much of their time caring for others.

If you're a carer, this card is for you - www.carerscarduk.co.uk

Discounts for carers

From your weekly shop to family days out, our app gives you access to exclusive online discounts, in-store savings with e-Gift cards, and money off all major gyms. Simple, smart savings — all in one place. On average our members save £20 per month.



Notes for Carer

Notes for Carer booklet is available via our website to order or download. www.opa.org.uk/product/notes-for-a-carer/



A **HUGE** thank you
to our amazing
fundraisers!



Also, special thanks to
the Charitable Trusts and
Foundations who continue
to support the OPA.

NEW COLLECTION

**Christmas
Cards**

FROM
£4.99
PACK OF 10

				
Christmas Stockings 10 Pack - £4.99	Countryside Christmas 10 Pack - £4.99	Frosty Tree 10 Pack - £5.99	Have You Been Good 10 Pack - £4.99	In the Town Square 10 Pack - £5.99
Quantity	Quantity	Quantity	Quantity	Quantity
				
Junior dressing the tree 10 Pack - £4.99	Peace Doves 10 Pack - £5.99	Santa Feeding the Reindeer 10 Pack - £5.99	Starry night 10 Pack - £5.99	Watercolour Wreath 10 Pack - £4.99
Quantity	Quantity	Quantity	Quantity	Quantity

Christmas Card Order Form

Name _____

Address _____

Email _____

Amount Enclosed for order £..... I would like to donate £.....to the OPA

Post the order form to:
OPA, Unit 4, Bordesley Hall Farm Barns, Storage Lane, Alvechurch, Birmingham B48 7ES.

Or order via the OPA Shop online - www.opa.org.uk/product-category/christmas-cards/

By bank transfer

Sort Code: 40-42-12
Account Number: 02301636

To make an online donation, please visit
our website or scan the QR code opposite
www.opa.org.uk/ways-to-donate/

**By Regular Standing Order payment****Sort Code 40-42-12 Account Number: 51354981**

I wish to make regular donations to the OPA Cancer Charity of *(tick appropriate box)*

£2 ☐ £5 ☐ £10 ☐ £25 ☐ £100 ☐ or other amount:

Please state amount in words:

every *(tick appropriate box)* ☐ Week ☐ Month ☐ Year starting on ____ / ____ / ____ until further notice

Your bank details

To: (insert name and address of your bank) _____

Sort Code: _____ - _____ - _____ Account Number: _____

Boost your donation by 25p of Gift Aid for every £1 you donate at no extra cost to you!

In order to Gift Aid your donation you must tick the box below.

Your address is needed to identify you as a current UK taxpayer. Please treat all donations I make or have made to OPA Cancer Charity for the past four years as Gift Aid donations until I notify you otherwise. I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference. **I understand that OPA Cancer Charity will reclaim 25p of tax on every £1 that I give.** ☐

Gift Aid is reclaimed by OPA Cancer Charity from the tax I pay for the current tax year.

*giftaid it***Your Details**

Title: (Mr/Mrs/Dr etc.) _____ Name: _____

Address: _____

Tel: _____ Email: _____

Signature: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / ____

Any other donations

I am pleased to send a donation of £_____ Please tick here ☐ if this is to be treated as a Gift Aid donation

Title: (Mr/Mrs/Dr etc.) _____ Name: _____

Address: _____

Tel: _____ Email: _____

Signature: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / ____

Together we can make a difference

Please return this form to: Fundraising Dept. OPA Cancer Charity,
Unit 4, Bordesley Hall Farm Barns, Storage Lane, Alvechurch B48 7ES
Or email to: enquiries@opa.org.uk

For further information please contact the OPA on **0121 704 9860**



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