

Dr Philip Sawyer



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**BE CLEAR
ON CANCER**

NHS Be Clear on Cancer

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Let's be clear about bladder and kidney cancer

Around 19,100 people in England are diagnosed with bladder or kidney cancer each year. Both cancers affect men and women, although they are more common in men. Bladder and kidney cancers can affect people of all ages but are most common in people over 50.

Things that increase the risk of bladder and/or kidney cancer include:

- Smoking
- Being overweight or obese
- Some jobs, because of exposure to certain chemicals
- Other medical conditions, such as kidney failure
- A family history of cancer

In England, around 8,000 people die from bladder or kidney cancer each year, but this needn't be the case. Knowing what to look out for saves lives. If you notice any blood in your pee, even if it is just once, tell your doctor straight away. The chances are it's nothing serious, but these cancers are more treatable if they are found early.

If you are unable to check for blood in your pee but are concerned then speak to your doctor.

You can find your doctor's contact details online at **[nhs.uk/findgp](https://www.nhs.uk/findgp)**

Look before you flush

If you don't check you may not notice blood in your pee. So if you can, remember to look before you flush the toilet.

Let's be clear about how to spot it

Blood in your pee is a key symptom for both types of cancer.

Other bladder cancer symptoms include:

- Cystitis (a urinary tract infection) that is difficult to treat or comes back quickly after treatment
- Pain when peeing
- Other kidney cancer symptoms include:
 - A pain that doesn't go away, either in the tummy or in the side below the ribs
 - Weight loss

Let's be clear about how important it is to see your doctor

You're not wasting anyone's time by getting your symptoms checked out. Whatever the problem, your doctor is there to help. And if it is a condition such as bladder or kidney cancer, early detection makes it easier to treat. Seeing your doctor early could save your life.

Some symptoms may be caused by an infection or bladder or kidney stones, all of which may need treatment. But don't try and diagnose yourself. Go and see your doctor to find out for sure.

Go back to your doctor if your symptoms persist

If you've been to the doctor but your symptoms haven't gone away, he or she will want to know. It's important to see your doctor again if your symptoms persist.

Looking out for others

If you know anyone who has any of these symptoms, encourage them to see their doctor.

Let's be clear about how seeing your doctor early could save your life

Phil Kelly, Patient Trustee, Action Bladder Cancer UK says:

“I only saw blood in my pee once and thought I would wait to see if it happened again. But my wife didn't agree and encouraged me to go straight to my doctor. It turned out to be bladder cancer. Please don't hesitate – if you see any blood in your pee, go straight to your GP.”

Geraldine Sinfield, aged 70, Supporter of The Urology Foundation says:

“I noticed blood in my pee in late 2013. I knew something was wrong and made an appointment to see my doctor immediately. Following tests, I was diagnosed with bladder cancer. Just six months after treatment I was able to go sailing around Britain with my husband because my cancer was caught early. Recently I have been told that I no longer need to receive annual check-ups, which is a huge relief.”

John Griffin, aged 54, Ambassador, Kidney Cancer UK says:

“In April 2016 I went to the toilet, looked down and thought, “Who's poured a glass of red wine in here?” I was stunned to realise it was me - I was passing blood! I went to the doctor first thing the next day. He arranged for me to have some tests and I was diagnosed with kidney cancer. The NHS were amazing. I had an operation and was back at work in July 2016.”

Let's be clear about reducing your risk of cancer

Around 300,000 people are diagnosed with cancer in England each year, but about 4 in 10 cases could be prevented by lifestyle changes, including:

Stop smoking

Smoking increases the risk of many cancers. If you smoke, the best thing you can do for your health is to quit. There's plenty of support and help available from the NHS. Visit [nhs.uk/smokefree](https://www.nhs.uk/smokefree), call **0300 123 1044** or textphone **0300 123 1014**.

Eat healthily and stay active

Being overweight or obese can increase your risk of some cancers. Try to maintain a healthy weight and keep active. Swimming, cycling, dancing, walking – the more you can do, the better. Try to eat a healthy, balanced diet too.

Cut down on alcohol

Drinking too much alcohol can lead to a number of health problems and is linked with some cancers. By drinking less, you'll reduce your health risks.

More information

For more information on how to reduce your risk of cancer visit **[nhs.uk/reduce-your-risk](https://www.nhs.uk/reduce-your-risk)**

Unclear on anything?

Visit **[nhs.uk/bloodinpee](https://www.nhs.uk/bloodinpee)**

This leaflet is also available in alternative formats from the website above or from Public Health England – please email **enquiries@phe.gov.uk**

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[nhs.uk/bloodinpee](https://www.nhs.uk/bloodinpee)

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