



**JOAQUIM  
CHAVES  
SAÚDE**

DESDE 1959

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# Information Guide for Cancer Patients

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## What is an oncological disease?

An oncological disease is characterised by an abnormal and uncontrolled growth of cells that can form a mass called a tumour. Some types of cancer may not form these tumours, as is the case with certain blood cancers.

One of the characteristics of cancer cells is their capacity to spread through the blood stream or lymph nodes. Therefore, tumours can form in other organs of the body, called metastases.

## What are the risk factors?

Our environment and lifestyle can increase the predisposition to develop an oncological disease. Several studies show that certain risk factors increase a person's likelihood of developing cancer.

The principal risk factors are:

- Ageing;
- Tobacco;
- Unhealthy lifestyle;
- Being overweight;
- Alcohol consumption;
- Prolonged sun exposure;
- Ionising radiation;
- Chemicals and other substances;
- Some viruses and bacteria;
- Certain hormones.

It is now known that there is a relationship between cancer and an individual's genetics, although only 10% of cancers are hereditary.

## What symptoms to look out for?

In many cases, the symptoms of oncological diseases only appear in more advanced stages. Therefore, in general, it is essential to be aware of the following symptoms:

- Thickening, mass or "lump" in the breast or other part of the body;
- Appearance of a new mole or changes in an existing mole;
- Wound that does not heal;
- Persistent hoarseness or cough;
- Significant changes in intestinal transit;
- Discomfort after eating;
- Difficulty swallowing;
- Unexplained weight loss;
- Bleeding or any abnormal secretion;
- Weakness or extreme fatigue.

## Diagnosis

The diagnosis may result from seeking medical services due to the appearance of symptoms or through routine examinations to screen for oncological diseases (cancer screening).

If there is any kind of change in the body or appearance of any specific symptom, the person should consult a physician, who will ask questions relating to the individual's clinical and family history, as well as conduct a physical examination.

The physician may also prescribe clinical tests or other medical examinations, like CAT scan, magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) or scintigraphy.

In some types of cancer, the diagnosis may be made without the person having any symptoms, through regular screening or examinations.

This is the case, for example, with mammography, cytology (Pap smear), faecal occult blood test and colonoscopy. To undergo these examinations, there are specific guidelines.

When cancer is suspected, a biopsy is the required medical procedure to reach a definitive diagnosis.

To carry out a biopsy, the physician must remove a tissue sample for analysis.

To provide the most appropriate treatment for each individual and their oncological disease, the physician needs to know the extent (stage) of the disease, in other words, to determine whether the disease is in an early or advanced stage.

Frequently, the staging system for oncological diseases uses the size of the tumour, spread (metastasis) of the tumour to the lymph nodes, or metastasis to other parts of the body (distant metastasis).



## What treatments are available?

After the oncological disease has been diagnosed and correctly staged, the multidisciplinary team accompanying the patient will discuss the best personalised treatment strategy, according to the type, location and extent of the tumour. There are different treatments, which can be divided into:

Locoregional therapy:

- Surgery;
- Radiation Therapy;
- Interventional Radiology.

Surgery and radiation therapy are locoregional treatments that aim to remove or destroy the tumour's cells in a specific area of the body.

Systemic therapy:

- Chemotherapy;
- Hormone therapy;
- Immune therapy;
- Targeted therapy.

Systemic therapy affects the body as a whole through the bloodstream. These therapies slow the growth or destroy cancer cells and reduce the risk of the tumour reappearing.



# Cancer Patient Care

Joaquim Chaves Saúde is at the forefront of the diagnosis and treatment of oncological diseases in Portugal, specialising in three different fields: **Breast**, **urological** and **skin cancer**. With the opening of the Clínica Cirúrgica de Carcavelos, JCS currently provides a 360° service to accompany cancer patients throughout their journey.

Furthermore, Joaquim Chave Saúde offers a dedicated support service for cancer patients, through the Cancer Patient Manager.

## What is the Cancer Patient Manager?

The Cancer Patient Manager provides clear information on the rights, tax benefits and privileges the patient is entitled to; they clarify doubts, for example, on scheduling appointments or examinations, and may also assist with a request for help, if a patient feels unwell and is unable to contact the department or attending physician.

Internally, the Cancer Patient Manager keeps the clinical team informed of developments and limitations that may arise throughout the treatment process, while also guaranteeing a rapid response in the performance of prescribed medical acts and requests for authorization from the relevant financial entities.

## Benefits

The cancer patient is entitled to certain tax benefits and support, acquired through a certificate of multipurpose disability. These benefits include:

- 1 Road vehicle tax exemption (if a car is registered in the patient's name);
- 2 Exemption from user charges in the National Health Service;
- 3 Income tax reduction, if the degree of disability is equal to or greater than 60%.

We are here to support you. Join us and enjoy a better service. Talk to us by calling 214 124 300 (Call Centre).

# Joaquim Chaves Saúde Oncology – Our Story

Featuring 20 years of experience in the field of Oncology, Joaquim Chaves Saúde has eight Radiation Therapy units and one Medical Oncology unit, with national geographic coverage that includes the continent and both archipelagos.

Our team is comprised of specialised physicians in various fields involved in the diagnosis, treatment and follow-up of oncological diseases. In addition, the Joaquim Chaves Saúde Group also offers additional support for patients through the Cancer Patient Manager, to accompany them more closely and help them on their journey, from diagnosis to treatment.

The Cancer Patient Manager is a facilitator who ensures that patients do not have to worry about bureaucratic issues and provides them with all the information on their case and the benefits to which they are entitled.

## Joaquim Chaves Saúde | Oncology

Where we are

### Medical Oncology

Clínica de Miraflores  
Clínica Cirúrgica de Carcavelos  
Clínica de Cascais  
Centro Oncológico Dr.ª Natália Chaves (Carnaxide, Lisbon)

### Radiation Therapy

Clínica de Radioncologia do Porto (Porto)  
Clínica de Radioncologia de Santarém (Santarém)  
Centro Oncológico Dr.ª Natália Chaves (Carnaxide, Lisbon)  
Clínica de Radioncologia do Alentejo (Évora)  
Clínica de Radioncologia do Algarve (Faro)  
Clínica de Radioncologia da Madeira (Funchal)  
Clínica de Radioncologia Madalena Paiva I (Azores - Ponta Delgada)  
Clínica de Radioncologia Madalena Paiva II (Azores - Angra do Heroísmo)



### Contacts

214 124 300 (Call center)

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through the QRCode.**