

**WORLD
CANCER
DAY2016**

I CAN



BE MYSELF



ON 4 FEB

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I CAN — BE MYSELF



Cancer and its treatment can change how people living with cancer feel about themselves and the way they look.

These feelings may come from the physical changes that can occur during and after treatment. Changes may be short-term such as hair loss from chemotherapy, or long-term changes such as impairment to speech or loss of a limb from surgery for some cancers, all of which can diminish a person's quality of life and result in stigma and discrimination¹⁻³. Even if others can't see these changes, for example urinary incontinence sometimes arising from prostate cancer treatment, they can have an enormous impact on body image, contributing to anxiety and depression.

For many cancer patients, addressing issues of body image is an important way of regaining control and preserving a degree of normality. Accessing dedicated support services to manage their physical appearance such as

wearing a wig or prosthesis, can improve self-esteem and quality of life^{4,5}. Seeking counselling from a health professional and keeping active with regular exercise are other ways for cancer patients to build confidence in the way they look and feel about themselves⁶.

**WITH THE RIGHT SUPPORT,
PEOPLE LIVING WITH CANCER
CAN FEEL LIKE THEMSELVES
AGAIN.**

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4. National Cancer Institute. Self Image and Sexuality. <http://www.cancer.gov/about-cancer/coping/self-image>

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