

- Melanoma Monday
- Meaningful May
- Well-being Webinar—Ask the Nurse
- Summer BBQ
- Melanoma Awareness at RSCH
- Cancer Vaccines
- Melanoma May
- Buddies report
- And more.....



Melanoma May

The start of the week Monday 1st May was the start of Melanoma May. So, with all the hype around Chatbot engines, a twitterer asked Chatgpt to sent him alternative lyrics for the Bangles hit song "Manic Monday". This is what it returned.

The doctor called on Monday
Said they found a melanoma spot that was no fun
But they said there's a treatment called immunotherapy
And it could help me beat this thing, one by one
I was a bit worried about side effects
But I was willing to give it a run
It was a Melanoma Monday
But now, the fight has begun

It's Melanoma Monday
And I'm ready for the fight, come what may
It's Melanoma Monday
I'll kick cancer's butt, in my own way

The treatment was intense, no doubt
But I tried to keep a smile on my face
I had some side effects, but nothing I couldn't handle
And my positive attitude kept me in a good place
I made some jokes and had some laughs
And my family and friends helped me ace
It was a crazy Melanoma Monday
But I'm stronger now, I can embrace

It's Melanoma Monday
And I fought hard, day by day
It's Melanoma Monday
And I can win the battle, in my own way

Cancer is a tough fight for us
With immunotherapy on our side
We'll stay strong and stay hopeful
And take cancer on, with pride

It's Melanoma Monday
And I fought hard, day by day
It's Melanoma Monday
And I WILL win the battle, in my own way

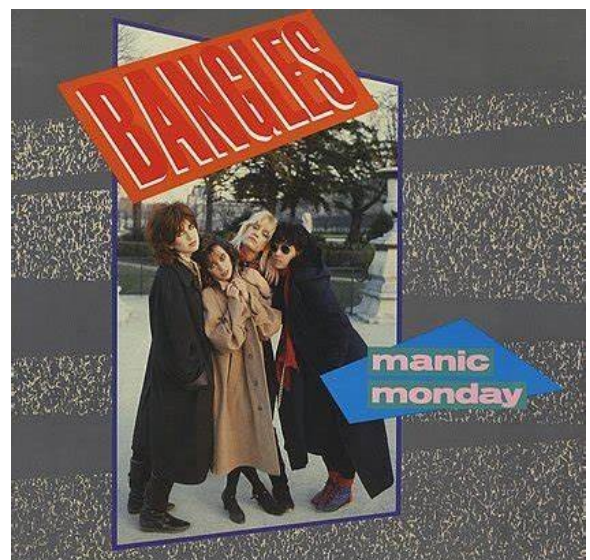
It's a Melanoma Monday
But I'm still standing, and that's a win
I'll keep spreading hope and joy
And keep fighting, with a grin.

The result is a master stroke and judging by the fact that Chatgpt can download university essays in 5 seconds from receipt of the title, I can only imagine the speed at which this little ditty came down the line.

[https://twitter.com/
The_Stoic_Hound/
status/1653025815372742657](https://twitter.com/The_Stoic_Hound/status/1653025815372742657)

Copy and paste to your browser to see the original tweet.

Our thanks to member Ed Farmer for this.



Meaningful May

Let's find ways to be part of something bigger

Meaningful May 2023

MONDAY

1 Do something kind for someone you really care about

TUESDAY

2 Focus on what you can do rather than what you can't do

WEDNESDAY

3 Take a step towards an important goal, however small

THURSDAY

4 Send your friend a photo from a time you enjoyed together

FRIDAY

5 Let someone know how much they mean to you and why

SATURDAY

6 Look for people doing good and reasons to be cheerful

SUNDAY

7 Make a list of what matters most to you and why

8 Set yourself a kindness mission to help others today

9 What values are important to you? Find ways to use them today

10 Be grateful for the little things, even in difficult times

11 Look around for things that bring you a sense of awe and wonder

12 Listen to a favourite piece of music and remember what it means to you

13 Find out about the values or traditions of another culture

14 Get outside and notice the beauty in nature

15 Do something to contribute to your local community

16 Show your gratitude to people who are helping to make things better

17 Find a way to make what you do today meaningful

18 Send a hand-written note to someone you care about

19 Reflect on what makes you feel valued and purposeful

20 Share photos of 3 things you find meaningful or memorable

21 Look up at the sky. Remember we are all part of something bigger

22 Find a way to help a project or charity you care about

23 Recall three things you've done that you are proud of

24 Make choices that have a positive impact for others today

25 Ask someone else what matters most to them and why

26 Remember an event in your life that was really meaningful

27 Focus on how your actions make a difference for others

28 Do something special and revisit it in your memory tonight

29 Today do something to care for the natural world

30 Share a quote you find inspiring to give others a boost

31 Find three reasons to be hopeful about the future



ACTION FOR HAPPINESS

Happier · Kinder · Together

Action For Happiness provides Well-Being Talks. Each event lasts for 1 hour. For Further information on how to join please go to: <https://actionforhappiness.org/talks>.



Building Resilience with Dr Neeta Bhushan

Thursday, 11 May 2023
19:00-20:00

TICKET PRICE
Suggested Donation



Kate Upshon - Lead Skin
Clinical Nurse Specialist

ASK THE NURSE

Kate provided us with a brilliant session on the 5th April and offered us her views on a number of topics and responded to questions such as:

- How and why did you get into nursing?
- What attracted you to specialise in skin cancers?
- What are the best parts of your joband the worst?
- Covid – what is the current state at the RSCH in relation to Covid 19?
- Is the Oncology department now up to full strength (both on surgical and treatment side) and is the backlog diminishing?
- What psychological services are available to those who wish them?
- How do we find out about other services available to skin cancer patients through the NHS?
- Is there any further engagement with the surgical or oncology teams after the 5-year mandatory period?
- Are GPs now expected to undertake mole checks on behalf of hospital specialist clinicians?
- What is the rationale to switch from PET scans to CT scans?
- How can you and your team support MelaNoMore recruitment?
- Why can't we display our banners in St Luke's and the Castle?

We recorded the session and we very much recommend that you take an hour or so out of your day to watch this recording. Just copy the link below and paste into your browser, press enter then press the play button (triangle pointing to the right) and the recording will start.

<https://1drv.ms/v/s!AgiK2WfB3hAUh3hO-IRxONj7mEU3?e=u8bxTL>

Our thanks to Kate for providing such full and frank responses. We had more questions to ask but we had already overrun our time. We look forward to meeting up with you next year, if not before, for a further update.

Summer BBQ — Save the Date

Many of you attended the highly successful BBQ we ran last year at the Guildford Masonic Centre. You will remember it was a glorious evening, in a fantastic setting, with good food, music and drink. Over 70 of us gathered and dined on the outside terrace overlooking the river Wey.

We tucked into barbequed chicken, tasty sausages and burgers, complete with sweetcorn, salads and accompaniments. The selection of desserts were exquisite and fruit sticks with coffee polished off the culinary feast.

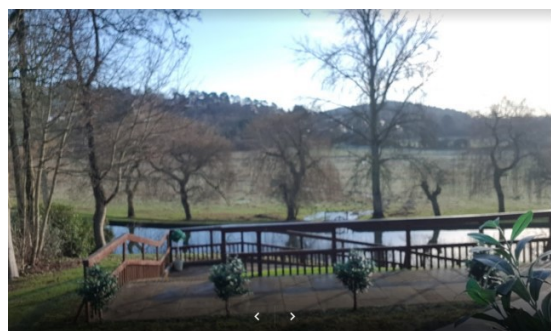
Members and clinicians happily conversed with one another, welcoming each other as old friends and generally re-acquainting themselves.

We have re-booked the venue for Saturday 19th August, 2023.

Speakers will be announced in due course.

At our recent AGM, members stated that they expected to pay for the events. Recognising that our funds are limited it was considered necessary to make a nominal charge for each guest of £10 (cash on the night) to cover some of the costs, but I hope you will agree that this still represents exceptional value.

We will provide further communications on this event over the next few months, but in the meantime please save this date in your calendar.



Melanoma May at the Royal Surrey

18th May 2023

The Hospital will be raising awareness of skin cancer during May by having a stall set up in the main front entrance of the hospital in the morning until lunch time.

We will be joining Kelly Smith to promote awareness during this time. There is a clinic on this day and in the afternoon MelaNoMore will book a room in the Fountain Centre and all are welcome to join us for tea and cake and a good chinwag. Also those of you that don't have a clinic that day you are still most welcome to join us.

If any members wish to volunteer for the day please let me know (neil@melanomore.net), we would be very happy to see you there.



News From The World of Melanoma

Donated by member Sarah Pleass

Cancer and heart disease vaccines 'ready by end of the decade'

Exclusive: Pharmaceutical firm says ground-breaking jabs could save millions of lives

'A silver lining': how Covid ushered in a vaccines golden era

The Guardian

Linda Geddes

Sat 8 Apr 2023 11.37 BST



📷 The success of the Covid jab has escalated the development of vaccines for cancer and other conditions such as heart disease Photograph: Liam McBurney/PA

Millions of lives could be saved by a ground-breaking set of new vaccines for a range of conditions including cancer, experts have said. A leading pharmaceutical firm said it is confident that jabs for cancer, cardiovascular and autoimmune diseases, and other conditions will be ready by 2030.

Studies into these vaccinations are also showing "tremendous promise", with some researchers saying 15 years' worth of progress has been "unspooled" in 12 to 18 months thanks to the success of the Covid jab. Dr Paul Burton, the chief medical officer of pharmaceutical company Moderna, said he believes the firm will be able to offer such treatments for "all sorts of disease areas" in as little as five years.

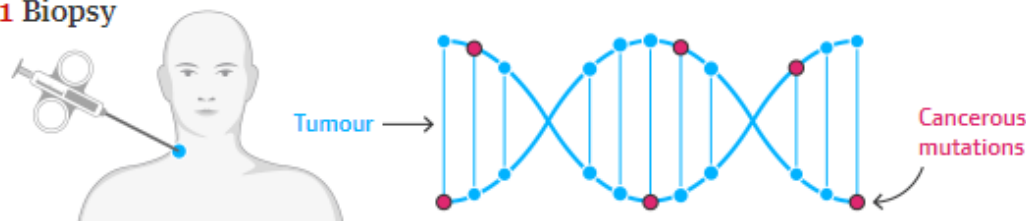
News From The World of Melanoma

The firm, which created a leading coronavirus vaccine, is developing cancer vaccines that target different tumour types.

Burton said: "We will have that vaccine and it will be highly effective, and it will save many hundreds of thousands, if not millions of lives. I think we will be able to offer personalised cancer vaccines against multiple different tumour types to people around the world."

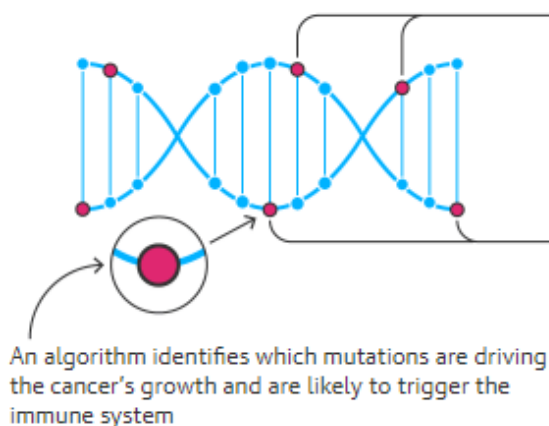
How personalised cancer vaccines work

1 Biopsy

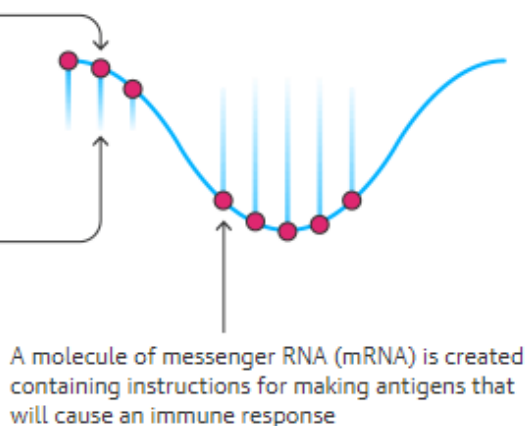


A biopsy of a patient's tumour is sent to a lab, where its genetic material is sequenced to identify mutations not present in healthy cells

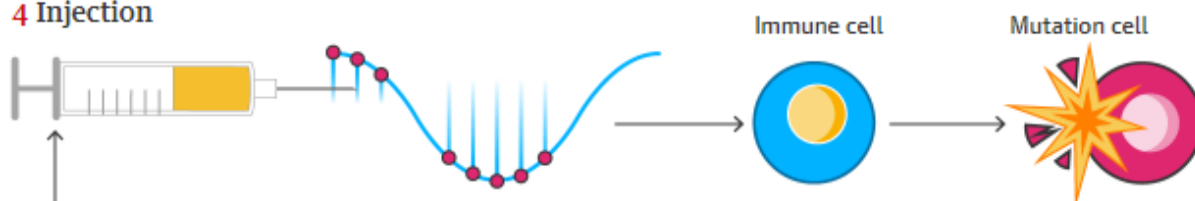
2 Selection



3 Instruction



4 Injection



Once injected, the mRNA is translated into protein pieces identical to those found on tumour cells. Immune cells encounter these and destroy cancer cells carrying the same proteins

Guardian graphic. Source: Moderna, CDC, FT

News From The World of Melanoma

He also said that multiple respiratory infections could be covered by a single injection – allowing vulnerable people to be protected against Covid, flu and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) – while mRNA therapies could be available for rare diseases for which there are currently no drugs. Therapies based on mRNA work by teaching cells how to make a protein that triggers the body's immune response against disease.

Burton said: "I think we will have mRNA-based therapies for rare diseases that were previously undruggable, and I think that 10 years from now, we will be approaching a world where you truly can identify the genetic cause of a disease and, with relative simplicity, go and edit that out and repair it using mRNA-based technology."

But scientists warn that the accelerated progress, which has surged "by an order of magnitude" in the past three years, will be wasted if a high level of investment is not maintained.

The mRNA molecule instructs cells to make proteins. By injecting a synthetic form, cells can pump out proteins we want our immune system to strike. An mRNA-based cancer vaccine would alert the immune system to a cancer that is already growing in a patient's body, so it can attack and destroy it, without destroying healthy cells.

This involves identifying protein fragments on the surface of cancer cells that are not present on healthy cells – and which are most likely to trigger an immune response – and then creating pieces of mRNA that will instruct the body on how to manufacture them.

First, doctors take a biopsy of a patient's tumour and send it to a lab, where its genetic material is sequenced to identify mutations that aren't present in healthy cells.

A machine learning algorithm then identifies which of these mutations are responsible for driving the cancer's growth. Over time, it also learns which parts of the abnormal proteins these mutations encode are most likely to trigger an immune response. Then, mRNAs for the most promising antigens are manufactured and packaged into a personalised vaccine.

Burton said: "I think what we have learned in recent months is that if you ever thought that mRNA was just for infectious diseases, or just for Covid, the evidence now is that that's absolutely not the case.

"It can be applied to all sorts of disease areas; we are in cancer, infectious disease, cardiovascular disease, autoimmune diseases, rare disease. We have studies in all of those areas and they have all shown tremendous promise."

In January, Moderna announced results from a late-stage trial of its experimental mRNA vaccine for RSV, suggesting it was 83.7% effective at preventing at least two symptoms, such as cough and fever, in adults aged 60 and older. Based on this data, the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) granted the vaccine [breakthrough therapy designation](#), meaning its regulatory review will be expedited.

In February, the FDA granted the same designation to Moderna's personalised cancer vaccine, based on recent results in patients with the skin cancer melanoma.

Burton said: "I think it was an order of magnitude, that the pandemic sped [this technology] up by. It has also allowed us to scale up manufacturing, so we've got extremely good at making large amounts of vaccine very quickly."

News From The World of Melanoma

Pfizer has also begun recruitment for a late-stage clinical trial of an mRNA-based influenza vaccine, and has its sights set on other infectious diseases, including shingles, in collaboration with BioNTech. A spokesperson for Pfizer said: "The learnings from the Covid-19 vaccine development process have informed our overall approach to mRNA research and development, and how Pfizer conducts R&D (research and development) more broadly. We gained a decade's worth of scientific knowledge in just one year."

Other vaccine technologies have also benefited from the pandemic, including next-generation protein-based vaccines, such as the Covid jab made by US-based biotechnology company Novavax. The jab helps the immune system thinking it is encountering a virus, so it mounts a stronger response.

Dr Filip Dubovsky, president of research and development at Novavax, said: "There has been a massive acceleration, not just of traditional vaccine technologies, but also novel ones that hadn't previously been taken through licensure. Certainly, mRNA falls into that category, as does our vaccine."

Dr Richard Hackett, CEO of the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness and Innovations (Cepi) said the biggest impact of the pandemic had been the shortening of development timelines for many previously unvalidated vaccine platforms. He explained: "It meant that things that might have unspooled over the next decade or even 15 years, were compressed down into a year or a year and a half ..."

Prof Andrew Pollard, director of the Oxford Vaccine Group and chair of the UK's Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI), said: "There's no doubt there's a lot more interest in vaccines. The really big question is, what happens from here?"

With the looming threat of wider conflict in Europe, there is a risk that this focus on vaccines is lost, without capitalising on the momentum and technological insights that have been gained during the pandemic. Pollard, for one, believes this would be a mistake.

He said: "If you take a step back to think about what we are prepared to invest in during peacetime, like having a substantial military for most countries ... Pandemics are as much a threat, if not more, than a military threat because we know they are going to happen as a certainty from where we are today. But we're not investing even the amount that it would cost to build one nuclear submarine."

News From The World of Melanoma

Donated by member Ed Farmer.

News from the USA:

The Melanoma Research Foundation (MRF) is the largest independent organization devoted to melanoma. Committed to the support of medical research in finding effective treatments and eventually a cure for melanoma, the MRF also educates patients and physicians about prevention, diagnosis and the treatment of melanoma. The MRF is an active advocate for the melanoma community, helping to raise awareness of this disease and the need for a cure.

The MRF's website is the premier source for melanoma information seekers.

<https://melanoma.org/about-us/>

Mission Statement

To eradicate melanoma by accelerating medical **RESEARCH** while **EDUCATING** to and **ADVOCATING** for the melanoma community.

Today is the official start of #MelanomaAwarenessMonth23 & we are excited to officially announce this year's #GetNaked spokesperson: @TeddiMellencamp

#GetNaked: Teddi

Guest blog post by Teddi Mellencamp Arroyave, TV Personality, Wellness Coach, host of the top-rated podcast Two Ts in a Pod, stage II melanoma survivor and advocate:



The mole on my back had been there for years.

Did I notice it had changed? Yes. And did part of my brain try to tell me I should probably get it checked out? Also, yes. But with anxiety like mine, you'll make any excuse to avoid the doctor.

And then one afternoon while working out with my friend, Kyle Richards, she insisted I go get it looked at. Immediately. Like, right then. And so I was ushered into her car and driven to a dermatologist, where a biopsy was immediately taken.

News From The World of Melanoma

Cont'd from previous page

It was melanoma.

As somebody who isn't shy to admit that sun bathing was a frequent thing as a teen, I was still in shock. Skin cancer wasn't something that ran in my family. And it wasn't like I was constantly tanning anymore. I was a healthy adult who took care of myself and my skin — how was this possible?

But you soon learn that the damage we do to our skin when we're younger can catch up to us. After that, I thought, "Okay, great. That's over." A three-month check-up had me looking good. So, of course, my brain told me, "There's no need to get any more check-ups. You don't need them." It's a strange battle, the one where we want to avoid something that could be potentially life-saving.

I finally went for my next check-up and... more melanomas. This time some of them were white. Another surprise; another lesson. One that through sharing my stories on social media I've come to realize not many of us know: Melanomas. Can. Be. White.

All-in-all, I had 11 total on my shoulder; "That may be a record in one spot," my doctor said. Look, I'm competitive, but I would have been glad to sit this one out. After a small lymph node scare (it was benign), I'm now in the mode of getting my regular check-ups every six weeks and feeling very blessed; currently there's no sign of any disease. I'm grateful to my doctors, my nurses, my family, my friends, and all of the people on social media who have sent their love and support.

The positive in all of this: hearing the stories from people who wouldn't have gone to get their skin checked if I hadn't shared my journey. That is why it's so important for me to work with the MRF as the 2023 #GetNaked spokesperson: I want to spread the message as far as possible. Together, I hope to continue to use this platform to educate the public on melanoma awareness, dispel myths (like the above mentioned white melanomas), and encourage everyone to be more proactive in sun safety and early detection.

Because while I may have scars all along my back, they're worth it knowing my story can help save yours.

Melanoma affects men, women and children of all skin types, and can occur anywhere on the body. The MRF is committed to increasing awareness of all forms of melanoma and how important it is to #GetNaked for a monthly self-skin check and yearly full body exam by a dermatologist.

News From The World of Melanoma

Melanoma Focus



Know your skin: Be smart about skin cancer

More people die of melanoma per year in the **UK** than in Australia. Yet **86%** of cases of melanoma are preventable and increasing numbers of people are being diagnosed with melanoma skin cancer. There are now more than **16,700** new cases each year in the UK.

We want to encourage everyone to be **sun-safe**, and for anyone who has noticed changes in their moles or lesions to contact their GP. Many of these moles or lesions do **NOT** end up being anything serious, however, it is always important to be diagnosed early as early stage melanomas are generally **curable**.

How you can get involved this May:

Support us on Social Media:

- Follow us on [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#) to keep up to date with our awareness campaign and news
- Share our posts using the hashtag **#knowyourskin** and remember to tag us
- Add our awareness stickers to your Instagram stories by searching for 'melanomaawareness' in the sticker bar

News From The World of Melanoma

CHECK YOUR SKIN FOR NEW OR CHANGING MOLES OR LESIONS

BE SMART ABOUT SKIN CANCER

#know your skin

MELANOMA AND SKIN CANCER AWARENESS MONTH | MAY

More than 5 Sunburns Doubles your risk of Melanoma Skin Cancer

PROTECT YOUR SKIN FROM THE SUN USE SPF 30+ SUNSCREEN

MELANOMA FOCUS
Registered Charity No. 1124716

CONTACT OUR **FREE** AND CONFIDENTIAL HELPLINE
0808 801 0777

SCAN THE QR CODE OR VISIT:
melanomafocus.org

MelaNoMore's Buddies and Friends

Join the conversation – we are looking for both “friends” and “buddies” to match together

“It is so good just to talk – we discuss all sorts of different subjects and have formed a real friendship”

MelaNoMore
Buddies
Let's talk

A 2020 study of 100,000 Brits found that confiding in others appears to reduce the risk of depression by 21%

Whether you have just received your diagnosis, are undertaking treatments, still on the road to recovery, or a family member trying to make sense of it all, you may be feeling anxious, fearful, apprehensive. MelaNoMore is here to help. We cannot give medical advice, but we can give a listening ear and the chance to chat with someone who understands what you're going through.

For further information: visit www.melanomore.net/buddies/ or email: melanomore.buddy@gmail.com

Chris Caswell, Lead – MelaNoMore Buddies

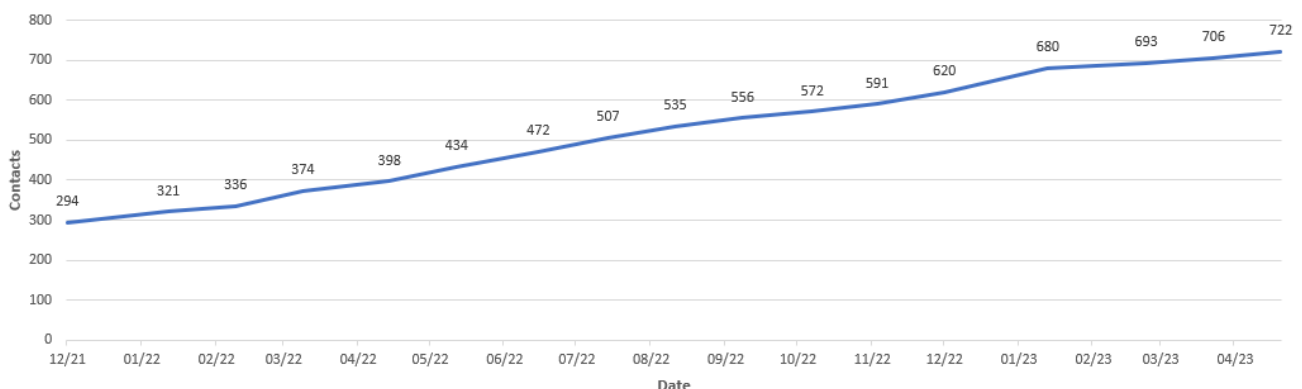
The MelaNoMore Buddies system continues to offer support via the Buddy / Friend one to one pairing. A Buddy, who perhaps has had more experience of the melanoma path and process, is paired with a Friend, who is possibly newer and in need of support and a listening ear.

This pairing offers support to share information, to discuss worries and concerns on a one to one basis, without the constraints of appointment time slots. This support pairing is away from the standard clinical appointments, on a more frequent basis, probably weekly or more.

Contacts are mostly by longer phone calls and interspersed with shorter ad hoc text or WhatsApp messages.

In just over two years Buddies have been in contact with 27 Friends to give support, shared 701 phone calls, texts, WhatsApps or emails. There have also been a total of 21 face to face meetings, including MelaNoMore group gatherings at the Loseley Park in April, the Guildford Masonic Centre in August and the most recent Christmas celebration at the Hogs Back Hotel in December. This gives a total of 722 support contacts since inception in October '20.

MelaNoMore Buddy/Friend Contacts



If you wish to join this support group, as either a Buddy or a Friend, please send an email to

group@melanomore.net

This page is for your contributions to the Newsletter. There are no limits on content.

If you have any gems of useless trivia, then please email them to us for publication.

Absolutely useless trivia:

- Alaska is the only state whose name is on one row on a keyboard.
- The average adult spends more time on the toilet than they do exercising.
- Your fingernails grow faster on your dominant hand.
- Dragonflies have six legs but can't walk.
- Apple seeds contain cyanide.
- The chicken and the ostrich are the closest living relatives of the Tyrannosaurus Rex.
- There's a trademark on the world's darkest shade of black. The darkest shade of black is called Vantablack. The colour is so dark that it creates an illusion that eliminates all depth and reflections.
- The infinity sign is called a lemniscate.
- The inventor of Pringles was cremated and his ashes placed inside a Pringles can.— This was a specific request in his burial wishes to his family. They debated which flavour can to use but finally choose "Original."
- Riding roller coasters can help you pass kidney stones.
- Dr. Seuss invented the word "nerd."
- Octopuses and squid have three hearts.
- "Spoonfeed" is the longest English word with its letters in reverse alphabetical order.
- There's a city called "Rome" on every continent except Antarctica
- Ketchup was used medicinally in the early 1800s. Because it is rich in vitamins and antioxidants, doctors claimed that it could help cure diarrhoea and indigestion and sold it in pill form.
- Movie trailers got their name because they were originally shown after the movie. They "trailed" the movie. But audiences never stayed until the end to see them so theatres started playing the trailers before the movie.
- People used to answer the phone by saying "ahoy" instead of "hello."
- The tool used to measure your feet at the shoe store is called a "Brannock Device."
- Pound Cake got its name because the recipe originally included a pound of all of its ingredients: 1 pound each of butter, eggs, sugar, and flour.
- Sloths can hold their breath longer than dolphins
- As the leader of the Mongol Empire from 1206 to 1227, Gengis Khan had both a large harem and a collection of multiple wives. Between all of these women, he fathered a lot of children. According to genetic research, it was found that over 16 million people alive today are his direct descendants.

We hope you enjoy this Newsletter. Please let us know or if you have, any suggestions for improvement or any articles you wish to publish. You can contact us on:

group@melanomore.net



MelaNoMore Vacancies

We continue to have vacancies on the Committee and are also in need of volunteers to assist the Committee with tasks or roles - such as:

- *Website designer
- *Deputy Newsletter Editor
- *Membership Secretary
- *Linked Site leads
- *Committee members

If you are interested in helping out with any of these roles or wish to join the Committee, then drop a line to

group@melanomore.net

Include your phone number and we will ring you back to discuss with you.

