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- Melanoma Patient Conference
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December

A time of giving, helping and being a friend.



10 ways to give at Christmas

1. **Support your local foodbank** - If you are in a position to donate, supporting your local food bank is an excellent way to help others within your community. This winter, food banks in the **Trussell Trust** network are expected to distribute more than 1 million emergency food parcels.
2. **Buy a gift for someone in need** - the **Book Trust** aims to deliver 17,000 surprise festive book parcels to children aged between 3 and 13 years in the UK whose families are facing economic hardship or are in care.
3. **Help our furry friends** - This winter, the RSPCA is asking supporters to join the **Christmas Rescue** by donating to help rescue teams reach the thousands of animals who desperately need them after animal abandonment and neglect incidents have soared to a shocking three-year high.
4. **Be a Christmas Lifeline** - Age UK's campaign is raising awareness of how distressing loneliness can be for so many older people, especially at Christmas. The Charity is urging the public to donate to the campaign if they can and support Age UK's friendship and advice services, which will be a lifeline to so many this Christmas.
5. **Turn your hobby into a charitable act** - the UK Hand Knitting Association has a list of charities looking for knitted item donations
6. **Volunteer from home** - Age UK, Independent Age and Re-engage all pair people willing to give up some time (usually half an hour, on a weekly basis) with an older, vulnerable person to have a chat over the phone.
7. **Give a practical present** - Donate to Refuge to help keep women and children safe. Donate to Centrepoin's "Sponsor a room" campaign and help provide a safe room to a young homeless person, and practical skills and support to turn their life around.
8. **Give Blood** - The festive season is always a difficult time of year to maintain blood stocks, which usually dip from mid-December to early January. Giving blood only costs an hour of your time. Find out more at [blood.co.uk](https://www.blood.co.uk) or call 0300 123 23 23 and book an appointment.
9. **Buy from charity shops** - Your Christmas shopping and supporting **charities** can go hand in hand. The website <https://www.charityretail.org.uk/find-a-charity-shop/> can help you find a charity shop near you to browse or, if you'd rather shop from the comfort of your home, eBay for Charity provides an online storefront for charities like Red Cross, Cancer Research, Shelter and many more. You can also sell your items to raise money for a charity.
10. **Raise money as you shop** - Aside from buying from charity shops, there are schemes that let you raise money for charities while you shop online from your favourite retailers — it's a bit like earning cashback for charitable causes. For example, you could try **Savoo** or **Give As You Live**, both of which let you select a charity to support when you sign up and donate a cut of the commission retailers pay them when you buy something.



MelaNoMore Christmas Party

Christmas Party



Susanna Daniels, CEO of Melanoma Focus provided us with an engaging talk of the activities of her Charity



The Queen of Raffles—Gina Freeman
Gina collected 24 prizes for the raffles from local traders and raised £500 on the night.



Great to see the medics attending, unfortunately Mr Pakzad attended later as he still had patients to attend to.

Our thanks again to the family of Lisa (a MelaNoMore founder member) in blue, green & yellow hats, for their continued support and a further gift of £750.

A full set of pictures can be viewed by copying the link below into your browser and pressing enter:

<https://1drv.ms/f/s!AgiK2WfB3hAUiWW7yENmyTdsP8-?e=UU4dau>





Do Good December



This month, we're encouraging you to carry out small acts of kindness.

December Kindness 2023

MONDAY



4 Support a charity, cause or campaign you really care about

11 Buy an extra item and donate it to a local food bank

18 Ask for help and let someone else discover the joy of giving

25 Treat everyone with kindness today, including yourself!

TUESDAY



5 Give a gift to someone who is homeless or feeling lonely

12 Be generous. Feed someone with food, love or kindness today

19 Contact someone who may be alone or feeling isolated

26 Get outside. Pick up litter or do something kind for nature

WEDNESDAY



6 Leave a positive message for someone else to find

13 See how many different people you can smile at today

20 Help others by giving away something that you don't need

27 Call a relative who is far away to say hello and have a chat

THURSDAY



7 Give kind comments to as many people as possible today

14 Share a happy memory or inspiring thought with a loved one

21 Appreciate kindness and thank people who do things for you

28 Be kind to the planet. Eat less meat and use less energy

FRIDAY

1 Spread kindness and share the December calendar with others

8 Do something helpful for a friend or family member

15 Say hello to your neighbour and brighten up their day

22 Congratulate someone for an achievement that may go unnoticed

29 Turn off digital devices and really listen to people

SATURDAY

2 Contact someone you can't be with to see how they are

9 Notice when you're hard on yourself or others and be kind instead

16 Look for something positive to say to everyone you speak to

23 Choose to give or receive the gift of forgiveness

30 Let someone know how much you appreciate them and why

SUNDAY

3 Offer to help someone who is facing difficulties at the moment

10 Listen wholeheartedly to others without judging them

17 Give thanks. List the kind things others have done for you

24 Bring joy to others. Share something which made you laugh

31 Plan some new acts of kindness to do in 2024



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>.

How To Change with Prof. Katy Milkman

Wednesday, 10 January
2024
19:00-20:00





Dr Vesna Gjorgjievska-Marsh talking about Dermatology.

It was so pleasing to see 24 of you dialling in to Dr Vesna's talk on the 24th November at our new start time of 7pm.

She focused on commonly asked questions:

- Since seeing my GP recently I have seen 2 dermatology doctors and a surgeon, how does it all knit together? How does dermatology fit in with the surgeons and oncologists?
- What specific training do dermatology doctors have to undertake?
- Is information exchanged between hospitals in the Surrey and Sussex Trusts?
- Why are patients from East Surrey sometimes sent to RSCH?
- What is the total scope of a Dermatology Doctor/Consultant
- What causes moles or other skin deformity?
- How do you determine if any moles or blemishes look serious?
- Provided examples (pictures) of what looks good and bad.
- How often should we get our skin checked?
- Tips on how to look after our skin.

She also continued to respond to questions from the viewing group way after time.

A very interesting talk providing honest and transparent answers to the many questions.



Community of Practice for Clinical Nurse Specialists in the Surrey and Sussex Cancer Alliance.

On Tuesday 12th December at the Holiday Inn Hotel in Guildford 75 Cancer Nurse Specialists (CNSs) met to share and learn from their experiences. MelaNoMore was invited to talk about patient experience and the impacts that Macmillan has had. Chris Caswell volunteered to speak.

Chris spoke about his own journey* through cancer and also acknowledged the support from Macmillan, both financially and through sharing their experience, in assisting the start-up of MelaNoMore.

* For those of you who do not know his story then look up Newsletter October 2021 on the website: "Beating the Odds - A fascinating, moving and very personal account of Chris' journey through the melanoma pathway."





News From The World of Melanoma



Thursday 29 February & Friday 1 March
Voco St Johns Hotel, Solihull,
Birmingham, B91 1AT



After dinner Guest Speaker



Connect and network with other melanoma patients



Providing patients with information on the latest drug treatments, developments and clinical trials that are available to them



Interactive discussions on pressing issues faced by patients & medical professionals



Living life beyond melanoma treatment - non-medical support & psycho-social services

£30 for 1 delegate place / £50 for delegate & guest
Dinner on Thursday night, B&B and catering throughout
the conference on Friday is included.

brought to you by
MELANOMA
FOCUS

'Patients should be visible. We need to be heard & for this to happen we must be seen.'



Imogen Cheese
founder of the
Melanoma Patient
Conference

REGISTER TODAY!

To find out more scan the QR code or visit:
<https://melanomafocus.org/support/meetings-and-events/melanoma-patient-conference/>





News From The World of Melanoma



Welcome to the Melanoma Focus 2023 Round Up

Watch our 2023 round up:



Watch all the achievements that Melanoma Focus has accomplished during 2023.
Copy the link below to your browser and press enter:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4CPKU8jaPWY>

Don't forget to turn on the sound!!

The video is just 3½ mins long and is a highly recommended watch





News From The World of Melanoma



Cancer Care Map

Cancer Care Map



A **simple, free**, online resource to help people living with cancer find **care** and support services in their local area, **anywhere in the UK**.



Medical Services



Health & Wellbeing



Emotional Support



Practical Concerns

What is Cancer Care Map?

Cancer Care Map is a simple, online resource that aims to help you find cancer support services in your local area wherever you are in the UK. Cancer Care Map is run by the Richard Dimbleby Cancer Fund Charity.

Log on at <https://www.cancercaremap.org/>





News From The World of Melanoma



CANCER - Published December 14, 2023 11:41am EST

By Greg Norman, FOXBusiness

Merck-Moderna vaccine with Keytruda cuts risk of skin cancer relapse or death by half, data shows

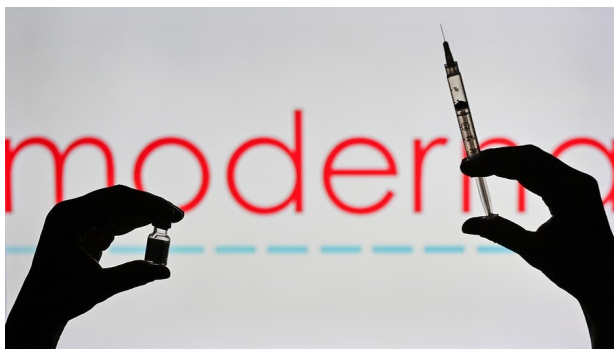
Moderna and Merck announce latest results of trial involving experimental cancer vaccine

Moderna on Thursday [14th Dec] announced that an experimental cancer vaccine it is developing with Merck — when combined with the latter's Keytruda immunotherapy — has been proven in a clinical trial to cut the risk of recurrence or death from the "most serious form of skin cancer" by half after three years.

The company, citing data from a trial involving 157 patients with "high-risk stage III/IV melanoma," said the combination of treatments "reduced the risk of recurrence or death by 49%" compared to those just taking Keytruda alone. The results also showed the combination lowers the chances of melanoma spreading elsewhere in the human body by 62%, according to Moderna.

"We are committed to driving research forward for innovative modalities in earlier stages of cancer, where we can make the most meaningful impact for patients, by combining Merck's expertise in immuno-oncology with Moderna's innovative mRNA technology," Marjorie Green, the senior vice president and head of late-stage oncology at Merck Research Laboratories, said in a statement.

Moderna said the most common side effects of people in the trial were "fatigue (60.6%), injection site pain (56.7%), and chills (49%)."



Reuters reports that Moderna is currently building a facility in Massachusetts to produce the experimental vaccine on a commercial scale and is hoping to have the property completed by next year.

Moderna President Stephen Hoge told the news agency that despite Thursday's data release, it will still take some time before the companies can file for approval for the treatment.



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

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.

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

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

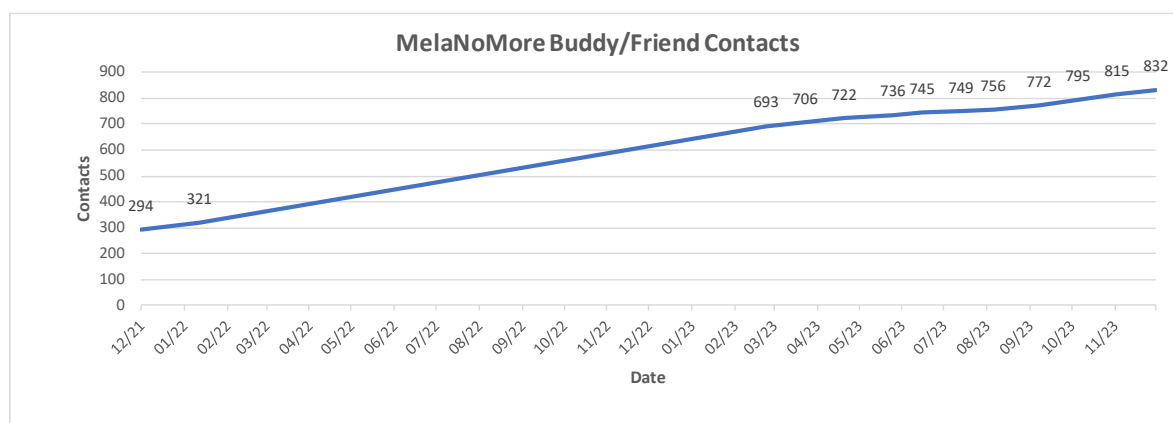
Chris Caswell, Lead – MelaNoMore Buddies

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 over three years Buddies have been in contact with 29 Friends to give support, shared 802 phone calls, texts, WhatsApps or emails. There have also been a total of 30 face to face meetings, including MelaNoMore group gatherings at the Loseley Park in April '22, the Summer BBQ in August '22, the Christmas celebration at the Hogs Back Hotel in December '22 and the recent Summer BBQ in August '23. This gives a total of 832 support contacts since inception in October '20.



If you wish to join this support group, as either a Buddy or a Friend, please send an email to [**group@melanomore.net**](mailto:group@melanomore.net)

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



GCHQ has released its “trickiest” ever annual Christmas quiz aimed at secondary school children and adults ready to test their code-breaking skills.



The quiz has seven one-word answers, each of which has a one word answer that can follow “Christmas”, before taking letters from the seven answers and placing them into a grid to produce a seasonal message.

To discover the final festive answer, children will need to look to the design on the front of the card, which features a rare 1940 image of a snow-covered Bletchley Park taken before a photography ban was introduced at the mansion.



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



The seven questions below each have a one-word answer which can follow 'Christmas'.
Use the design of the card to help you to put letters from your answers into the grid below to find the final answer.

1

These clocks show a four-letter word.
Can you work it out?



3

We've jumbled up our gift tags! Split them into three groups of three and find a word that links each group.

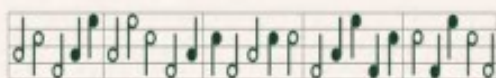
What word links these three link words?

DECLAN	BEVERLEY	JASMINE
PUDSEY	PENNY	PITCH
SCARBOROUGH	SIRIUS	STICKY

6

We found a scrap of paper with some bars of music on it which we think are concealing a word.

Next to the music were some 1s and 0s, and the numbers 16,8,4,2,1. Can you work out the hidden word?



2

Can you solve this riddle?

What breaks but cannot fall,
can leap but never crawl,
can be seized but never gripped,
often present, never skipped?

4

Each letter represents a different digit:

MI x MI = MAA
TI + TI = RA
DO - SO + TI - MI = RE
RE x RE = ?

5

Find the pairs of letters which come next in each sequence:

TH, RD, ND, ??
ET, EL, PM, ??
WU, SQ, OM, ??
WR, AP, PI, ??

7

Look at this message.
Can you work it out and find the secret 4-letter word?

Agklq ldhum qom ndem.
Gembqgax c 4-hmqmk vdke.
Hddp mumkxvomkm.
Ycxim gq'l umkx diugdsl.

Can you solve the final challenge below?



Follow us or scan the QR code to find the answers soon.

X @GCHQ
@GCHQ



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The answer is **STOCKING**

The word 'wrapping' as in 'wrapping paper'

WR, AP, PI, NG

Each subsequent letter is two letters before the last in the alphabet

WU, SQ, OM, KI

ET, EL, PM, **OC**—The word 'complete' backwards

4th, 3rd, 2nd, 1st

Question 5. TH, RD, ND, ST

3 = T, 6 = R, E = 0. The answer is **TREE**

RE x RE = ? 60 x 60 = 3600

DO - SO + TI - MI = RE - 98 - 58 + 32 - 12 = 60

TI + TI = RA - 32 + 32 = 64

Question 4. MI x MI = MA - 12 x 12 = 144

All words that precede **PUDDING**

Scarborough, Pudsey, Beverley = Yorkshire

Sirius, Pitch and Penny = Black

Declan, Jasmine and Sticky = Rice

Question 3.

Question 2. The answer is: **DAY**

Question 1. The first clock shows 8pm which is the 20th hour of the day. The 20th letter of the alphabet is T. Therefore the four clocks represent: **T - I - M - E**

Answers



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- The answer is: YULETIDE FELICITATIONS
- The third letter is Y
- The answer to question two is DAY
- The gingerbread man icon represents question two
- Example: The pattern matches the gingerbread man in the top right square
- Using the answer to the question, find the nth letter of the word using the number
- Match the item to the icon before each question above this quiz
- Match the pattern in the top left square to the corresponding item in the image

Final question. To solve this puzzle:

Take the first letter of each sentence and you get **FILM**

Maybe it's very obvious.

Look everywhere.

Identify a 4-letter word.

First solve the code.

Question 7. Assuming that '4-hmqmk' translates to '4-letter':

the answer to the puzzle is **CAROL**.

00001, 10010, 01111, 01100 (which translated to decimal gives us: 3, 1, 18, 15, 12) so get 3. The third letter of the alphabet is C. Therefore the symbols correspond to 00011, The first three symbols of the first bar are 0s. The final two are 1s so we add 2 and 1 to symbols in each bar represents 16, the second 8, then 4, 2, 1.

Question 6. The puzzle is in binary. Filled-in notes are 1s and hollow notes are 0s. Each bar represents a letter and each note within each bar is a number. The first of the five

Answers

HOW DID YOU DO? - I WON'T BE JOINING GCHQ ANYTIME SOON!

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.

