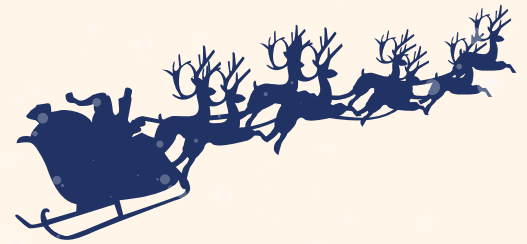




# Merry Christmas AND Happy New Year



Caring for the cancer patient & their family



## OPA Christmas Newsletter 2020

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We hope this Newsletter finds you safe and well. We would like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a much happier 2021!

The coronavirus pandemic has certainly dominated 2020 and its effects have hit charities hard. We want to use our Christmas Newsletter to share some good news with you. Despite a troublesome year, we have been busy, there is a great deal to report. We hope you enjoy the read!

We particularly want to send a huge thank you to all who continued fundraising for the OPA despite the social restrictions and difficulties we have all faced. We have loved hearing about the very creative ways you have managed to complete your challenges, with so many of you thinking outside the traditional box!

We are living in unprecedented times right now, but we want you to know that we are here for you and can offer the expanded support services free of charge:

- 1-2-1 patient support via telephone
- 1-2-1 patient support via online virtual chat accessible on the OPA website
- 1-2-1 or group support via Zoom
- Support via the helpline by telephone on 0121 704 9860
- Support via the helpline by email at [enquiries@opa.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@opa.org.uk)
- Support via our free information and resources available in the OPA Shop - <https://www.opa.org.uk/shop.html>
- Newsletters (you can subscribe here: <https://www.opa.org.uk/register.html>)

We appreciate these are certainly tough times for all. The OPA has led the fight against oesophageal and gastric cancers for over 30 years. Our purpose is to support patients, their families and carers and to continue to raise awareness of these cancers and their prevention.



# We are pleased to announce The OPA launch of its first ever UK Reflux Awareness Week

## 23rd - 29th November 2020

The OPA is working in collaboration with their Patron, Fiona Wade, urging people to Get Educated, Get Evaluated and Get Treated for Acid Reflux. Fiona, who plays Priya Sharma in Emmerdale, is OPA's Patron after losing her father to Oesophageal Cancer who suffered from acid reflux for some time. [Click to watch](#) and listen to the personal message from Fiona.

## Our campaign centres around three core messages:

### GET EDUCATED

About the symptoms and complications. We would like to educate people that Reflux disease is more than just heartburn and raise awareness of more symptoms. By using this symptom checker <https://refluxuk.com/symptoms-and-diagnosis/eligibility-symptom-checker/> you can see how severe your symptoms are.

[LEARN MORE](#)

### GET EVALUATED

To find out if you have Gastro-oesophageal reflux disease (GORD): The first and most important step in treating your reflux symptoms is to accurately diagnose the cause. There are a range of diagnostic tests available to understand your own individual case and we will be raising awareness of all the different tests and what to expect.

[LEARN MORE](#)

### GET TREATED

Learn about treatment options for GORD: Once the cause of your symptoms have been established by your healthcare professional, there are a range of different treatment options available to you. We aim to raise awareness of these different options so you can have an informed conversation with your healthcare professional about what might be the best treatment for you.

[LEARN MORE](#)

Watch this space for an update in the Spring 2021 Newsletter!



We will be sharing the campaign across our social media platforms. If you are on any of these channels we'd love it if you can help share, like and repost our content to help raise more awareness.

@OPACANCERCHARITY

OPA\_UK

OESOPHAGEAL PATIENTS ASSOCIATION

OESOPHAGEAL PATIENTS ASSOCIATION



# GORD is more than Heartburn



## GORD

Gastro-oesophageal reflux disease

- a common condition, where acid from the stomach leaks up into the oesophagus<sup>1</sup>

1 in 7

GORD affects 1 in 7 adults in the UK<sup>1</sup>

One of the causes of GORD is a weak muscle in the oesophagus called the lower oesophageal sphincter (LOS)<sup>1</sup>

Symptoms may include regurgitation, asthma, hoarseness, bad breath, difficulty swallowing, chest pain, sore throat, cough and heartburn<sup>1</sup>

Possible Complications<sup>1</sup>: Oesophagitis Barrett's oesophagus Stricture

## GET EDUCATED

about the symptoms and complications

## GET EVALUATED

to find out if you have GORD

## GET TREATED

Learn about treatment options for GORD



<sup>1</sup> Poisson regression model of 16 studies yielded a sample size weighted mean of 15.2% for the prevalence of GORD in Europe.

<sup>1</sup> El-Serag HB, Sweet S, Winchester C, et al. Update on the epidemiology of gastroesophageal reflux disease: a systematic review. Gut. 2014. 63(6): 871-80.

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# GORD Awareness Week 2020

NOVEMBER 23 - 29

For more information, please go to [www.opa.org.uk/awarenessweek](http://www.opa.org.uk/awarenessweek)

## New Trustee: Sid Rananaware



With the advert for trustee in Autumn newsletter, I contacted John Campolini, Vice Chair to show my keen interest to broaden my volunteering effort. And to my pleasant surprise this is an opportunity for me to introduce myself as a new trustee. How wonderful! I am thankful for the opportunity and hoping for the best contribution from my journey.

## “” Testimonials

“I was so scared when I received my diagnosis and I felt really alone. A friend told me about OPA and the great work they do and suggested I call their cancer support helpline.

Having someone to talk to that understood what I was going through really helped. Then they put me in touch with a patient buddy, who had been through the same treatment I was scheduled for. Having someone to chat with that had been through the same situation was a real help.”

.....  
- Frank T

“Thank you to the OPA for their continued support and for raising awareness of this awful disease. My dad was diagnosed last year and since then the OPA have provided multiple free resources and information that we couldn't find anywhere else.”

.....  
- Emma T

“Thank you to the staff at OPA for their help and advice and support when I didn't know where else to turn. They provided me with free information booklets and guidance on next steps after my surgery.”

.....  
- Paula B

“I'm writing in to say thank you very much to all the staff at the OPA who supported my husband when he was diagnosed with Oesophageal cancer earlier this year. The OPA put him in touch with a patient buddy and provided lots of free information booklets and advice. We are grateful for all of the support they provided for us.”

.....  
- Lynne R

## New Health Unlocked Carer's Forum

We are now able to announce that we have a brand new OPA Carer's Forum Page on Health Unlocked, which is the world's largest social network for health. We would love you to join this forum in support of the OPA. You will find the link for this at the bottom of the OPA website.

HealthUnlocked

[www.opa.org.uk](http://www.opa.org.uk)

<https://healthunlocked.com/opa-carers>

The OPA have the following pages on Health Unlocked:

- Oesophageal Patients Association (OPA) - <https://healthunlocked.com/oesophagus>
- OPA Acid Reflux Support - <https://healthunlocked.com/opa-gord>
- OPA Carers Forum - <https://healthunlocked.com/opa-carers>
- OPA Palliative Care & Guidance - <https://healthunlocked.com/opa-palliative-care>

## Zoom update

### Zoom 1-2-1 patient support

The OPA have introduced Zoom meetings with a Patient Buddy, please contact us if you would like further details. Call the cancer support helpline on 0121 704 9860 or email [enquiries@opa.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@opa.org.uk) and we will be happy to arrange this for you.

- Instructions for Zoom - [https://www.opa.org.uk/edit/files/zoom\\_instructions\\_v1.pdf](https://www.opa.org.uk/edit/files/zoom_instructions_v1.pdf)



## The Carer's Group Zoom meeting

On the 7th of November, The OPA held two Zoom meetings for carer's. Their main areas of concern touched on their partners' diet, eating portions, and Dumping Syndrome but, worryingly, a few also revealed how little follow-up or advisory services they had been offered after discharge from hospital. This underlined how important it may be for them to be given the confidence to persevere in getting access to such services.

*Philip Wright*

## The London Group Zoom meeting

On the 14th of November, the London group held its first Zoom meeting. 50 participants had pre booked and the meeting started at 10.00am. Our guest speaker was James Gossage who spoke about the new world of oesophageal surgery. A lively exchange of questions and answers followed and then after thanking James for his hugely interesting presentation, the group then went on to have a group exchange of experiences and advice following our individual experiences and worries.

All-in all a very successful meeting and having now experienced our first one, the plan is to roll these Zoom meeting out every other month until we can get back to face to face meetings. I would like to thank all the participants for their interest and participation.

*John Campolini*



## Much Loved

MuchLoved is an ideal way for supporters to fundraise in memory as part of a charity fundraising event or a Tribute Fund scheme.

This is your own special memorial website in tribute to your loved one, where you can share memories, thoughts and stories with family and friends as well as light candles, add music, photos and videos.

You can collect fundraising donations for a special charity or project in their name, organise events, celebrate anniversaries – and much more.

More information can be found on the OPA website - <https://www.opa.org.uk/in-memoriam.html>

much  loved

## Fundraisers

Thank you so much to our supporters and fundraisers!



## Christmas cards are in stock...

You can order your OPA Christmas Cards via the OPA Online shop at £1.50 - <https://www.opa.org.uk/sections/christmas-cards-2020.html>

These are available to buy individually or as a pack (one of each).



# Please will you help us?

## By bank transfer

Recipient bank: HSBC Bank,  
34 Poplar Road, Solihull, B91 3AF  
Sort Code: 40 - 42 - 12  
Account Number: 02301636

## To make an online donation visit:

<https://www.opa.org.uk/donations.html>

### By regular Standing Order payment –

Sort Code: 40-42-12

Account Number: 51354981

I wish to make regular donations to the Oesophageal Patients Association of *(tick appropriate box)*

£2  £5  £10  £25  £100,

or other amount:

Please state amount in words:

every *(tick appropriate box)*  Week  Month  Year starting on \_\_\_ / \_\_\_ / \_\_\_ until further notice.

### Your bank details

To: (insert name and address of your bank) \_\_\_\_\_

Sort Code: \_\_\_ - \_\_\_ - \_\_\_

Account Number: \_\_\_\_\_

## Boost your donation by 25p of Gift Aid for every £1 you donate

Gift Aid is reclaimed by the charity from the tax you pay for the current tax year. Your address is needed to identify you as a current UK taxpayer.

### In order to Gift Aid your donation you must tick the box below:

I want to Gift Aid my donation of £ \_\_\_\_\_ and any donations I make in the future or have made in the past 4 years to the OPA.

I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay.

### Your Details

Title: (Mr/Mrs/Dr etc.) \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_ / \_\_\_ / \_\_\_

## Any other Donations

I am pleased to send a donation of £ \_\_\_\_\_ Please tick here  if this is to be treated as a Gift Aid donation.

Title: (Mr/Mrs/Dr etc.) \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_ / \_\_\_ / \_\_\_

Please send this form to: Fundraising Dept. The OPA, 6 & 7 Umberslade Business Centre, Pound House Lane, Hockley Heath, Solihull B94 5DF. Or email to: [enquiries@opa.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@opa.org.uk)

For further information please contact The OPA on 0121 704 9860 or email [charity@opa.org.uk](mailto:charity@opa.org.uk)

Registered Charity No 1062461

