

## Don MacLean

The 12th November is a date that will always stick in the mind of Don MacLean, a retired Outdoor Learning Manager, living on Lewis. It was on this date in 2013 that he was told he had stomach cancer.



Don was suffering from arthritis and taking painkillers. He noticed that every time he ate he would be sick.

“I didn’t feel nauseous or anything. I blamed the tablets, stopped taking them and the sickness stopped. However, I carried on losing weight and had no energy. I went to the doctor and over a period of 3 weeks had an endoscopy, scan, examination, and an appointment with my consultant. This was when I was told that I had stomach cancer.”

After undergoing treatment which involved having his stomach removed and chemotherapy, Don is now able to enjoy lots of small meals spread throughout the day. He was also able to begin cycling, walking and sailing 9 weeks after his operation.

Don believes that, although cancer is scary, it is a diagnosis of an illness, and in the majority of cases something positive can be done, and the earlier it can be detected the better.

Read Don’s full cancer story at:

<http://www.wihb.scot.nhs.uk/cancer/real-stories>

**DON'T GET SCARED, GET CHECKED.**

Remember, the earlier cancer is found, the easier it is to treat.

## Useful links

Detect Cancer Early	<a href="http://www.getcheckedearly.org">www.getcheckedearly.org</a>
NHS inform	<a href="http://www.nhsinform.scot">www.nhsinform.scot</a>
NHS Western Isles	<a href="http://www.wihb.scot.nhs.uk/cancer">www.wihb.scot.nhs.uk/cancer</a>
Macmillan Cancer Support	<a href="http://www.macmillan.org.uk">www.macmillan.org.uk</a>
Lewis & Harris Women’s Cancer Support Group	<a href="http://www.lhbcsg.org">www.lhbcsg.org</a>
Hebridean Men’s Cancer Support Group	<a href="http://www.hebmencancer.com">www.hebmencancer.com</a>
Uist Cancer Support	Facebook (Uist Cancer Care Forum)
Barra Cancer Support	Facebook (Barra Cancer Support Group)

## We are listening - how did we do?

We welcome your feedback, as it helps us evaluate the services we provide. If you would like to tell us about your experience:

- speak to a member of staff
- visit our website [www.wihb.scot.nhs.uk/feedback](http://www.wihb.scot.nhs.uk/feedback) or share your story at - [www.careopinion.org.uk](http://www.careopinion.org.uk) or 0800 122 31 35
- Tel. 01851 704704 (ext 2408) on a Tuesday and Friday afternoon between 1pm and 4pm.

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### Disclaimer

The content of this leaflet is intended to augment, not replace, information provided by your clinician. It is not intended nor implied to be a substitute for professional medical advice. Reading this information does not create or replace a doctor/patient relationship or consultation. If required, please contact your doctor or other health care provider to assist you interpret any of this information, or in applying the information to your individual needs.

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Bòrd SSN nan Eilean Siar  
NHS Western Isles

**DETECT CANCER EARLY**



Sharing local cancer survivor stories, and raising awareness of the Detect Cancer Early campaign

Twice as many people survive cancer today compared to 30 years ago thanks to research advancements and the development of new treatments. Detecting cancer early can also make a real difference to your chance of survival.

## Signs and symptoms

Below are some potential signs and symptoms of cancer that are worth visiting your GP about.

Remember, having one of these doesn't necessarily mean you have cancer, it could be a sign of something else, but either way, it's better to have your concern checked.

- A new lump in the breasts, testicles or anywhere else that appears, or an existing lump that gets bigger.
- A sore that doesn't heal up – in the mouth, throat or on the skin.
- A mole that changes shape, size or colour.
- Any growth that appears on the skin and continues to grow.
- Coughing up blood, or blood in the urine or mixed through stools (poo).
- Things that don't clear up, like a cough that doesn't go away, or a pain somewhere that won't settle.
- A change in the pattern of going to the toilet.
- Unexpected weight loss (when you have not been trying to lose weight).

For more information on other signs and symptoms, visit: [www.getcheckedearly.org](http://www.getcheckedearly.org)

## Catherine Macleod

Several years ago, Catherine Macleod was told she had breast cancer after attending routine breast screening.

Since undergoing treatment, Catherine has become a breast cancer survivor and returned to work.

During a recent International Women's Day event held in An Lanntair, Stornoway, Catherine championed women to be more breast aware, and to visit their GP if they found a lump or had a breast concern. Catherine also stated the importance of attending the Scottish Breast Screening Unit, where her own cancer was found.

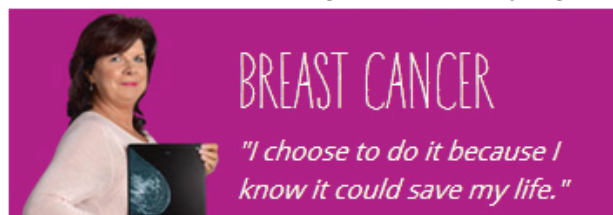
Catherine told the audience that, through attending the Breast Screening Unit when she was invited, her cancer was detected early - when the clumps of affected cells were no larger than 'grains of sand'.

Most women know that a lump can be a sign of breast cancer. Lumps can be found anywhere in your breasts, armpit or around your collarbone. If you do find one it doesn't necessarily mean you have cancer. However, you do need to get it looked at by your doctor – just to rule it out.

Read Catherine's full cancer story at:

<http://www.wihb.scot.nhs.uk/cancer/real-stories>

If you would like advice on how to check your breasts, please visit: [www.getcheckedearly.org](http://www.getcheckedearly.org)



## Rob Daly

Several years ago, having just turned 61, Rob Daly, a retired schoolteacher from the Isle of Barra, received his bowel screening test through the door.

Although having "no signs or symptoms whatsoever", Rob took the test, never having any concerns that there would be a problem.

"It was such a shock to be diagnosed with bowel cancer", Rob said. "There is no history of bowel cancer in the family; my mum and nan lived into their 80s and my dad is still going in his 90s. I have not smoked for over 25 years - but I probably drink a bit more than I should, but I have two or three periods each year when I don't drink at all."

After undergoing treatment, Rob has become a bowel cancer survivor, and is looking forward to having a long and active life.

Rob's cancer was detected early, because he took the bowel screening test, and he is now urging others to take the test so that, if there is a problem, they too will have the best possible chance of beating the disease.

Read Rob's full cancer story at:

<http://www.wihb.scot.nhs.uk/cancer/real-stories>

