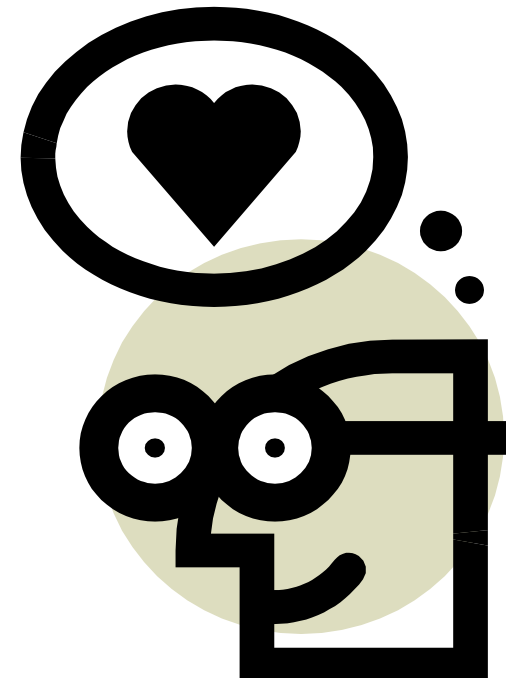


8th Annual Pierce County Cancer Survivorship Conference
August 10, 2016

Male Sexual Health: Practical Pointers During and After Cancer



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Sex and Cancer:

Do those two things really go together?

Men who are treated for cancer often don't think about sex for a while.



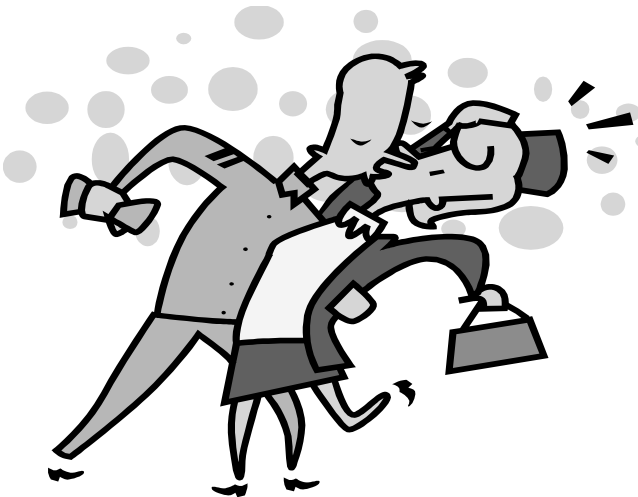
Suddenly, time has gone by... *now what?*

Sex and Sexuality:

Two Parts of the Same Idea

Sex

- The activity



Sexuality

- The feelings



Cancer Affects Sex and Sexuality, *and not usually in a good way!*

- Cancer and treatments affect how you feel physically, mentally, emotionally and energetically
- Cancer does not have to end your sex life, but it will, *if you let it...*
- **When** is the right time to talk about sex or sexuality? **NOW!**



How Cancer Treatments Affect the Body

- **Surgery, Radiation, Chemotherapy, Transplant**
- Skin: GVHD, texture, sensitivity, scars, elasticity
- Lymph: Lymphedema
- Nerves: Sensation changes
- Blood Flow
- Glands: Hormone Changes



How Cancer Treatments Affects the Body:

- **Chemotherapy & Transplant**

- Low blood counts
 - *Infection risk (white cells)*
 - *Bleeding risk (platelets)*
 - *Fatigue (red cells)*
- Nausea, appetite, weight change
- Bowel and bladder function
- Dryness and sores in the mouth, gut and rectum, GVHD changes
- Sensation changes
- Fertility



Cancer Treatments and Sex

Body changes that effect **sex**:

- Skin sensitivity, scars
- Pain
- Weight changes
- Bowel and bladder function
- Hormone, erectile and orgasm changes
- Fatigue
- Yes, cancer can change sexual **function**



Cancer and Sexuality

Sexual changes include:

- Decreased desire, arousal, orgasm
- Confidence, body image, self esteem
- Role changes (feeling like a 'patient' instead of a 'lover')
- Hormone changes
- Energy level
- Worry, fear, depression, anxiety, *and even*
- Relationship satisfaction
- Yes, cancer can change how you ***think*** about sex!



Partner Changes

Communication makes a difference!

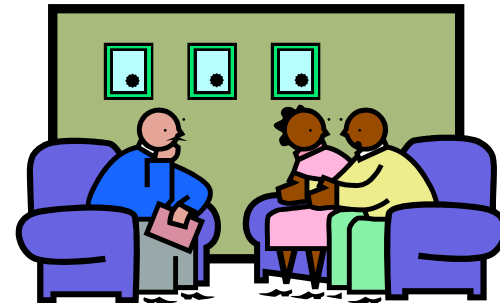


- *It takes two to tango...*
- Role changes – in and out of the bedroom
- Fear of causing pain
- Fear of rejection
- Not wanting to be demanding
- Fatigue, worry, stress
- Not knowing when or how to bring it up

What Can Help? How Do I Start?

- Bring up your worries, fears, and concerns with your healthcare providers
- Talk to your partner
- Don't *expect them to know* how you feel or what is happening
- Find resources - books and support groups

Ask for help, even if you are not sure how...



It Isn't Always About **Sex**...

- Hand holding, snuggling, and back rubs count!
- Spend time watching a favorite movie
- Look through photos, talk about memories
- Do projects together
- Go for a walk together
- *Create time for romance to return*



Sex and Sexuality – Alone or With a Partner

- Your BRAIN is your biggest sex organ
- Think ahead, imagine...
- Allow *time* to not feel rushed
- Let each time be *its own* time



Sex and Sexuality – Alone or With a Partner

- Set some ground rules, but remember to have fun!



- *All of these considerations are the same alone or with a partner!*

The 'How To' of How To Start

- Touch yourself, or guide your partner to touch you, in ways that feel good.
- This can be anywhere on the body, even an arm or back can be a good place to start!
- Move on to more sensual/sexual touching if that feels comfortable.



The 'How To' of How To Start

- Lubricants for genital touching can be helpful.
- Go slowly, be willing to slow down, stop, move back to another area, “check in” with what feels good and even take a break.



- Tears, talking, negotiating and even giggling is allowed.

Things That Can Help

Lubricants

Water based:

- Can be used with any toys or condoms
- Easy to obtain can be used anywhere on the body
- Not all are created equal, some get sticky, some are scented, some are organic...

Oil based:

- Can be used with all toys
- Not to be used with latex condoms
- Can stain



Silicone based:

- Super slippery
- Can stain
- Should not be used with silicone toys.

Hand lotion, Vaseline, glycerin based products or essential oils may cause irritation, risk of infection and breaks down condoms

Things That Can Help

Medications may help to maintain erections or make erections firmer

- Viagra, Cialis, etc. (sildenafil)
- Muse (alprostadil) suppository
- Caverject (alprostadil) injection

Surgical implant may be an option for some people



- **Toys and Tools**

- Vacuum pumps, hand held devices for masturbation, and compression rings can be used to assist with erections
- Vibrators used internally or externally to stimulate the penis, prostate, nipples or other body parts.
- Books and movies can provide fantasy and mood material.
- Clothing can makes you feel sexy, or to accentuate or hides areas.
- A journal or “love notes” can give you a place to write down what you’d like if talking about it is too difficult.

The First Step is to ***START***

- ***Avoiding the topic of sex won't get you far***
- Talk to your partner (or potential partner)
- If you have been together a long time, remind each other stories about times when sex and intimacy were terrific
- Talk to someone you trust
if you need information
or encouragement
- Resources are available...



Written material on cancer and sexuality

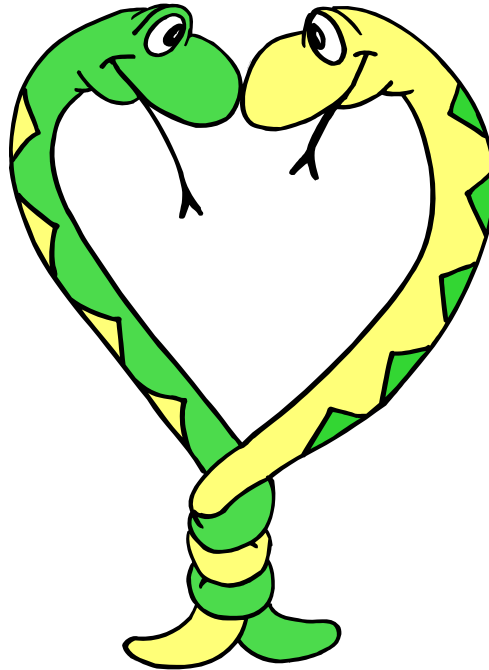
- Man, Cancer, Sex by Anne Katz
- Sexuality for the Man with Cancer by the American Cancer Society
- Making Love Again: Hope for Couples Facing Loss of Sexual Intimacy by Keith Laken
- And In Health: A Guide for Couples Facing Cancer Together by Dan Shapiro
- Sexuality and Fertility After Cancer by Leslie R. Schrorer
- Saving Your Sex Life: A Guide for Men with Prostate Cancer by John Mulhall
- Childhood Cancer Survivors: A Practical Guide to Your Future by Nancy Keene, Wendy Hobbie and Kathy Ruccione
- This Should Not Be Happening: Young Adults With Cancer by Anne Katz

Resources: stores, websites and more

- **SCCA Survivorship Clinic**
welcomes any cancer survivor who has completed their acute cancer treatment, at SCCA or any other location. 206-288-1024
www.seattlecca.org/survivorship
- **Healthcare providers and staff:**
doctors, NP's, PA's, nurses, psychologists, social workers, counselors, chaplains and others are willing to talk to patients, survivors and family members. Some providers are more comfortable than others – ask!
- **Shine:** *A unique cancer specialties store* www.sccashine.org
- **Babeland:** *Seattle's Adult Toy Store* www.babeland.com
- **SheBop:** Portland, OR
www.sheboptheshop.com
- American Cancer Society
www.cancer.org
- www.livestrong.org

The “New Normal”...

- *...can be pretty darn good!*



Time for questions and discussion

