

# Manage Sex and Intimacy during and after Gynecologic Cancer Treatment

## For women and their sexual partners

Read this resource to learn:

- How cancer treatments can affect how your body responds to sex
- What you can do to have sex that is safe and feels good
- When to get medical help
- Where you can get more information

This pamphlet was made by your health care team. It is meant to give you general information on the topic. It should not be used to replace the advice of your health care team, or to replace any cancer treatment.



## Introduction

Many treatments for gynecologic cancers can affect your intimate relationships and your sexual function. It can be hard to feel like a sexual person during and after cancer treatment.

### **Sexual function is:**

- What you do sexually and how your body responds.
- Sexual function does not only mean sexual intercourse or vaginal penetration (putting something in your vagina, like a penis, finger or sex toy).
- It also includes other ways of expressing yourself sexually, like touching and kissing.

### **Intimacy is:**

- The physical and emotional closeness you share with another person.

Both intimacy and sexual function can affect how we see ourselves, and how we think of ourselves.

Intimacy and sexual function can be affected by cancer and its treatments. It is important to know that there are things you can do to manage changes to your intimacy and sexual function.

## **How will the different cancer treatments affect me?**

There are many different treatments for gynecologic cancers. The treatments you get depend on the type of cancer you have. Because gynecologic cancer is in your sex organs, these treatments may affect how your body responds to sex.

Gynecologic cancer treatment may also affect how you feel about your body.

Changes to your intimacy and sexual function can be caused by:

- illness
- pain
- hormone changes
- cancer-related fatigue (tiredness that does not go away with rest or sleep)
- body image
- stress or anxiety (feeling uneasy)
- anger
- sadness
- medications
- relationship problems with your partner
- relationship problems with other people in your life
- problems that your partner may have with his/her sexual function

You can learn to manage these things by:

- being creative
- being a good communicator
- being patient

There are also other things you can do to keep your sex life healthy. Read the next sections to learn about different types of treatment, and how they can affect you and your sex life.

## How surgery may affect you

### How will surgery affect my sexual function?

These surgeries may change the way your body reacts to sex:

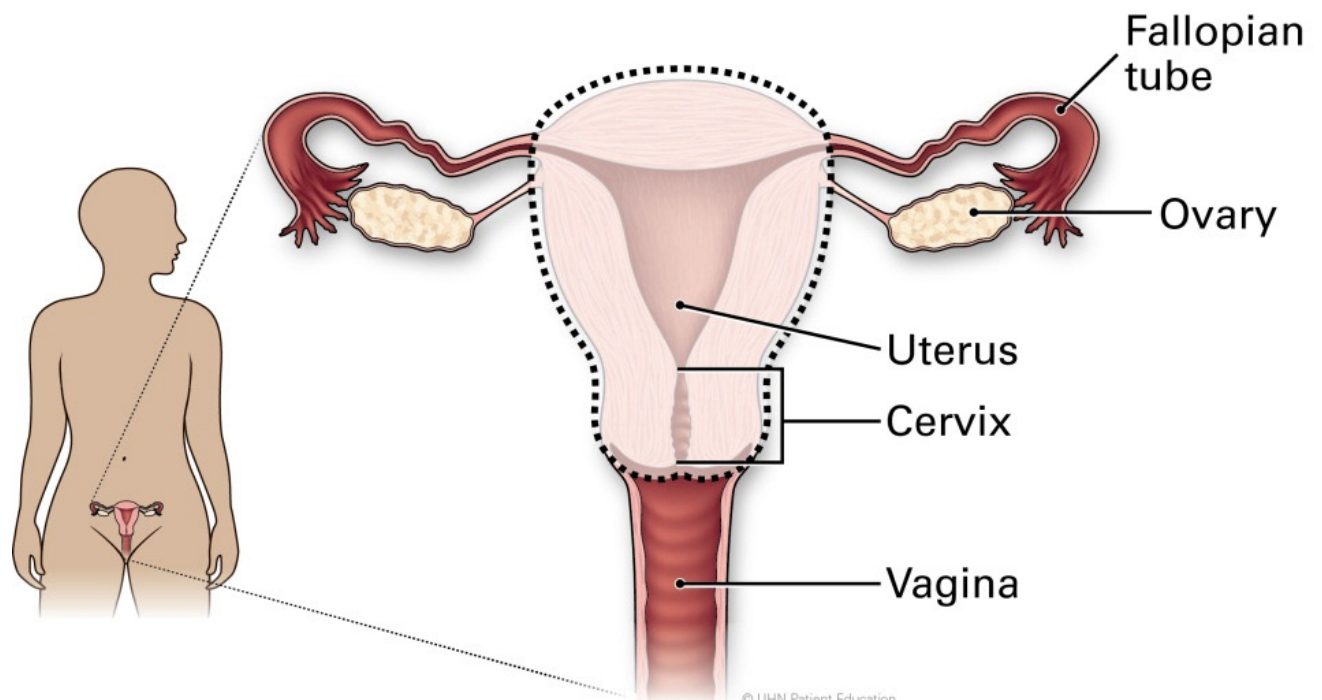
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Surgeries can leave behind scars that are both physical and emotional. For some women, these scars can affect intimacy and how they view their body.

Read the sections below to learn about the different types of surgery, and what you can do to help you and your partner cope with changes to your intimacy and sexual function.

## Hysterectomy

A hysterectomy is a surgery to remove the uterus.

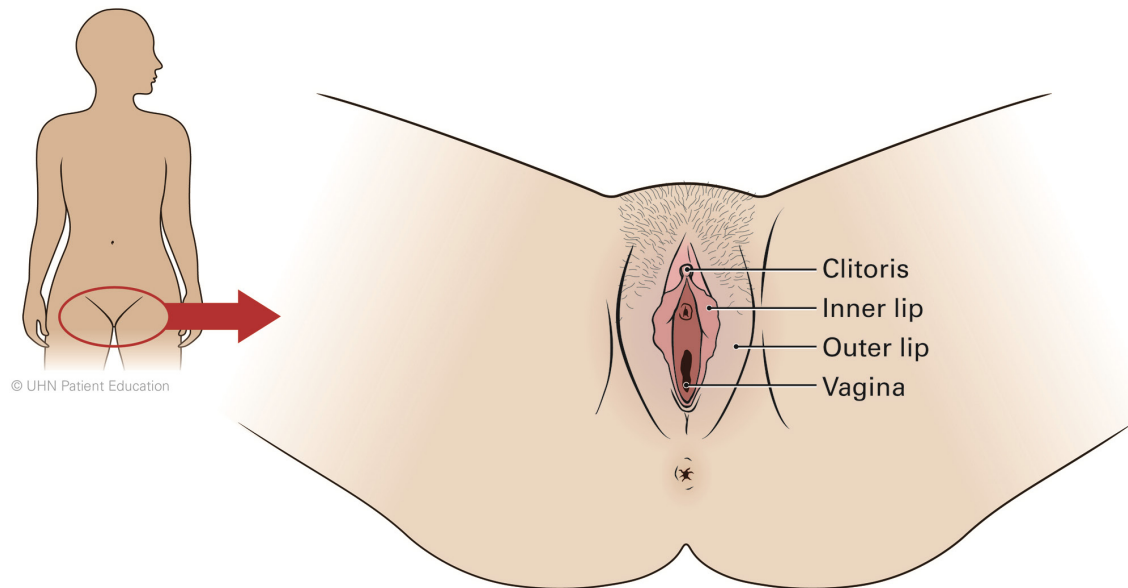


### What can I expect?

After a hysterectomy, the vagina may be shorter. This can make sex uncomfortable at first. But over time, the vagina stretches during sex so there will be less discomfort.

Most women have orgasms (sexual climax) though direct stimulation (touching or stroking) of the clitoris.

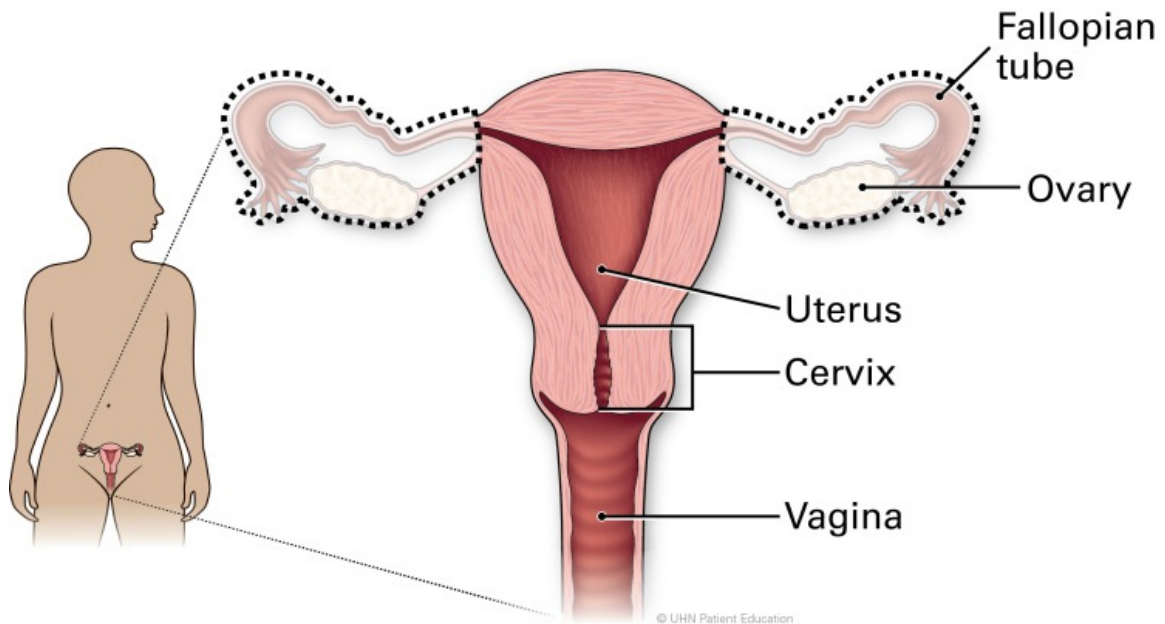
The clitoris is on the outer genitals (see image below).



The clitoris is not damaged by having a hysterectomy. This surgery will not usually directly affect a woman's ability to have an orgasm.

## Bilateral salpingo-oophorectomy (BSO)

During a BSO (pronounced bye-lat-er-all sal-ping-go oo-fer-ek-ta-me), both the fallopian tubes and the ovaries are removed.



### What can I expect?

This surgery can cause menopause to happen early if you have not gone through it yet. When menopause starts, your body starts to make less estrogen. This may cause your vagina to become drier and less stretchy. This can make sex and medical pelvic exams more uncomfortable.

Over time, dryness in the vagina can lead to:

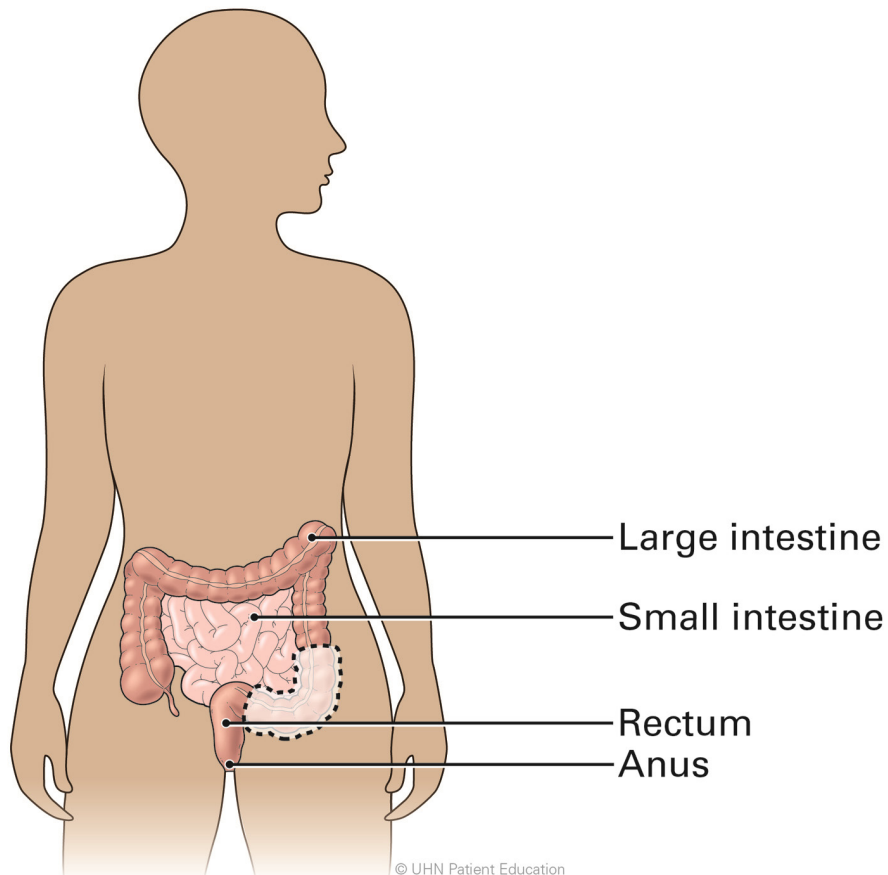
- pain (often when you have sex)
- burning
- itching
- higher chance of getting an infection in your vagina
- higher chance of getting an infection in your urinary tract (this includes your urethra, bladder and kidney)

It is important to keep your vagina moist, even if you are not having sex. Read the resource called “Vaginal Moisturizers and Lubricants” to find out more about how to keep your vagina moist and healthy.

## Colostomy and ileostomy

During a colostomy (pronounced koh-LOS-toh-mee) or ileostomy (pronounced IL-ee-OS-toh-mee), parts of the intestines or anus are removed. The surgeon creates a different path for feces (poo) to leave the body.

This surgery is only used in cases of advanced cancer.



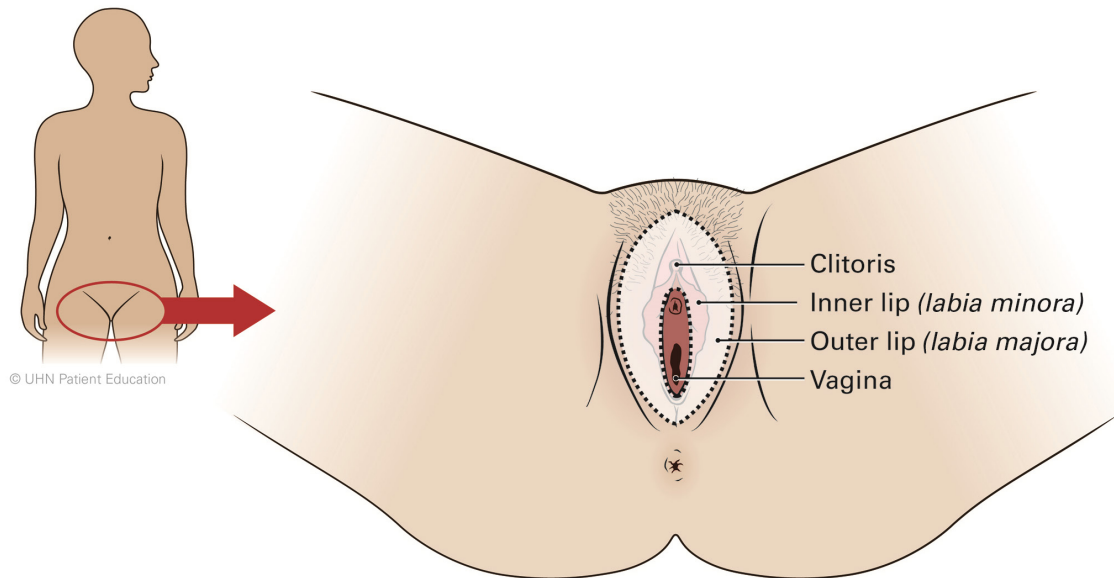
## What can I expect?

This surgery may not change the way your body responds to sex, but it may change the way you feel about your body. It may affect your body image or sexual confidence. Feeling good about your body is part of feeling sexy.



## Vulvectomy

During a vulvectomy (pronounced vul-vek-tah-me), parts of the vulva are removed. The vulva is the name for the outer genitals. This includes the labia minora and labia majora (inner and outer lips of the vagina) and the clitoris.



In a partial vulvectomy, only the parts of the vulva affected by cancer are removed. A small edge of tissue around the cancer (called a “margin”) and some lymph nodes in the groin may also be removed.

In a radical vulvectomy, the whole vulva is removed. A radical vulvectomy is very rarely necessary.

The surgeon will save us much of the vulva as they safely can. A vulvectomy surgery does not include the vagina, uterus or ovaries.

## **What can I expect?**

This surgery may change how the area around the vagina will look and feel. Some women may have numbness (lack of feeling) in the genital area where the surgery was done. Some feeling may return slowly within a few months after surgery.

It is common for women to worry about how a partner will react to seeing their genitals after surgery. Some women may be able to have reconstructive surgery to rebuild the outer and inner lips of their genitals. This may help with the way the vulva looks.

Read the sections below for information about how to feel more sexually confident and comfortable after surgery.

## **Other surgeries**

Other cancer-related surgeries can also affect a woman's intimate relationships and sexual function.

This includes surgeries that:

- change the way urine (pee) leaves your body
- remove the clitoris
- change the shape of the vagina

With the right education and support, you can still have a very happy sex life. Ask your surgeon nurse or another member of your health care team about how you can keep a healthy sex life after surgery. Try to have your partner there for these talks too, or share the information with your partner.

There are many helpful questions you can ask, such as:

- How will this surgery affect my sexual function?
- How soon after this surgery can I have sex or insert something into my vagina?
- What can I do to make sex more comfortable and pleasurable after this surgery?

## **Coping after surgery**

### **How soon after the surgery can I have sex?**

Talk to your doctor at your first follow up visit after your surgery. Ask when it is safe for you to start having sex again.

Starting 6 to 8 weeks after surgery, most people can safely have sex with vaginal penetration (putting a penis, finger or sex toy inside the vagina). How long you will need to wait to have sex will depend on the type of surgery you have.

Before having sex with vaginal penetration make sure that:

- The surgical incision (cut) at the top of the vagina has healed
- Blood spots and bleeding from the vagina has stopped

There is much more to sex and intimacy than just sexual intercourse and vaginal penetration. Kissing, hugging, massaging and cuddling are safe to do right away. These types of intimate activities may also help you feel closer to your partner.

### **Will there be pain the first time I have sex after the surgery?**

It depends. Some women may still feel pain and discomfort after surgery. Pain can get in the way of pleasure and is a common worry for women and their sexual partners.

Read the next section to learn what you can do to help prevent and reduce pain.

## What can I do to help reduce pain during sex?

You and your partner can do things to reduce pain and increase pleasure during sex:

### 1. Find a comfortable position.

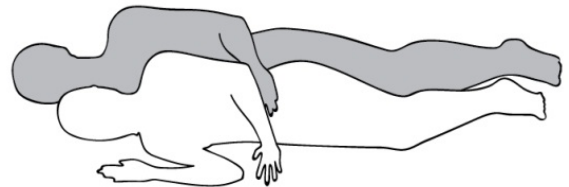
How you and your partner place your bodies during sex is important to reducing pain and making you more comfortable. Try these positions:

- When you are lying on your back, place pillows under your knees or behind your lower back.
- Try placing yourself in a top or in a side-lying position. This will allow you to control the depth of penetration (e.g. how far a penis enters your vagina).

**Top position**



**Side-lying position**



### 2. Talk to your partner and share your feelings.

Let your partner know if you feel any pain or discomfort during sex.

If you feel any pain or discomfort during sex, it may help to:

- Move your position.
- Switch to a different sexual activity (e.g. touching and caressing on the outside of your vagina).
- Take a short break from sex.

You and your partner should let each other know how you are feeling physically and emotionally so that you can try to avoid pain.

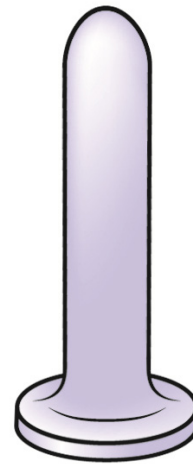
### **3. Use a dilator.**

Use a dilator if you have vaginal stenosis (narrowed vagina). This can be caused by some cancer treatments. A dilator is a smooth plastic tube that you place in your vagina to stretch the inside walls.

Use a dilator to help reduce discomfort during sex or during medical pelvic exams.

Ask your doctor or a member of your health care team if you may need a dilator.

Read the resource called “How to Manage Vaginal Stenosis” to learn more about vaginal dilators.



**Dilator**

### **4. Use a vaginal lubricant or moisturizer.**

Use water-based or silicone-based lubricants (lube) during sex. Using a lubricant will help reduce discomfort caused by vaginal dryness.

There are many options for lubricant. You can buy them at your local pharmacy or at many sex shops. You do not need a prescription.

Do not use massage oils and oil-based lubricant:

- inside your vagina
- with condoms

Massage oils and most oil-based lubricants should not be used for sexual activities involving vaginal penetration. Oils can break down the latex in condoms. This will make them more likely to break.

Some oils can also increase your risk of getting a yeast infection or urinary tract infection.

Choose water-based or silicone-based lubricants that are free of:

- perfumes
- glycerin (sugar-based alcohol)
- parabens (un-natural chemicals)

These can irritate the vagina.

Use a vaginal moisturizer 2 to 3 times per week to keep the inside of your vagina moist. Using vaginal moisturizers often will help keep your vagina healthy. It will also make sex more comfortable.

Replens® and Zestica Moisture® are product examples of vaginal moisturizers. You can also use a natural oil as a vaginal moisturizer, such as natural almond oil or natural coconut oil.

Read the resource called “Vaginal Moisturizers and Lubricants” to learn more about the different lubricants and moisturizers, and how to apply them.

## **5. Ask your doctor about hormone treatment.**

A doctor can prescribe (give you) vaginal estrogens to help reduce discomfort from vaginal dryness. But this hormone treatment is not safe for some women. Ask your doctor if this is a safe option for you.

## **6. Take your pain medication.**

If you feel pain anywhere on your body, take your pain medication before having sex. This may make sex more comfortable and feel better.

You may be able to take over-the-counter pain medication such as Advil® or Tylenol®, or your doctor may prescribe other pain medication for you to use. Always check with your doctor before trying any new pain medication. Some over-the-counter pain medications may not be safe for you to use.

## **7. Try being intimate without vaginal penetration.**

You and your partner can try different ways of touching and caressing to learn pain-free ways to become aroused. This can include:

- kissing
- touching
- massaging your own body and your partner's body
- using your mouth or hands on the genitals



## **Will sex feel different to my partner after surgery?**

During sex, your partner will not be able to feel that you had surgery to remove any internal sex organs (e.g. the uterus, fallopian tubes, or ovaries). The vagina is very elastic (stretchy). Sex can be very pleasurable even if the vagina is shortened from surgery.

If you have had both ovaries removed (e.g. BSO), you and your partner may notice that your vagina feels drier. If your vagina is drier after surgery, use lubricant during sex. This will make vaginal penetration more gentle and sexual activities more pleasurable.

See page 14 to learn more about vaginal lubricants.

Vulvectomy surgery may or may not change how sex feels for your partner. It may depend on which parts of the vulva have been removed during the surgery. The vulva looks different after vulvectomy surgery. Changes in how the vulva looks can affect how some partners feel about having sex.

Other surgeries mentioned above can sometimes affect how your partner feels about performing some sexual acts (such as oral sex). It is important for you and your partner to speak openly about what you are feeling, both physically and emotionally.

Ask for help from a member of your health care team if you and your partner are having a hard time coping with sexual changes after surgery.

## **Will I be able to have an orgasm after surgery?**

Having surgery to remove the internal sex organs (e.g. uterus, fallopian tubes, ovaries) will not affect the nerves involved in orgasms. If you were able to have an orgasm before the surgery, you will likely still be able to have orgasms after.

Vulvectomy surgery can sometimes damage the nerves involved in orgasm. This will depend on the parts of the vulva that have been removed during the surgery. If you have had a vulvectomy, speak to your doctor to find out if your surgery may affect your ability to have an orgasm during sex.

Some cancer treatments lower hormone levels. This may change the way your body becomes aroused. For example, you may notice a decrease in genital fullness or vaginal lubrication.

If your cancer treatment has lowered your hormone levels, talk to your partner. Let them know that:

- These changes are caused by your surgery.
- These changes do not mean that you have lost all desire for sex.
- You are still attracted to your partner.

Together, and with the support of your health care team, you can find ways to adjust to these changes.

## **What can I do to feel more confident with my body?**

There are many things that you can do to feel more confident with your body. For example, if you have had a colostomy or ileostomy, try wearing attractive clothes or lingerie that covers the ostomy (new opening on your body where body waste exits) during sex. This may help you to feel more attractive and sexy.

No matter what surgery you had, you can:

- Talk to your doctor, nurse or other health care professionals for more information on how to have sex safely and feel more comfortable with your body.
- Attend the “Look Good...Feel Better” class at the Princess Margaret Cancer Centre to learn more tips on how to feel good about your body and how you look. See page 33 to learn how to sign up.
- Read the resource called “Managing Body Image Concerns after Cancer Treatment” to learn more.

## How radiation treatment can affect you

### How will radiation affect my sexual function?

The effects of radiation treatment are different for each person. How radiation affects you also depends on:

- the dose of your radiation treatment, and
- the area of your body treated

Radiation to the pelvis or abdomen may cause side effects, such as:

- fatigue (tiredness that does not go away with rest or sleep)
- nausea (feeling of having to throw up)
- diarrhea (watery, or loose poo)
- swollen bladder or bladder infection
- swollen vagina
- vaginal stenosis (narrowed vagina)
- fluid or blood leaking out of the vagina
- sunburn-like effect on skin of vulva or groin

Some side effects of radiation treatment do not show up right away. They may appear months or years after treatment is done.

Delayed side effects can include:

- vaginal stenosis (narrowed vagina)
- swollen legs

These side effects may affect:

- Your desire for sex
- How your body responds to sex

## What can I do during and after treatment?

Try these tips:

- **Have sex often.** Frequent sex with vaginal penetration (2 to 3 times a week) can help to stretch the vagina and reduce vaginal narrowing. Having sexual intercourse helps to keep the vagina healthy. You can also enjoy sexual penetration using fingers or sex toys (such as a vibrator).  
  
Using a lubricant can increase your comfort and pleasure during these sexual activities.
- **Use a vaginal dilator 3 times a week.** This will help keep your vagina open to a normal size so you can have comfortable sex. Using dilators also makes it easier for you to have pelvic exams. Read the resource called “How to Manage Vaginal Stenosis” to learn more about dilators.
- **Arouse yourself often.** When you are aroused, more blood flows to your vagina. Increased blood flow to your vagina helps keep it healthy. This is true with or without vaginal penetration. You can pleasure yourself (masturbation) or arouse yourself with a partner.
- **Use lubricant and vaginal moisturizers.** Use a vaginal moisturizer 2 to 3 times a week. Use a lubricant for added moisture right before sex. Read the resource called “Vaginal Moisturizers and Lubricants” to learn more.

## **Is it safe to have sex during radiation treatments?**

Yes, it is usually safe to have sex during radiation treatment. Cancer is not contagious, meaning you cannot pass cancer onto your partner during sex. Radiation treatment will not cause you to pass on any radiation to your partner during sex.

During radiation treatment, your vagina may become tender or swollen. It may feel like a sun-burn. Try using lubricants and vaginal moisturizers to see if it helps ease your discomfort.

If you are very sore during radiation treatment:

- You may need to take a short break from intercourse or other sexual activities that involve vaginal penetration.
- You can try having sex again 2 to 4 weeks after radiation treatment ends.
- Sexual activity will usually be more comfortable after you allow some time for your body to heal.

## How chemotherapy can affect you

### How will my sexual function be affected during chemotherapy?

The chemotherapy medicine itself does not change the way your body responds to sex. But, there are some side effects that can affect your mood or desire to have sex. Some examples of side effects are:

- fatigue (tiredness that does not go away with rest or sleep)
- nausea (feeling of having to throw up)
- mouth sores
- constipation (not being able to go poo)
- diarrhea

Not all types of chemotherapy cause the same side effects.

### What can I do during and after chemotherapy?

Below is a list of few things that can happen during and after chemotherapy (side effects), and what you can do to help increase your sexual comfort and pleasure.

#### 1. Fatigue

This is a common side effect of chemotherapy. Red blood cells carry oxygen throughout your body. The oxygen keeps you alive and gives you energy. During chemotherapy, you may have a lower number of red blood cells in your blood. This lack of energy may lower your desire for sex.

To help with fatigue, you can:

- Visit the Princess Margaret's Fatigue Clinic to:
  - Get assessed by clinic staff to set up a plan to manage your fatigue.
  - Attend the "Reclaim Your Energy" class. See page 34 to learn how to sign up and attend the Fatigue Clinic.
- Read the resource called "Reclaim Your Energy: Coping with Cancer-Related Fatigue"

## **2. Hair loss**

Some types of chemotherapy cause hair loss. If you have hair loss due to chemotherapy, your hair will likely start to grow back after many months. Hair loss can affect your self-esteem and body image. Taking steps to feel more comfortable with how you look can help you to feel more attractive and confident.

To cope with hair loss and improve your self-image, you can try some of the following steps:

- Wear a head scarf, wig or other covering.
- Wear a sexy nightgown or other clothing that makes you feel comfortable and confident.
- Attend the "Look Good...Feel Better" class at the Princess Margaret Cancer Centre to learn more tips on how to feel good about your body and how you look. See page 33 to learn how to sign up.
- Read the resource called "Managing Body Image Concerns after Cancer Treatment" to learn more.



### **3. Infection**

Chemotherapy may cause you to have a lower number of white blood cells in your body for 7 to 10 days after treatment. Since white blood cells help your body fight infection you are more likely to get an infection during this time.

The infection could be in your:

- lungs
- stomach and intestines
- vagina
- other areas

Your doctor or nurse may give you other instructions to lower your chance of getting an infection.

If your partner is sick or feeling sick (has a sore throat or cold), do not have intimate contact with them for 7 to 10 days after treatment. Doing this will help you avoid possible infection.

Talk to your doctor or nurse about any concerns you may have during or after chemotherapy. There are medications that can help reduce or relieve many of the side effects of chemotherapy.

Some medications can have sexual side effects. Let your doctor know if you are having side effects that are affecting your intimacy and sexual function.

## General tips to help improve pleasure and desire

### 1. Talk about it.

If you are worried about current or future problems with your sexual function talk to your doctor, nurse, social worker, or other health care professionals with whom you feel comfortable. Dealing with your concerns about your sexuality and intimacy is an important part of your return to wellness.

If you have a partner:

- Include them in any talks about sex with your health care team. This will help them reduce any fears they might have.

For example, some partners are afraid that sex will be painful for the patient. They may even be afraid that they may catch cancer. Let your partner know that cancer is not contagious (you cannot pass cancer onto your partner).

If you are single:

- You might have concerns about when to tell a future partner about your cancer diagnosis.
- Try joining a support group through the hospital, online, or in the community.
  - Going to a support group can help you connect with other women who are dealing with concerns about dating and other similar issues.
  - Ask a member of your health care team to help you to find a cancer support group to meet your needs.

## **2. Plan ahead.**

Schedule time for you and your partner to be intimate. Some couples like to set aside a “date night”. Planning ahead allows you to focus on your intimate relationship and create a comfortable environment for you to be sexual.

## **3. Set the mood for intimacy.**

Create a setting that is relaxing, comfortable and sensual. Choose lighting (such as candles), music, and scents (such as perfumes, lotions) that you find sexy. Think about ways that you can move from your regular hectic day into a more relaxed and erotic frame of mind. You can try:

- a warm bubble bath
- watching a romantic movie
- reading a sexy novel

## **4. Save your energy and reduce fatigue.**

Do not leave sex for the end of the day when you feel the most tired. It may be helpful for you to:

- Plan your sex and intimacy at times when you have the most energy (morning, after a nap, or on a weekend).
- Get a good night’s sleep and take naps when you can.
- Let your doctor know if you are having trouble sleeping.
- If possible, get some help with housework and other chores that are likely to lower your energy.

## **5. Eat a healthy diet and get regular exercise.**

Take care of your body by eating healthy and exercising.

- This will give you more energy. It may also help to improve how you feel about your body.
- Good nutrition and exercise help improve sex drive and pleasure.
- Ask your health care team if it is safe to exercise before you start.

## **6. Manage your pain.**

Try these tips:

- If you have pain from your cancer or treatment, take your pain medications 1 hour before having sex.
- Keep your lubricant in an easy to reach place so that you can quickly use it to help with any pain from vaginal dryness.
- If you are going to have sex and include vaginal penetration extend the “foreplay”. Make sure that you are feeling aroused and moist before inserting anything into your vagina.
- Use pillows to support your body comfortably. Choose positions that allow you to control the depth of penetration and move comfortably.

## **7. Manage your nausea.**

If you have nausea from treatment, take your anti-nausea medications 1 hour before having sex.

## **8. Get to know your own body intimately.**

You can do this by self-pleasuring (masturbating). Self-pleasuring can be helpful because:

- Most people do it! Self-pleasuring is a normal and healthy thing to do for women of all ages. This is normal whether you are in a relationship or not.
- Self-pleasuring can maintain good blood flow to the vagina. This will help keep it healthy.
- Cancer treatments can sometimes change how your vagina and genitals feel when touched. So learning what feels good through self-touch can help you be a better guide for your partner.

## **9. Be playful and change up your sexual routines.**

Trying something new can add fun and excitement to your sexual relationship:

- Let your partner know if you would like to try new and exciting ways of pleasuring each other.
- Try new ways of touching, kissing, massaging and caressing one another.
- Visit your local bookstore to find books with tips on how to improve your sex life.
- Be playful and talk openly with your partner about what you each like and do not like.

## **10. Try a sex toy.** Toys add a sense of fun and excitement in the bedroom.

- There are many sex toys women can use for pleasure.
- Sex toys that vibrate can be very arousing. The added stimulation can be helpful for women who have less feeling in and around their vagina after treatment.
- Many women find that they are able to become aroused and reach orgasm much easier using a vibrating sex toy.
- Some sex toys can be inserted into your vagina. These can work as a dilator and to help keep your vagina open and healthy.
- Sex toys can be used alone or with a partner.

## **11. Talk to your doctor about hormone options.**

Your doctor can let you know whether these products are a good option for you. Some examples of products are testosterone and/or estrogen-based creams. For some women these can help boost sexual function and desire.

## **12. Work on your relationship issues.**

The strength of a couple's relationship can affect their sex life. Cancer can put more stress on your relationships.

It is important for partners to be able to talk openly and honestly with each other. This will help you resolve conflicts and help you both work through problems together.

## Where to find more information

Members of health care teams that treat cancer have different levels of comfort and training on the topic of sex and intimacy.

- Do not give up if you and your partner are still having problems with sex and intimacy. It is normal to go through this.
- Problems with sex during and after cancer treatment are very common. You can get support from trained experts.
- Ask a member of your health care team to refer you to a registered sex therapist. A registered sex therapist is an expert in sexual counseling and relationship issues.
- It might also be helpful to see a physiotherapist. Some physiotherapists have special training in pelvic health, and they can help you resolve vaginal pain and tightness.

## Important phone numbers and contacts

### To find a registered sex therapist

#### **Board of Examiners in Sex Therapy and Counseling in Ontario (BESTCO)**

80 Colony Lane, R.R. #2 Calabogie, ON K0J 1H0

Website: [www.bestco.info](http://www.bestco.info)

Phone: 416 204 0336

Find a registered sex therapist in your area. Learn what to expect during sex therapy and how to find a therapist near you. Sex therapy services are often not covered by OHIP, but may be covered by some extended health benefits.

### To find a pelvic health physiotherapist

#### **College of Physiotherapists of Ontario**

375 University Avenue, Suite 901 Toronto, ON M5G 2J5

Website: [www.collegept.org](http://www.collegept.org)

Email: [info@collegept.org](mailto:info@collegept.org)

Phone: 1 800 583 5885



## **Ontario Physiotherapy Association (OPA)**

55 Eglinton Avenue East, Suite 210 Toronto, ON M4P 1G8

Website: [www.physiotherapy.ca](http://www.physiotherapy.ca)

Email: [womenshealth@physiotherapy.ca](mailto:womenshealth@physiotherapy.ca)

Phone: 416 322 6866

Find a physiotherapist with expertise in pelvic health.

## **Pelvic Health Solutions**

Website: [www.pelvichealthsolutions.ca](http://www.pelvichealthsolutions.ca)

## **To find more information and support**

### **Look Good...Feel Better Program**

Princess Margaret Cancer Centre

3rd Floor, Room 642

610 University Avenue

Toronto, ON M5G 2M9

Website: [www.theprincessmargaret.ca/en/PatientsFamilies/SupportServices/Pages/look-good-feel-better.aspx](http://www.theprincessmargaret.ca/en/PatientsFamilies/SupportServices/Pages/look-good-feel-better.aspx)

Phone: 416 946 2075

Learn how to use make-up, wigs, scarves and more to regain control over how you look and feel better. The workshops are free. You will also get a free set of cosmetics and skin-care products for attending.

Visit the Patient and Survivorship Education Calendar of Events for times ([www.ThePrincessMargaret.ca/en/calendar](http://www.ThePrincessMargaret.ca/en/calendar)). Call to register.

### **“Sex & Intimacy” Class**

[ELLICSR](#) (Toronto General Hospital)

Basement, Room B PMB 130

585 University Avenue

Toronto, ON M5G 2C4

Phone: 416 581 8620

Take a class from a trained Physiotherapist and Registered Sex Therapist. Learn how cancer and cancer treatment affects sex and intimacy, what to expect, and how you can help. Call to register.

### **The Princess Margaret Fatigue Clinic**

Princess Margaret Cancer Centre,

2nd Floor (The Cancer Survivorship Centre)

610 University Avenue

Toronto, ON M5G 2M9

Website: <http://www.theprincessmargaret.ca/en/patientsfamilies/supportservices/pages/fatigue-clinic.aspx>

Email: [survivorship@uhn.ca](mailto:survivorship@uhn.ca)

Phone: 416 946 4501, extension 2363

Open Monday to Friday, 9:00 am to 5:00 pm

Meet with fatigue experts. Get information and attend free classes to help with your fatigue.

## **The Princess Margaret Patient & Family Library**

Princess Margaret Cancer Centre  
Main Floor Lobby  
610 University Avenue  
Toronto, ON M5G 2M9

Email: [patienteducationpmh@uhn.ca](mailto:patienteducationpmh@uhn.ca)  
Phone: 416-946-4501, extension 5383

The Patient & Family Library is open:  
Monday to Thursday, 8:30 am – 4:30 pm  
Friday 8:30 am – 4:00 pm  
Closed on weekends and holidays.

The Patient & Family Library is open to all patients and their families, and the general public. The Library can help you and your family find reliable and up-to-date information about cancer and other health topics.

Contact or go in person to the Library to get any of the resources listed in this booklet.

## **Psychosocial Oncology Clinic**

Princess Margaret Cancer Centre,  
16th Floor  
610 University Avenue  
Toronto, ON M5G 2M9

Website: <http://www.theprincessmargaret.ca/en/patientsfamilies/clinicsandcentres/psychosocialclinic/pages/about-us.aspx>

Phone: 416 946 4525

Open Monday to Friday, 9:00 am to 5:00 pm  
Meet with social workers to get information on emotional, social and financial support resources.

## **Wellspring Cancer Support Network**

Toronto Office  
4 Charles Street East  
Toronto, ON M4Y 1T1

Website: [www.wellspring.ca](http://www.wellspring.ca)

Phone: 416 961 1928

Toll Free: 1 877 499 9904

Meet other men, women and children living with cancer. Wellspring offers daily classes, support groups, and programs that can help you cope with and manage the impact of cancer on your life.

## **Canadian Cancer Society (CCS)**

National Office  
55 St Clair Avenue West, Suite 300  
Toronto, ON M4V 2Y7

Website: [www.cancer.ca](http://www.cancer.ca)

Email: [info@cis.cancer.ca](mailto:info@cis.cancer.ca)

Phone: 1 888 939 3333

## **The Women's Cancer Network Website**

230 W. Monroe Suite 2528 Chicago, IL USA 60606-4902

Website: [www.wcn.org](http://www.wcn.org)

Email: [info@foundationforwomenscancer.org](mailto:info@foundationforwomenscancer.org)

Phone: 800 444 4441

Visit this website to learn about clinical trials information and treatment options.

## **United Ostomy Association of Canada, Inc.**

36 Executive Park, Suite 120

Irvine, CA, USA 92714

Website: [www.ostomycanada.ca](http://www.ostomycanada.ca)

Email: [info1@ostomycanada.ca](mailto:info1@ostomycanada.ca)

Phone: 1 800 826 0826

This website is for people who have had a colostomy and ileostomy. Visit the website to learn about surgery, find support and get help with your needs.

Important: This resource does not include a full list of brands or products. The University Health Network does not recommend one brand over another and is not responsible for any products listed. Please contact each company directly to find out more about their products. Also, this resource does not include a full list of agencies and organizations. The University Health Network does not recommend one organization over another and is not responsible for the care and services provided. Some information may change. Please contact agencies or organizations directly to make sure the information is correct or to find out more about their services.

Visit [www.uhnpatienteducation.ca](http://www.uhnpatienteducation.ca) for more health information.

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