

# Comfortable Sex Positions For Patients Who Have Had a Stroke

This document suggests some sex positions that are comfortable and safe for most people recovering from stroke. Try different sex positions to find what is most comfortable for you. Use pillows as supports to help make these positions more comfortable. Talk to your health team if you have any questions or concerns.

Note: Striped limbs and/or sling indicate the weaker side of the body.

Developed by Toronto Rehab's Intimacy After Stroke Working Group, 2019, reprint with attribution.

## Lying on Your Side

Try lying on your strong side or your weak side to see which is more comfortable for you.

### Lying on your strong side

You may find lying on your strong side is a comfortable position if you have pain in your weak shoulder.

To make this position more comfortable:

- Put pillows under your weak arm to manage pain
- Put pillows under your leg to manage hip or knee pain.



Note: Striped limbs and/or sling indicate the weaker side of the body.

## Lying on your weak side

Lie on your shoulder blade (side of your upper back) and not directly on your shoulder.

To make this position more comfortable:

- Use additional pillows to support your shoulder and arm as needed



Note: Striped limbs and/or sling indicate the weaker side of the body.

Developed by Toronto Rehab's Intimacy After Stroke Working Group, 2019, reprint with attribution.

## One Partner on Top

### Lying on your back

To make this position more comfortable:

- Put pillows under your lower back
- Put pillows under your knees
- Put pillows under your weak arm



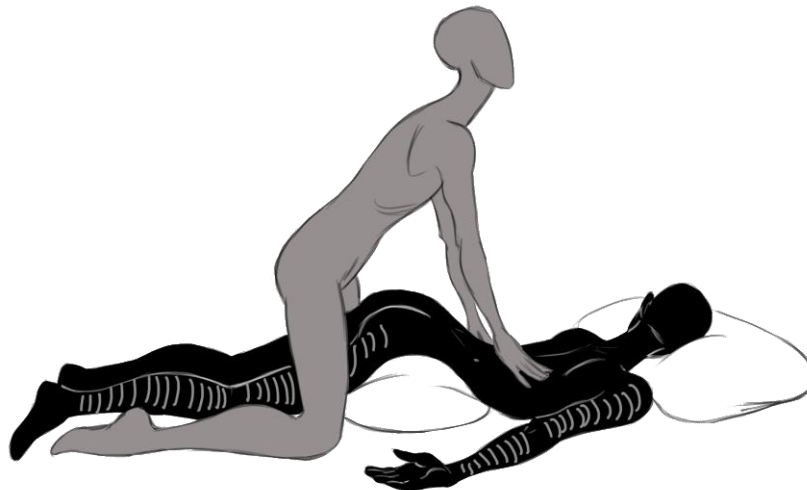
Note: Striped limbs and/or sling indicate the weaker side of the body.

Developed by Toronto Rehab's Intimacy After Stroke Working Group, 2019, reprint with attribution.

## Lying on your stomach

To make this position more comfortable:

- Put your weak arm straight against the side of your body to manage arm pain. Pull your elbow close to your side and rest the back of your hand on the surface you are lying on.
- Turn your head to the side that is more comfortable.
- Put a pillow under your hips.
- You may want to use a wedge for additional support if the pillow is too soft
  - Pleasure ABLE link (listed below, under “More Resources” ) provides additional products and information on how to engage in sexual activity



Note: Striped limbs and/or sling indicate the weaker side of the body.

### **As the top partner**

Being the top partner takes having strong trunk. Only try being the top partner if you feel strong.

To make this position more comfortable:

- Place pillows where you feel you need them to ease your ability to engage in the desired activity (Image 1)
- If you have little to no movement in your arm, you may use a sling to decrease risk of injury to your shoulder (Image 2)



Image 1



Image 2

Note: Striped limbs and/or sling indicate the weaker side of the body.

Developed by Toronto Rehab's Intimacy After Stroke Working Group, 2019, reprint with attribution.

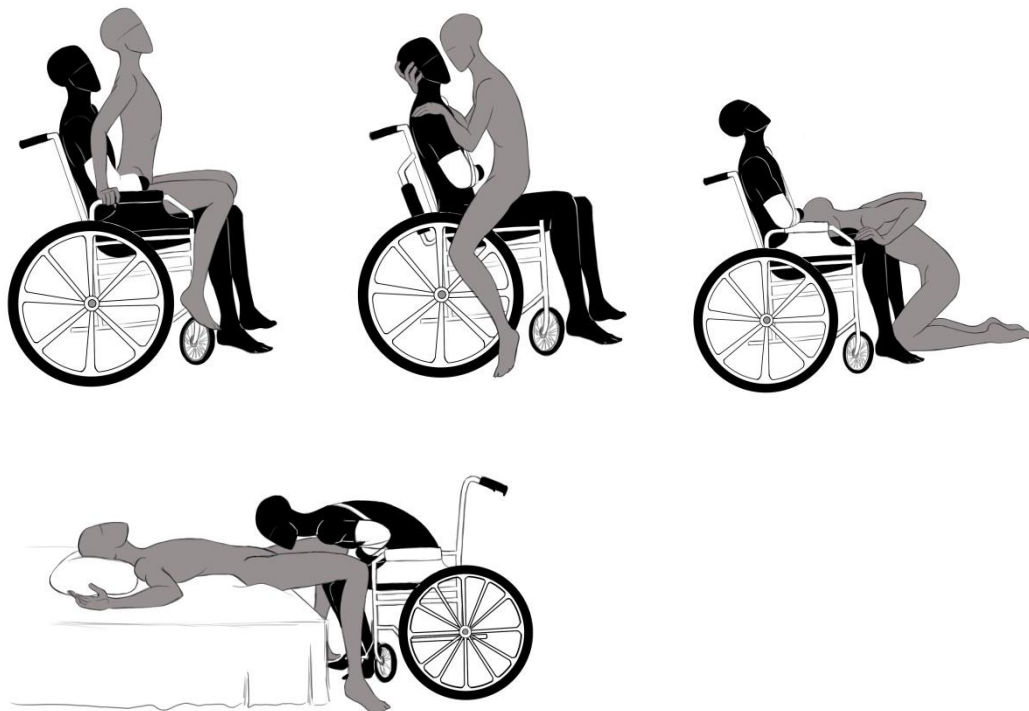
## Sitting in Chair or Locked Wheelchair

You or your partner can be sitting in a chair or a locked wheelchair. Put the back of the chair against a wall to keep the chair from moving and to keep the chair back strong.

Use a wheelchair without armrests or remove armrests from the wheelchair to have more options when trying this position.

To make this position more comfortable:

- Remove the lap tray from the wheelchair and use a sling to support your weaker arm.



Note: Striped limbs and/or sling indicate the weaker side of the body.

Developed by Toronto Rehab's Intimacy After Stroke Working Group, 2019, reprint with attribution.

## More Resources

The resources below have more information on sex positions, products and devices that may help your sexual function:

- Book: The Ultimate Guide to Sex and Disability:  
<https://www.corysilverberg.com/sex-and-disability>
- Pleasure ABLE: Sexual Device Manual for Persons with Disabilities  
[http://www.dhrn.ca/files/sexualhealthmanual\\_lowres\\_2010\\_0208.pdf](http://www.dhrn.ca/files/sexualhealthmanual_lowres_2010_0208.pdf)
- Sexual Aids:  
[www.myplesure.com/education/disability/index.asp](http://www.myplesure.com/education/disability/index.asp)

Illustrations courtesy of Milica Hovanec

Note: Striped limbs and/or sling indicate the weaker side of the body.

Developed by Toronto Rehab's Intimacy After Stroke Working Group, 2019, reprint with attribution.