



Your Sexual Health

Cancer and cancer treatments can affect your relationships, body image and intimacy. It may change the way you feel about sex. It is also common to have fears and worries that may affect your relationships with others. This can cause changes in your stress level and emotions.

What you can do to help:

- Talk to a member of your healthcare team about your fears and worries.
- Talk to your family and friends about your fears and worries.
- Ask a member of your healthcare team about programs or supports in your community.
- Keep a daily journal throughout your treatment.

Support groups and education programs

- Hearth Place Cancer Support Centre hearthplace.org or call 905-579-4833
- Look Good Feel Better Canada lgfb.ca or call 1-800-914-5665
- Virtual online programs
 - 'Low Down' On 'Down There' Group Support: Offered virtually once a month to persons with a vagina. For more information, go to: rvh.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/The-Low-Down-on-Down-There-Cancer-Class.pdf
 - Accepting Your Body After Cancer Treatment: Offered virtually to persons who have had breast or chest cancer. For more information, go to: rvh.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Accepting-Your-Body-After-Cancer-Group-Class.pdf

Patient education resources available online

Alberta Health Services

- Cancer and Sexuality, Fertility, Body Image and Relationships at myhealth.alberta.ca/HealthTopics/cancer-and-sexuality
- Female Sexual Problems myhealth.alberta.ca/Health/Pages/conditions.aspx?hwid=uh1854#uh1856
- Smoking: Sexual and Reproductive Problems myhealth.alberta.ca/health/pages/conditions.aspx?Hwid=aa152553
- Low Sexual Desire at myhealth.alberta.ca/cancer-and-sexuality/sexual-relationships-and-cancer/low-sexual-desire
- Talking to Your Partner About Sex at myhealth.alberta.ca/HealthTopics/cancer-and-sexuality/Pages/talking-to-your-partner-about-sex.aspx

Canadian Breast Cancer Network

- Never Too Young: Psychosocial Information and Support for Young Women with Breast Cancer Care booklet found at: cbcn.ca/en/never_too_young

Canadian Cancer Society

- Sex, Intimacy and Cancer booklet found at cancer.ca/en/support-and-services/resources/publications

Cancer Care Ontario

- Intimacy and Sex: For People with Cancer and their Partners handout found at: cancercareontario.ca/en/symptom-management/35051
- Prostate Cancer Patient Guide: How to Manage Sexual Health Problems handout found at: cancercareontario.ca/en/symptom-management/35051
- Prostate Cancer Guide: How to Manage Hormonal Symptoms handout found at: cancercareontario.ca/en/symptom-management/35046

Canadian Urological Association

- Erectile Dysfunction handout found at: cua.org/system/files/PIB/PIB%2032_en_web2023_0.pdf

Durham Regional Cancer Centre

- Breast Cancer: Information and Supports handout found at: lakeridgehealth.on.ca/en/ourservices/resources/Cancer/Breast-Cancer-Information-and-Supports.pdf
- Fertility Preservation for People Who Produce Eggs handout found at lakeridgehealth.on.ca/en/ourservices/resources/Cancer/Fertility-Preservation-for-People-Who-Produce-Eggs.pdf
- Fertility Preservation for People Who Produce Sperm handout found at lakeridgehealth.on.ca/en/ourservices/resources/Cancer/Fertility-Preservation-for-People-Who-Produce-Sperm.pdf
- Understanding Erectile Dysfunction found at lakeridgehealth.on.ca/en/ourservices/resources/Cancer/Erectile-dysfunction.pdf
- Using a Vaginal Dilator handout found at lakeridgehealth.on.ca/en/ourservices/resources/Cancer/Using-a-Vaginal-Dilator-.pdf
- Managing Your Vaginal Symptoms handout found at: lakeridgehealth.on.ca/en/ourservices/resources/Cancer/Managing-Your-Vaginal-Symptoms.pdf

- Progressive Muscle Exercise handout found at:
lakeridgehealth.on.ca/en/ourservices/resources/Cancer/Progressive-Muscle-Relaxation-Exercise.pdf
- Self-Sensate Focus Exercise handout found at:
lakeridgehealth.on.ca/en/ourservices/resources/Cancer/Self-Sensate-Focus-Exercise.pdf
- Sensate Focus Exercises handout found at
lakeridgehealth.on.ca/en/ourservices/resources/Cancer/Self-Sensate-Focus-Exercise.pdf
- The Mirror Exercise handout found at
lakeridgehealth.on.ca/en/ourservices/resources/Cancer/Mirror-Exercise.pdf
- Understanding Sexual Desire found at
lakeridgehealth.on.ca/en/ourservices/resources/Cancer/Sexual-Desire.pdf
- Understanding Erectile Dysfunction found at
lakeridgehealth.on.ca/en/ourservices/resources/Cancer/Erectile-dysfunction.pdf
- Using a Vaginal Dilator found at
lakeridgehealth.on.ca/en/ourservices/resources/Cancer/Using-a-Vaginal-Dilator-.pdf
- Wigs and Other Head Coverings handout found at
lakeridgehealth.on.ca/en/ourservices/resources/Cancer/Wigs-and-other-head-coverings.pdf

Fertile Future

- Cancer and Fertility: A Guide for Young Adults handout found at:
fertilefuture.ca/patient-resources

Pelvic Health Solutions

- Pelvic exercises for women or persons with a vulva/vagina: :
pelvichealthsolutions.ca/knowledge-base/pelvic-floor-muscle-strengthening-kegels-for-females-or-if-you-have-a-vulva-vagina?seq_no=4
- Pelvic exercises for men or persons with a penis:
pelvichealthsolutions.ca/knowledge-base/pelvic-floor-muscle-strengthening-kegels-for-males-or-if-you-have-a-penis?seq_no=3
- Finding a physiotherapist who specializes in pelvic health
pelvichealthsolutions.ca/find-a-health-care-professional

The Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada

- Concerns and Sexual Problems: sexandu.ca/sexual-activity/concerns-sexual-problems
- Menopause and Health Concerns: menopauseandu.ca/health-concerns

The North American Menopause Society

- Causes of Sexual Health Problems: menopause.org/for-women/sexual-health-menopause-online/causes-of-sexual-problems
- Effective Treatments for Sexual Health Problems: menopause.org/for-women/sexual-health-menopause-online/effective-treatments-for-sexual-problems

Finding Sex Therapy and Counselling Supports

- BESTCO: Board of Examiners in Sex Therapy & Counselling in Ontario (sex therapist directory): bestco.info/sex-therapists-near-you.
- Canadian Association for Marriage and Family Therapists: camft.ca or call 416-907-4620.
- Psychology Today (Canada): psychologytoday.com/ca/therapists.
- Catholic Family Services: cfsdurham.com/english or call 905-725-3513
- Durham Family Services: durham.ca/en/living-here/counselling.aspx or call 905-666-6240.

Talk to a member of your healthcare team if you have questions or do not understand any of the information in this handout.

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