



Intimacy and sex after prostate cancer

By Mayo Clinic staff

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Living with cancer blog

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Intimacy and sex after prostate cancer

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Men are faced with many physical, emotional and sexual challenges after a diagnosis of prostate cancer.

Today, there are many choices for treatment options to consider. What may be best for one person isn't for another. Collect the facts, discuss your options with your cancer treatment team, and talk with other prostate cancer survivors.

Take the time to be comfortable with your treatment option beforehand. Don't be afraid to ask questions about how your treatment will affect your sexual function. It's more important to have a good understanding of what to expect after treatment is over.

Surgery, radiation, chemotherapy and hormone therapy can all cause some sexual side effects. Nerve-sparing surgery to remove prostate cancer is less likely to cause erectile dysfunction. However, this may not be an option for everyone depending on the tumor size and location.

Remember to give your body time to heal after surgery before getting too frustrated with loss of function. It can take a year or two for the nerves and blood vessels to heal completely.

Some important steps to consider if you are experiencing sexual side effects:

- **Talk with your health care team.** Ask your health care provider what to expect and formulate a plan to address your concerns. It might be necessary to see

someone who specializes in sexual function (many times this is a urologist or a sex therapist).

- **Be open and communicate with your partner.** Be honest with your feelings, concerns and needs. If you are open with how you're feeling, you can work together to address what is best for you as a couple.
- **Seek support and information from other survivors.** Network and talk with others who have gone through similar experiences. Many times, a local prostate cancer support group can be a great forum to gain knowledge and support. Online forums and discussion groups can also be a great way to ask questions and get support.

Many of you have asked for this topic of discussion. This is an opportunity to ask your questions and share with others what has worked for you.

MayoClinic.com has excellent resources on this topic. See the links below.

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