

# Sexual Health

Most people know that cancer can take a big toll on your physical and emotional health—but it can affect your sexual health, too.

## HOW MIGHT CANCER AFFECT MY SEXUAL HEALTH?

Some cancer treatments can cause changes to your weight and/or your sex organs. As a result, you may face certain concerns and challenges regarding your sexual health, such as:

- Worrying about intimacy after treatment
- Struggling with body image after treatment and/or fearing that your partner will find you less attractive
- Fearing or experiencing pain or loss of sensation during sex
- Fearing or experiencing the inability to get or maintain an erection
- Having menopausal symptoms, such as hot flashes, dryness or tightness in the vagina, or other problems that can affect your desire to have sex
- Fearing or experiencing loss of fertility



## WHO SHOULD I TALK TO ABOUT MY SEXUAL HEALTH CONCERNS?

If you have questions or concerns about intimacy and your sexual health, talk to your oncologist. They can refer you to programs or professionals who specialize in sexual intimacy counseling for people with cancer.

It's important to know that some cancer treatments may affect your ability to have biological children. If you are worried about this, it's best to voice your concerns to your oncologist before treatment begins.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- American Cancer Society: How Cancer Can Affect Sex and Intimacy  
<https://www.cancer.org/cancer/managing-cancer/side-effects/fertility-and-sexual-side-effects/how-cancer-affects-sexuality.html>
- American Cancer Society: Body Image and Sexuality After Breast Cancer  
<https://www.cancer.org/cancer/types/breast-cancer/living-as-a-breast-cancer-survivor/body-image-and-sexuality-after-breast-cancer.html>
- American Cancer Society: Fertility Problems  
<https://www.cancer.org/cancer/managing-cancer/side-effects/fertility.html>
- American Cancer Society: Pregnancy After Breast Cancer  
<https://www.cancer.org/cancer/types/breast-cancer/living-as-a-breast-cancer-survivor/pregnancy-after-breast-cancer.html>
- American Cancer Society: Sexual Side Effects  
<https://www.cancer.org/cancer/managing-cancer/side-effects/sexual-side-effects.html>
- National Cancer Institute: Sexual Health Issues in Women with Cancer  
<https://www.cancer.gov/about-cancer/treatment/side-effects/sexuality-women>
- U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Common Sexual Health Problems Among Cancer Survivors  
<https://www.cdc.gov/cancer-survivors/healthy-living-guides/common-sexual-health-problems.html>

