

Intimacy and Sexuality After Breast Cancer

Breast cancer can be scary and stressful. It can change your life and your body. We are here to help you.

The symptoms you may be having can lead to changes in intimacy and sexuality. These may include:

- Feeling tired
- Nausea
- Pain
- Numbness
- Tingling
- Swelling
- Vaginal dryness

These changes depend on your treatment, which may last up to a year. You may need more medicine to lower the risk of cancer coming back. Treatments and medicines may have side effects. These may include:

- Changes in sexual interest.
- Harder to get aroused and have an orgasm.
- Pain with sex.
- Worries about appearance after treatment.

Carbone Cancer Center Resources **Lori Seaborne, MPAS, PA-C**

She works in the UW Health Breast Center. She is certified as a sexual counselor. She can talk with you and answer questions about your sexual concerns after breast cancer. She will help you find the right resources and the best care. To schedule a visit call **(608) 266-6400**.

Women's Integrative Sexual Health (WISH) Program

This offers a personal approach. You may have a physical exam as part of your care. Several female providers meet with patients to discuss specific concerns and offer recommendations. They also work with your pelvic floor physical therapists and sex therapists. They help you find resources to address your concerns. Contact your cancer doctor if interested.

There are other resources in the library at the Breast Center at UW Hospital—They have free brochures and books you can check out. You may also find books at a public library.

Brochures and Books

- **Intimacy and Sexuality** from Living Beyond Breast Cancer
- **Sexuality for the Woman with Cancer** from the American Cancer Society
- **Intimacy After Cancer: A Woman's Guide** by Sally Kydd and Dana Rowett
- **No Less A Woman: Femininity, Sexuality, and Breast Cancer** by Deborah Hobler Kahane, MSW
- **Woman, Cancer, Sex** by Anne Katz, RN, PhD

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person's health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright © 11/2023 University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#7759