

## Tips

### Psycho-oncology support

It may be that the psychological stress of the cancer cannot be managed without specialist help (urologists, gynaecologists). Psycho-oncologists can give you and your family additional support in processing the disease with counselling sessions. Ask your treatment team for a recommendation.

### Information on how to behave during and after chemotherapy

In some chemotherapies, the active substance remains in body fluids such as sperm or vaginal secretion for quite a long time. Ask your oncologist how long this will be. Protect your partner from direct contact with these fluids, for example with a condom.

Contraceptive measures are recommended. Ask your oncologist about these.

### Further information on this topic

- **«Sex, Intimacy and Cancer»** (Cancer Council Australia, 2022) – Comprehensive guide addressing how cancer and its treatments can affect sexuality and intimacy, offering advice on managing changes and maintaining relationships
- **«Body Image and Cancer»** (MacMillan Cancer Support, 2025) – Comprehensive guide addressing the emotional impact of visible changes due to cancer treatment and offering practical advice on managing these changes and maintaining self-esteem

## Changes in your sex life

### Good to know

The cancer and its treatment may also have an influence on your sex life. Pay attention to your needs, some of which are new, and to your body, and give yourself time.




You may possibly find that you become more embarrassed because of changes to your appearance. Working through this and coming to terms with it requires patience, conversations, and sometimes also support from those close to you or professionals.

Your partner will also be affected by the disease and its consequences. It is therefore extremely important that you are able to talk about your emotional and physical needs within the relationship.

Have confidence that you will find new ways of experiencing intimacy and sexual fulfilment.



## Changes in your sex life

| You feel...  | Or you notice...   | What you can do for yourself...   |
|--|--|---|
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mild changes</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The treatment could impair your fertility. Discuss any questions you have about fertility and contraception with the doctor. You will find further tips on this topic on the last page.</li> <li>Try to improve your body image, for example through more exercise, massages or sport.</li> <li>Talk to your partner; explore new ways of connecting.</li> </ul>   |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dry mucous membranes, absence of an erection</li> <li>The change in your appearance caused by hair loss, surgery or a change in your weight bothers you.</li> <li>You have lost confidence, because you no longer feel attractive or "up to it" when you have sexual relations.</li> <li>Marked decline in sexual desire</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use lubricants if your mucous membranes are dry.</li> <li>Take your loss of confidence seriously and bring it up in conversations with people close to you or suitable professionals.</li> <li>Discuss any questions you have about the change in your sexuality with the treatment team. Don't forget to mention any symptoms such as pain, nausea or fatigue.</li> <li>Plan sexual activity for a time when your experience shows you will have the fewest symptoms.</li> <li>Don't be afraid to ask for professional help.</li> </ul> |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Repeated, unexplained pain during sex</li> <li>Strong feelings of sadness or anger</li> <li>You are completely at a loss</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contact the treatment team.</li> </ul>   |