



Lung Cancer and Sexual Health

What is sexual health?

Sexual health is your desire and ability to express yourself sexually. It includes your thoughts, feelings, and actions about sex and is a key part of your sense of self, well-being, and overall health.

How can lung cancer affect your sexual health?

Lung cancer and its treatments can sometimes cause physical and emotional effects that can impact sexual health. Common examples of these effects include:

- Shortness of breath
- Pain
- Change in body image
- Decreased sex drive
- Other side effects from treatment

Why is your sexual health important?

Being sexually healthy is an important part of your **overall health**.

People with lung cancer who receive treatment for sexual health issues report better **quality of life**.

Studies show that being sexually healthy can improve your **connection** with a partner, **ease suffering**, and improve your **sense of well-being**.

If you or your partner has noticed a change in your sexual health and have questions or concerns, take the next step. Talk to a member of your care team.

What can you do to improve your sexual health?

Talk to your healthcare team. There are often simple treatments for sexual health concerns. Examples include:

- Special exercises
- Change of sexual positions
- Medicines
- Lubricants
- Physical therapy
- Counseling

How to talk to your care team about sexual health:

Some sexual health issues become long-term if they are not addressed. Talking to your care team about your sexual health concerns can often bring simple solutions.

- Be direct and open about your sexual health concerns.
 - “I’ve read that sexual health issues are common in people with lung can. I’d like to talk a little bit about this.”
 - “My sex drive has decreased. Can we talk about this?”
- Think about ways to make talking easiest for yourself. You may want to talk one-on-one or have someone with you.
- Choose a time when you don’t feel rushed.
- Schedule a visit with the healthcare team member you find most approachable.

Next Steps

Talk about your sexual health concerns.

Learn about your treatment options.

Share in decisions about your treatment.



Questions? Email us at support@go2.org or call our HelpLine at 1-800-298-2436.

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