

INTIMACY CHALLENGED BY SURGERY, RADIATION, OR ADT

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Intimacy is an important relationship between couples that can be challenged as an effect following surgery, radiation, or when a man's prostate cancer has escalated to the necessity of androgen deprivation therapy (ADT) in order to survive.

It is extremely important that both patient and wife/partner receive appropriate counseling so that both understand what occurs following surgery, radiation, or with the administration of androgen deprivation therapy when an LHRH agonist must be included in androgen deprivation treatment. Trauma to neurovascular bundles from surgery or radiation often takes many months to recover. And for men requiring the necessity of androgen deprivation therapy – the shutting down of testosterone production in order to remove the fuel that stimulates prostate cancer cell growth – this treatment has a dramatic effect on blocking mind/sexual stimulation. All such effects are medical occurrences that, following surgery or radiation, requires recognizing therapies that may resolve erectile issues in a shorter time frame, or with ADT having an effect a man has little ability to control. Thus the importance that both parties recognize this will occur and work together in discussing the emotions they each are experiencing in order to work together to overcome and resolve the cause of those emotions. Intimacy can still be experienced despite the loss of erectile capability. Both must better communicate, and in that communicating keep in mind that wrong inflections or tone can be misinterpreted and bring about stress and misunderstanding.

Both men and women need to recognize these very troublesome side effects that come from treatment side effects or the medications required to sustain life so that together they can research and study how to go about continuing being able to love and be loved and enjoy the intimacy that can come from a caring and loving relationship. A loving relationship does not have to hedge around being able to have sexual intercourse. True love is the result of comfortable “intimacy” between two persons; the ability to show concern and care for the feelings of the other, to continue the “look,” the caress, the hug, the kiss, the holding hands, and to be willing to open up exchanges of emotional feelings in order to recognize and understand the needs of the other.

Please take the important time to read through this paper regarding erectile dysfunction at <http://tinyurl.com/cy2wds>. In that paper are several suggestions for consideration, but read on through to make note of what some have done to keep the relationship “loving” and “intimate” despite erectile dysfunction. It certainly

takes “work” and absolute “concern” to keep a relationship close and caring with acts of intimacy. Please consider obtaining an excellent book, "Intimacy With Impotence – The Couple’s Guide to Better Sex After Prostate Disease” authored by Ralph and Barbara Alterowitz, certified sexual therapists. This book can be purchased at www.renewintimacy.org.”

I hope this helps for a continuing healthy, caring, and loving relationship.