

Sexuality and Fertility

Information for Patients on Cancer Treatment

Your cancer treatments may temporarily or permanently affect your fertility. Some drugs can slow or stop sperm production. They may stop the ovaries from releasing eggs, meaning that if you used to get periods, you may have irregular ones, or not have them, while on cancer treatment.

Many people can get pregnant or get someone pregnant after their cancer treatment. The best time to plan this is before starting your cancer treatment. Ask your doctor to refer you to a fertility specialist if this is important to you.

You may experience changes with sex and intimacy after starting cancer treatment. Practice safe sex by:

- Wearing a condom during sex until 7 days after your last treatment
- Using birth control if there is a chance you or your partner could get pregnant

Some people experience hot flashes, vaginal dryness, or low sex drive that impact their sexual activities. To manage:

- **Hot flashes:** Wear cool layers, avoid hot drinks, and breathe deeply and slowly during a hot flash
- **Vaginal dryness:** Use vaginal moisturizers every few days or lubricants before sex. Avoid petroleum-based products, hand/body lotions, or massage oils
- **Low sex drive:** Plan sex when you feel less sick and speak to a sexual health specialist