

# Sexual and Fertility Changes in Men



“I talked with my doctor before treatment. I told him I would like to have children one day. I’m glad I learned about my choices before treatment started.”

**Always use a condom when you have sex, because some chemotherapy may be in your semen.**

## Ask what changes you may have.

Talk with your doctor or nurse **before treatment starts** to learn what sexual changes or changes to your fertility you may have.

The changes you may have depend on the kind of chemotherapy you’ll be getting and the type of cancer you have. Your age and other health issues are also important.

## Questions from men about sexual problems:

### What sexual problems might I have?

- It may be difficult to get or keep an erection. This is called “impotence.”
- You may not be able to have an orgasm.
- You may feel too tired or stressed to have sex.

Talk with your doctor or nurse to learn how to manage these changes. Ask how they can be treated and how long these problems may last.





### How can I get help to cope?

Talk about your feelings and concerns with your partner. Find new ways to show love and be close. It may also help to talk with a doctor, nurse, social worker, counselor, or people in a support group.

### Is it okay to have sex?

Ask your doctor or nurse if it is okay for you to have sex during treatment. Most men can have sex, but you will want to talk with your doctor first.

### Do I need to use a condom?

**Yes**, you need to use a condom each time you have sex. Use a condom even if your partner is on birth control or cannot have children. This is because some chemotherapy may be in your semen.

### Questions from men about changes in fertility:

#### Will I be able to have children?

If you would like to have children after treatment, talk with your doctor **before you start treatment**. Your doctor or nurse can talk with you about your choices and refer you to a fertility specialist.

**Chemotherapy can damage sperm and cause birth defects. To make sure your partner does not get pregnant, use a condom. Your partner may also need to use birth control.**

**Talk with your doctor or nurse to learn about special instructions to follow.**

### Questions to ask your doctor or nurse:

1. What problems should I call you about?
2. What can help with sexual problems?
3. Can you give me the name of a social worker or counselor who I can talk with?
4. What method of birth control would you suggest that my partner use?
5. What can I do now if I would like to have children in the future?
6. Can you give me the name of a fertility specialist who I can talk with to learn more?
7. After treatment is over, how long do I need to keep using a condom? How long does my partner need to stay on birth control?

#### FREE SERVICES TO LEARN MORE

##### National Cancer Institute Cancer Information Service

**Phone:** 1-800-4-CANCER (1-800-422-6237)  
**TTY:** 1-800-332-8615  
**Online:** [www.cancer.gov](http://www.cancer.gov)  
**Chat Online:** [www.cancer.gov/help](http://www.cancer.gov/help)



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