

“Conversation Starter” Suggestions for you and your partner:

- We haven't been cuddling or holding hands lately. Can we talk about that?
- Let's hug, it's been a while?
- I feel unsure about our physical relationship, are you as well?
- Do you ever worry about hurting me so you avoid sex altogether?
- This is a difficult time for both of us, but I love you just as much now as I ever have. What can we do together to help us feel better and closer?
- Would it be beneficial for both of us to talk to our helping professionals together about our physical relationship?
- We may have had our problems in the past but would you like to make our physical relationship (communication) better for the future?
- I don't always know when, where or how to touch you to make you feel good. Maybe if we talk about it and you show me what you like, then I'll be less nervous.
- Is it possible that you worry about “catching” cancer from me, even just a little? We could talk to my doctor about this or do some online research for accurate information.

“Conversation Starter” Suggestions for you and your doctor:

- I feel uncomfortable talking about sex but I need to know if and how my cancer and treatment might affect my sexuality.
- Will my type of cancer/treatment affect my fertility?
- Is it safe for me to have sex now? If not, when will it be safe to do so?
- Do I need to use contraception during treatment and how long afterward?
- I've noticed that my body responds differently when I'm being sexual. Is that typical? Will I go back to my normal responses?
- Are my sexual changes short term or possibly permanent?

- I feel tired all of the time and it's affecting my interest and willingness to engage in sexual activities. Is there anything I can do to help this problem?
- Will radiation or chemo affect my partner in any way?
- I feel embarrassed about how my body looks now. Are there cosmetic or reconstructive surgeries that could help me?
- I've heard about medications, herbs, foods or other approaches to help with improving sexual interest or performance. Is it safe for me to try them?
- My partner and I are worried about (him or her) catching my cancer or getting sick from chemo or radiation. Is this a realistic concern?