

Cancer Answers

Volume 3 Number 10
June 2010
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Cancer and Your Love Life

This month I want to share some things that enhanced my husband and my love life following my first mastectomy. It wasn't that we were so smart. We actually stumbled onto some of them. For those of you who have experienced, or will experience, a single or double mastectomy, a complete hysterectomy or any other surgery that is involved in the act of lovemaking, I trust you will find encouragement and help.

...your body has changed permanently...the body your husband has fondled and adored is not the same. Because of that - your love life cannot be the same. Both physical challenges, and changes, along with emotional challenges need to be faced.

What can you do to help your new love life be as good or better than it was before? First, be open about what has changed. Your husband may find that although he is very accepting of your new body, scars and other physical differences hinder him from totally engaging you visually. This is natural and you should not be disappointed, frustrated or depressed if this is the case. Just think how **you** react to your new body when you look in the mirror. He needs time to adjust to your new body the same as you. Try wearing a skimpy outfit that covers your surgical area and choose instead to "wow" him with other physical assets.

Talk about what is still a "turn-on" and what hurts or is uncomfortable. He will be grateful that he does not have to guess and possibly make the wrong choice or choices. You will have to experiment with potential new "turn-on's" for both of you.

Tease, laugh and tickle each other. Have fun together! At a time when life is quite serious - learn to laugh with, and at, each other. My husband is quite the tease, but when I was diagnosed with cancer he said life had become too serious; he was no longer going to tease me. One day during my cancer journey following my first mastectomy, when I was feeling particularly awful from the chemotherapy, he came home from work to find me laying on the couch. I was bemoaning how terrible I felt and as he hugged me he commented, "I know what you are suffering from..."mono-nippleosis"! My first reaction was to smack him and then I realized how very creative and spot-on his comment was. We laughed and laughed...and I realized he was beginning to heal emotionally. He had begun teasing again.

I have another story to relate...but space does not permit...suffice to say that shortly after my cancer journey began we decided to purchase a new bedroom set. This purchase had much greater impact than we ever imagined. We had a new bedroom for a new love life. It was the best "accidental" decision we made. If you cannot afford new furniture, change the bedspread, purchase new throw pillows, buy some new pictures, and have the room painted room a great new color. It will be a very important part of making your love life a new experience in a new environment. Love-making can be even more wonderful after cancer. It's a chance to start over fresh!

POEM and Thoughts

Hope

Hope is a candle in the night
hope is a long respite

Hope is a feather...
once lifted, it'll only get higher

Hope is an oasis in a desert
hope is a diamond in the dirt

Hope is everywhere
yet hope is scarcely there

Hope is the dream of better days
hope is the passion ablaze

Hope is beautiful
and hope is tranquil

Hope is there for everyone
it is an asset that ALL has in abundance
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June is a month of warm summer days, romance, children playing and flowers. There may be no signs of warmth, life and joy in YOUR June...but there can be hope for a better tomorrow, next month and next year.

True hope comes from knowing that the wonderful, loving God who made you - cares about you. We, as humans are often very quick to blame God for the things that go wrong in our lives, but have you stopped lately to thank God for the things that are going right? Even if they are small things - they bring hope and joy.

Please contact me for prayer, encouragement, or information on how to know the God of the universe in more intimately.