Sexuality and Cancer: Conversation Comfort Zone


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ABSTRACT

Shortly before his death in 1995, Kenneth B. Schwartz, a cancer patient at Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH), founded The Kenneth B. Schwartz Center at MGH. The Schwartz Center is a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting and advancing compassionate health care delivery, which provides hope to the patient, support to caregivers, and encourages the healing process. The center sponsors the Schwartz Center Rounds, a monthly multidisciplinary forum where caregivers reflect on important psychosocial issues faced by patients, their families, and their caregivers, and gain insight and support from fellow staff members.

Psychosocial issues profoundly affect patients with cancer. Of the many complexities that make up the psychosocial dynamic, perhaps the medical profession is most uncomfortable with sexuality. Many elements of sexual behavior remain high-profile taboos. A number of diseases and treatments significantly affect sexual function. Male and female sexuality were discussed in two separate rounds with an emphasis on how to begin a dialogue about sexuality without jeopardizing other aspects of the relationship with patients. Three cases were presented. A patient with prostate cancer considering treatment options for early-stage disease and two patients with gynecologic malignancies; one with a colostomy following cytoreductive surgery for ovarian cancer and the other with a failed vaginal reconstruction for recurrent squamous cell carcinoma of the vagina. Staff discussed the wide diversity of response to sexual dysfunction and the difficulties that patients face. A sensitive and informed approach to discussing sexuality can provide effective support. The elements of successful dialogue are presented in the PLISSIT model.
Aries and Cancer sexual compatibility... Cancer cannot have sex without emotion whereas Aries will hump a good looking chair – there in lies the problem. Cancers ruling planet – the moon represents family and parenting. Crabs are sensual, giving creatures that often align sex with procreation and and nurturing. Sometimes they turn quite asexual because finding “the one” just seems too evasive. Aries needs to be patient and willing to wait – a hard feat for the ram but if they open up to Cancer emotionally, build trust and don’t choke on that “commitment” word – they will be rewarded with a beauty. Purpose Cancer survivors’ needs around sexual concerns are often unmet. The primary objective of this systematic review was to examine the prevalence of and factors associated with patient-provider... Sex comfort zone. Oncologist. 2000;5:336–44.CrossRefPubMedGoogle Scholar. 25. Stead ML, Brown JM, Fallowfield L, Selby P. Lack of communication between healthcare professionals and women with ovarian cancer about sexual issues. Br J Cancer. 2003;88:666–71.CrossRefPubMedPubMedCentralGoogle Scholar.