



Meeting of the Waters – 22/7/2017

When cancer joins you in the bedroom.....sexuality and intimacy

Gay Corbett
Prostate Cancer Specialist nurse

Continence Nurses Society Australia Vic Tas (CoNSAVT)
Victorian Urological Nurses Society (VUNS)



Why?



- Required by the men and partners
- No service in the region
- Limited resources
- Limited skill/knowledge of cancer impact
- Embarrassed



DeSouza institute

- Sexual Health & Cancer – male & female
- Canadian course – CAD \$349
- 7 week online course – 0400hrs!!!
- Online discussion – PLISSIT model
- 2 reflective pieces
- Weekly discussion forum



PLISSIT model

- Permission – obtained by practitioner to discuss sensitive issues
- Limited Information - provided to the patient
- Specific Suggestions are made as trust develops
- Intensive Therapy – referral to specialist – psychologist, sexual therapist

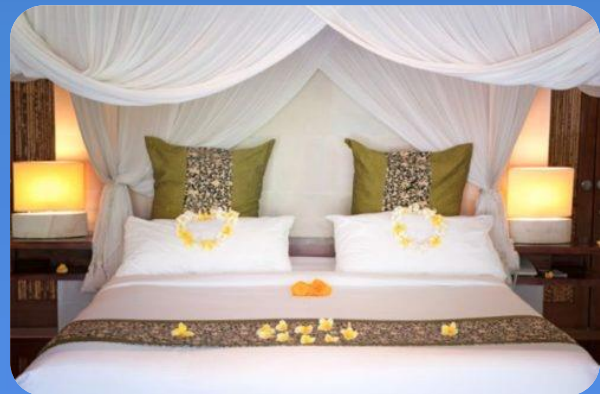


When cancer joins you in the bedroom

- 90 minute session
- Advertised through Wellness Centre in cancer centre
- Referral from MDT
- Encourage partners to attend

Going home to an empty bed
isn't what I want. I want to
curl up next to you and feel
your warmth besides me.

- me



WHO Definition of Sexuality

“Sexuality is a central aspect of being human throughout life and encompasses sex, gender identities and roles, sexual orientation, eroticism, pleasure, intimacy and reproduction. ”

(WHO, 2002)

Sexuality is more than just sex

It's the essence of who we are, how we relate to others, and how we think, feel, act and express ourselves emotionally, physically and spirituality. It is shaped by the social, political, religious, economic, and cultural climate in which we live



Sex is something you do. Sexuality is
something you are.

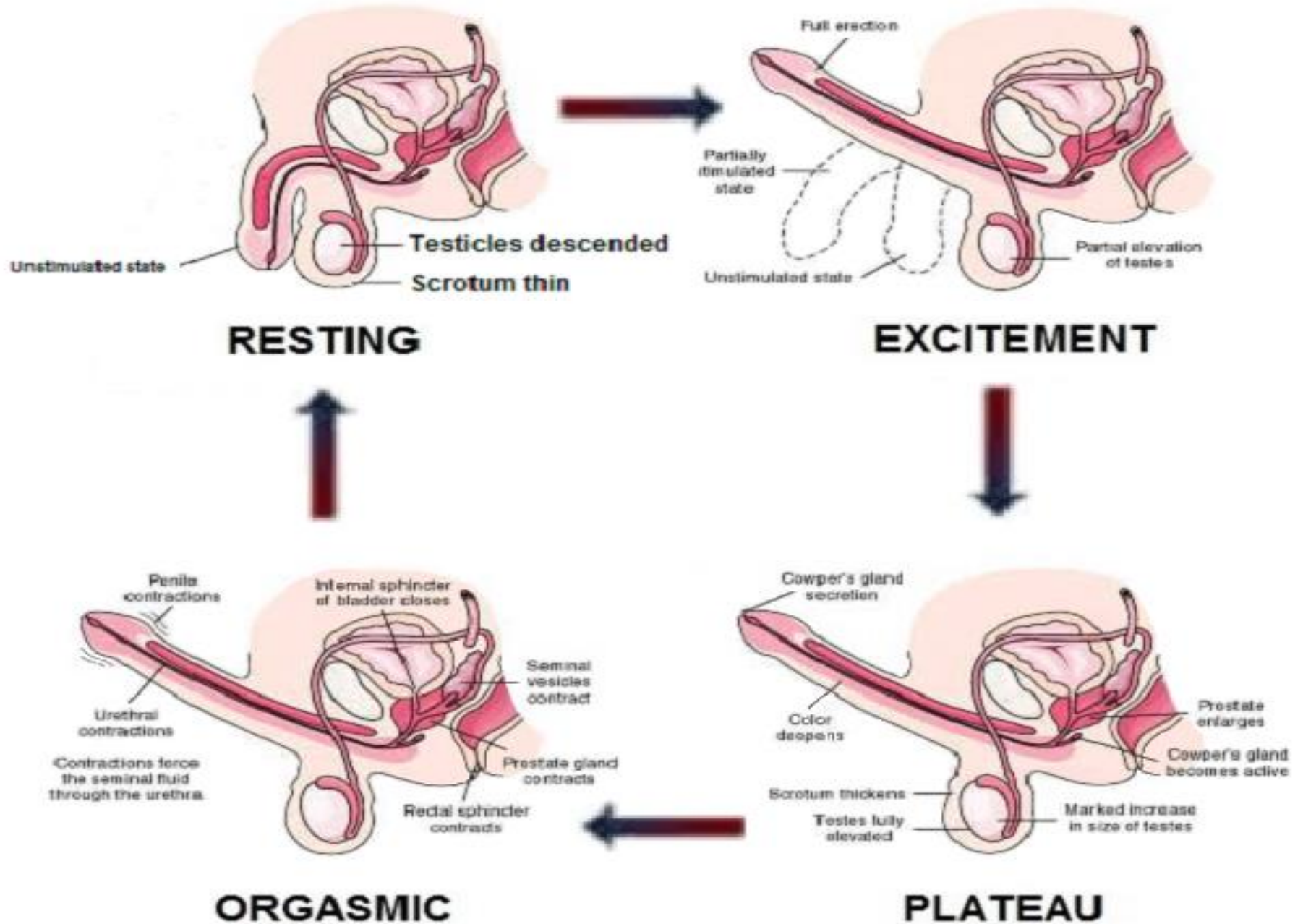
— Anna Freud —

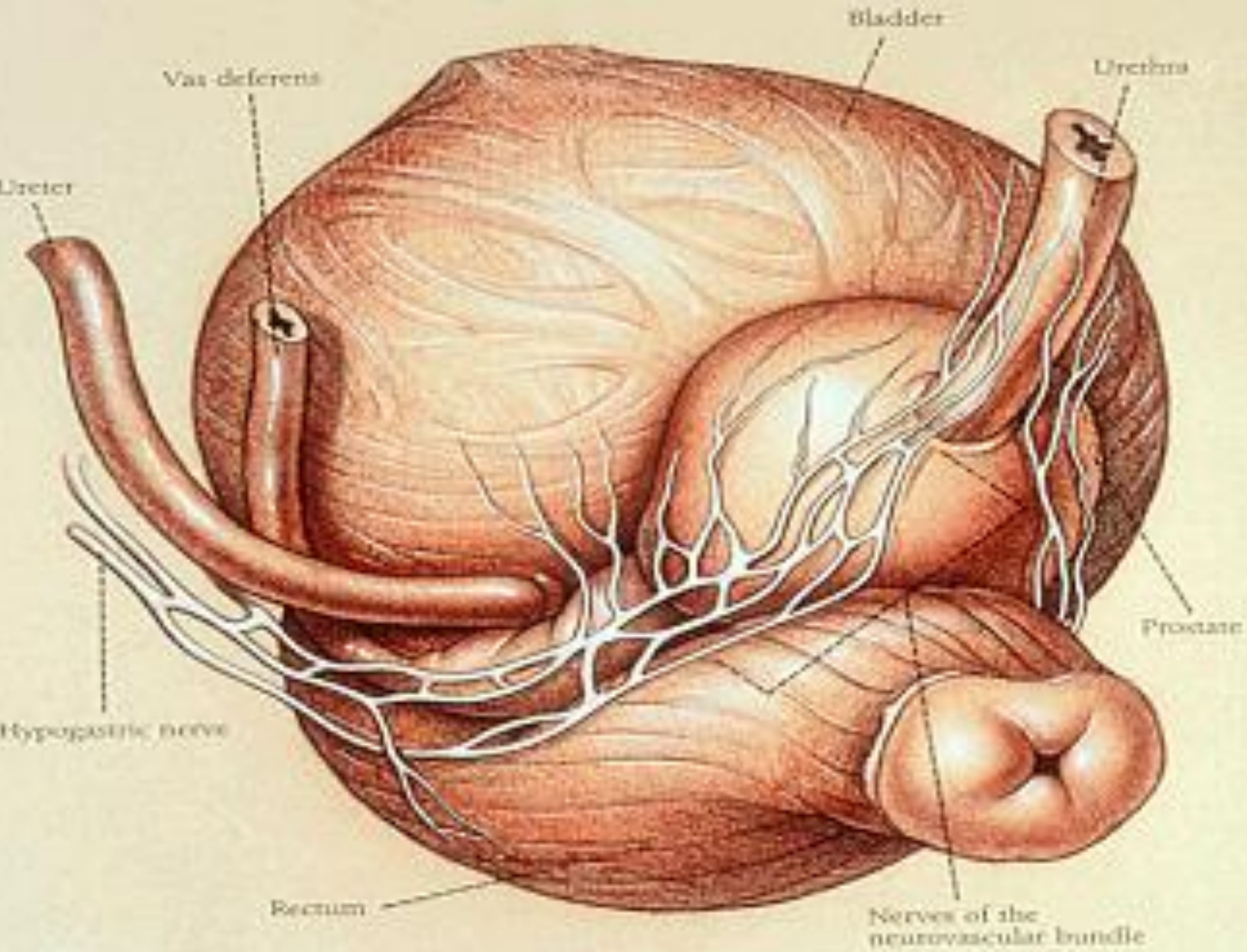
AZ QUOTES

Sexual response cycle

Stage	Response	Male	Female
Desire	Swelling	Visual stimuli	Touch /Verbal stimuli
Arousal	Vasocongestion Increased breathing & heart rate	Erection	Lubrication
Plateau	Spasms, muscle tension	Full erection	Full vasocongestion
Orgasm	Heightened pleasure, release sexual tension	Ejaculation	Contraction of lower uterus
Resolution	Body returns to pre orgasmic state	Loss of erection	Loss of congestion

The Male Sexual Response Cycle





What cancer can do!

- Disrupt the desire and arousal phase
- Erectile dysfunction, lack of libido
- Reduce size of penis
- Fatigue
- Dry ejaculations
- Negative effect on body image and sexual perception



Benefits of sexuality with cancer

- Sexuality and intimacy can lessen emotional distress
- Improve psychosocial adjustment in the face of cancer
- Physical pleasure can relieve stress
- Pleasure can be life affirming in the face of cancer
- Nourish relationships

(Park, Norris, Bober 2009)

Treatments

Dependent on the objective

- Penetrative sex
- Orgasm
- Masturbation
- Body image
- Intimacy



Reframing sex

‘Real sex’(normal sex) is often defined as penis vagina intercourse

Even when sex is acknowledged to be more than just intercourse involving activities such as oral sex or mutual masturbation, coital penetration is positioned as the inevitable outcome

Renegotiating sex and intimacy after cancer: resisting the coital imperative.

Ussher. JM Perz, J Gilbert, E Wong WK Hobbs K (2012)



The penis is like the
sun and when the
sun is out its hard
to see the moon
and the stars



Sexual renegotiation

Embracing intimacy and building trust

- Cuddling
- Kissing
- Nongenital touching
- Massage
- Spending time together
- Caring
- Talking



IT'S NOT ALWAYS
ABOUT SEX, SOMETIMES
THE BEST TYPE OF
INTIMACY IS WHERE YOU
JUST LAY BACK, LAUGH
TOGETHER AT THE
STUPIDEST THINGS,
HOLD EACH OTHER, AND
ENJOY EACH OTHERS'
COMPANY.

VIAGRA®
(sildenafil citrate) tablets

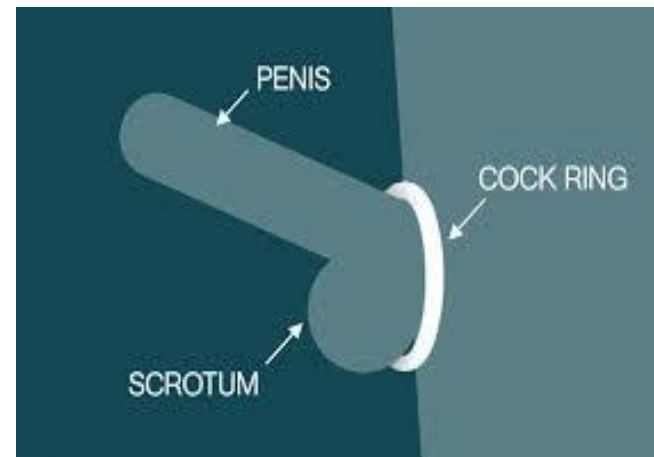
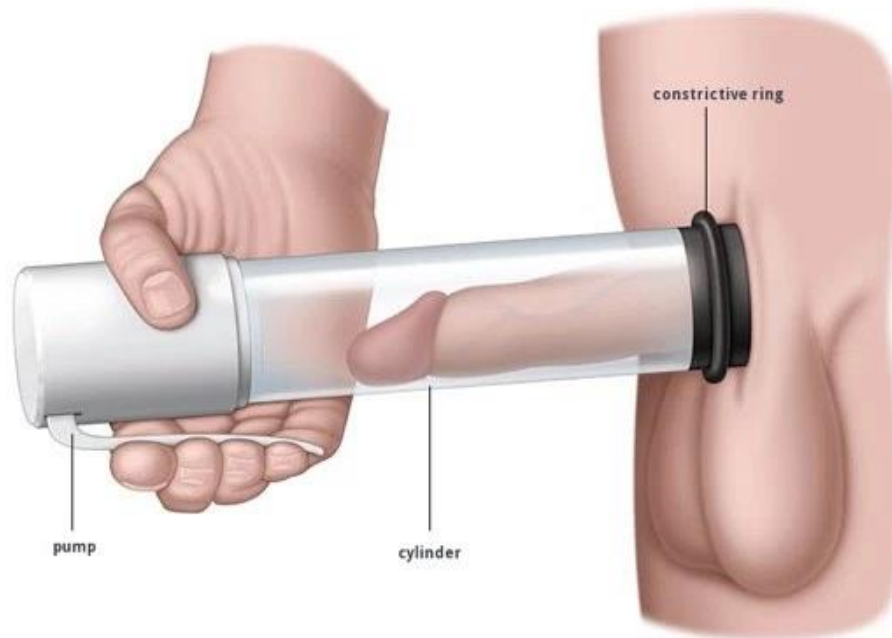


Treatments

- Take after light meal
- Need stimulation
- Try several times with self
- Need some erectile function to work
- Not an option if cardiac issues

Treatments

Vacuum device



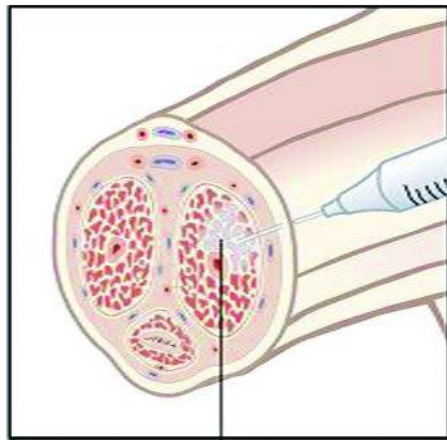
Treatments

Sex toys

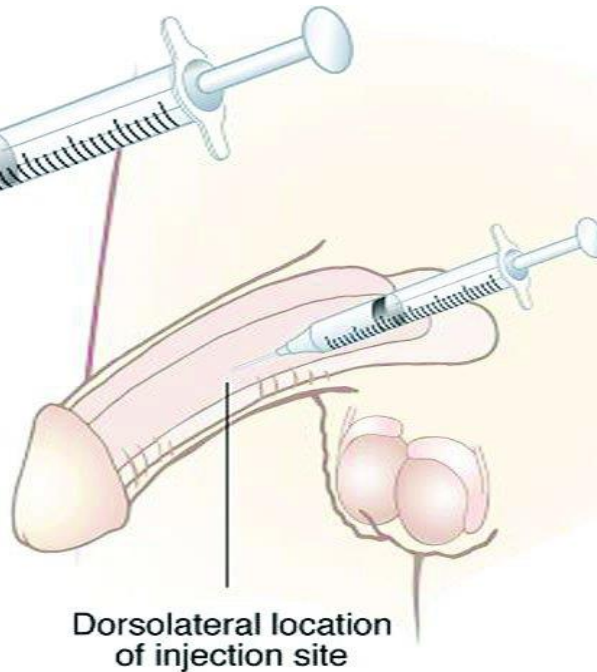


Treatments

Intracavernosal injections



Vasoactive substance is injected into the corpus cavernosum

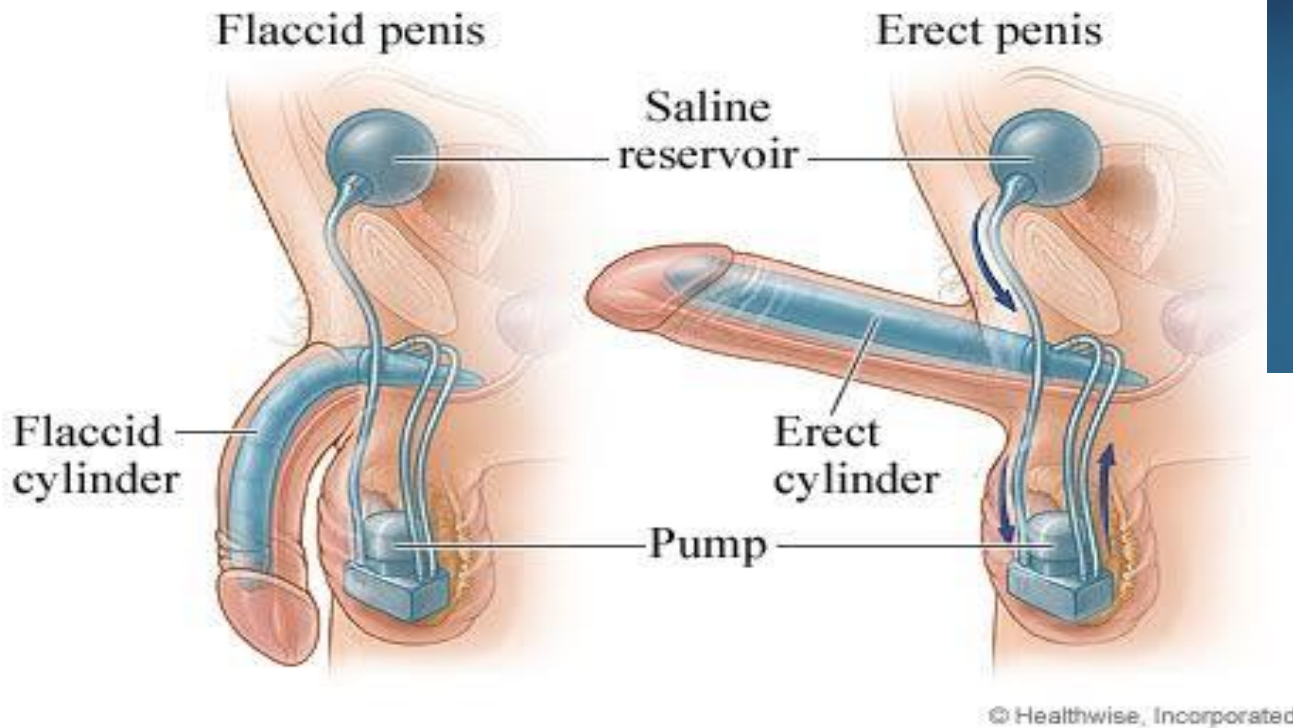


Dorsolateral location of injection site



Treatments

Penile prosthesis



Response

- Feel like a failure
- Partner will leave me
- No longer feel like a man
- Feel depressed
- Is this normal?
- I feel guilty for thinking about sex and I should be grateful I'm alive



Myths

- Men don't talk
- Older people don't have sex
- Can't have an orgasm without an erection
- Communication isn't affected by lack of intimacy
- Sex is finished when erectile dysfunction occurs



What nurses can do

Nurses can help cancer survivors adjust to sexual changes by

- initiating a discussion of sexuality at the time of diagnosis and throughout the trajectory of disease
- know where to refer men to for management
- discuss treatment goals – what do they want?
- link into support groups

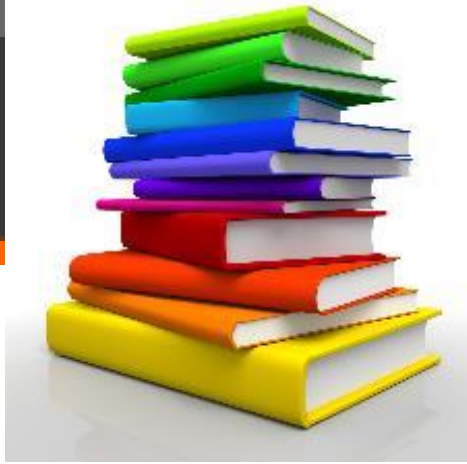
The conversation between
your fingers and someone
else's skin. This is the
most important discussion
you can ever have.

~ Iain Thomas



iloveinylar.com

References



- Renegotiating sex and intimacy after cancer: resisting the coital imperative. *Ussher, JM. Perz, J. Gilbert, E. Wong, WK. Hobbs, K. (2012)*
- Sexual health communication during cancer care: barriers and recommendations *Park, ER. Norris, RL. Bober, SL. (2009)*
- Sexuality: A quality of life issue for cancer survivors. *Seminars in Oncology Nursing, 24(2), 71-79. Tierney, DK (2008)*