



Getting back into life:

Your sexual relationship

Stroke can change your body and how you feel about yourself. This affects your sexuality. It will take time to adjust to these changes. For some time you may have less interest in sex. As you recover, sexual feelings and your desire for sex will gradually return.

Most stroke survivors can resume a healthy sex life. As you resume your sexual relationship, communication with your partner is important. Talk openly about how the stroke has affected both of you. Share your feelings. Discuss what sexual activity would be comfortable for you.

Open communication can help you and your partner overcome challenges and enjoy a loving, fulfilling relationship.

If you are not ready for sex, you may simply enjoy being close to your partner. You can be intimate with touching, kissing and hugging.

Your sexual relationship may be different that it was before your stroke, but it's not over. Give yourself time to discover what works best for you as a couple.



Questions about sexuality

- When is it safe to have sex again?
- I have weakness on one side, will I be able to have sex again?
- I am unable to have intercourse, how can I be intimate again?
- I am unable to speak after my stroke, how can I express my feelings?
- Who can I talk to about having sex after my stroke?
- Can I use medications to help get an erection?



Resources about sexuality

GENERAL INFORMATION

- **Let's Talk About Stroke,**
a guide developed by the Heart and Stroke Foundation, pages 52-53
www.heartandstroke.com/atf/cf/%7B99452D8B-E7F1-4BD6-A57D-B136CE6C95BF%7D/Lets-talk-about-stroke-en.pdf
- **Heart and Stroke Foundation**
www.heartandstroke.on.ca/site/c.pvI3leNWJwE/b.5506007/k.74DB/Stroke_Relationships.htm
- **StrokEngine**
provides information on stroke-related topics, including sexuality, from quality articles, websites and systematic reviews.
www.strokengine.ca/index.php?page=topic&id=34
- **Stroke Foundation of New Zealand**
has published a booklet titled "Intimacy After Stroke". You can access it online at www.stroke.org.nz/resources/Sexuality-Booklet.pdf

- **Stroke SA**
is an Australian support group established to provide support and information for people who have experienced a stroke. You can access an article titled “Sexuality Following Stroke” on their website www.stroke.org.au/pdf/Stroke5.pdf
- **Sexual Health Network**
www.sexualhealth.com/channel/view/disability-illness
- **Sexuality and Information Council of the United States**
www.siecus.org

COUNSELLING

- **American Association of Sexuality Educators, Counsellors and Therapists**
www.aasect.org
- **Sue McGarvie, Sex Therapist**
www.sexwithsue.com

SPECIAL EQUIPMENT

- **IntimateRider**
is a small swing chair especially designed to offer a natural gliding motion that will improve sexual mobility. www.intimaterider.com