

Sex and Aging

Judging by magazines and TV, doesn't it seem that only young people have sex? Well, you know better. As you grow older, your sex life may change. But that doesn't mean it has to end.

Why talk about sex?

Talking with your partner can make your relationship and sex life better. And talking to your doctor about your sexual activity matters. It's the only way your doctor can

help with health problems related to your sex life. Talking about sex may feel awkward. Try writing down questions or worries you have. This can help you get started.

Talk to your partner:

Talking is the first step towards solving a problem. You may want to talk about:

- What you do and don't enjoy
- How to work around a physical problem
- Ways to be intimate other than sex
- Whether to get medical care or not
- How condoms can protect you and your partner from STDs



Adapted from KRAMES

Your health can affect your sex life

Age can sometimes bring health problems. Be open and honest with your doctor about any problems you're having. These are some things that can cause changes that can affect your sex life:

- Heart disease
- Diabetes (high blood sugar)
- Stroke
- Cancer
- Menopause
- Depression
- Arthritis
- Some medicines

Your doctor may be able to help if you:

- Have pain during sex
- Have vaginal dryness
- Can't have an erection
- Can't have an orgasm
- Have developed a sexual problem after starting to take a new medicine
- Have a physical problem that prevents you from enjoying sex
- Have no interest in sex

Talk to your CHN doctor or social worker if you are having any of these issues.

There are many things your doctor can give you to help. Like give you lube or estrogen for vaginal dryness and medicines for trouble getting an erection. Counseling can also help with other worries.

Getting back in the dating game:

It's common for older people to find themselves single again. If the last time you dated was a long time ago, you may wonder if the rules have changed. When you were young, you may not have thought much about STIs (Sexually Transmitted Infections) or HIV/AIDS. It is important that you use condoms and get tested for STIs. But some things haven't changed. As always, you decide what you will and won't do.