

Between the Sheets...

April 2021

This column provides the platform for experts in the field to help men and women by providing answers to questions about sexual health and intimacy challenges that can result from prostate cancer treatment.

This column was compiled with the help of Dr. Anne Katz, Certified Sexuality Counselor and Clinical Nurse Specialist at CancerCare Manitoba. She has educated thousands of healthcare providers and cancer survivors about cancer, sexuality and survivorship. She is an avid blogger for ASCO Connections and the author of 14 books on the topics of illness, sexuality and cancer survivorship. (www.drannekatz.com)

QUESTION FROM PROSTATE CANCER SURVIVOR:

My urologist has recommended that I use an injection in my penis to get erections because nothing else has worked. I am really not keen to do this – please help!

RESPONSE FROM DR. ANNE KATZ:

I have yet to meet a man who is excited about penile injections ... but they WORK! What I have found is that with good education, a demonstration, and test dose, most men find that (a) the injection itself is not terribly painful, and (b) the proof is in the pudding, so to speak, and with evidence of reward, using the injection gets easier over time.

Many men have no idea what this entails. I have been asked if the needle goes into the head of the penis (no, it goes into the side of the shaft) or into the opening of the urethra (once again no). There are videos available on the internet that show how this is done and this can be helpful, but I think that a good education session with a knowledgeable health care provider, who can answer questions and calm the nerves, is important. I also like the partner of the man to be present for the education session and test dose because they often find themselves involved, especially if the man has a big abdomen and can't see the "target!"

The important thing is not to feel pressured to do this, either by a medical practitioner or a partner. You have to get used to the idea and it may or may not be right for YOU.

Watch Dr. Katz's presentation on sexual health and intimacy from the Prostate Cancer Pathways for Patients and Caregivers event recorded at Englewood Health in Englewood, NJ on September 29, 2018 at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A2ZdDhw2WGY&t=8542s>.

Read previous issues of *Between the Sheets* at www.ustoo.org/BTS.

Do you have a question about sexual health or intimacy? If so, we invite you to send it to Us TOO. We'll select questions to feature in future *Between the Sheets* columns.

Please email your question to: ustooBTS@ustoo.org

Or mail your letter to:

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feature on sex and intimacy,
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