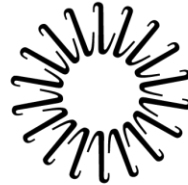


INTIMACY AND PULMONARY DISEASE



Lifespan Cardiovascular Institute

**Rhode Island Hospital • The Miriam Hospital
Newport Hospital**

Delivering health with care.®

**Center For Cardiac Fitness
Pulmonary Rehabilitation Program
The Miriam Hospital**

CONCERNS

- **COPD patients (women and men) report less frequent sexual activity.**
- **Low self-esteem may interfere with sex for men.**
- **Patients and doctors may be embarrassed to talk about sex.**

PHYSICAL EXERTION OF SEX

- **Climb 2 flights of stairs for healthier, younger males**
- **Sex =Mild to moderate physical activity**
- **Special Circumstances**
 - **New partners, positions**



IMPAIRED SEXUAL FUNCTIONING

- **Medication side effects**
 - Diuretics, BP meds, antiarrhythmics, anti-angina, cholesterol, antidepressants
- **Medical illness**
- **Depression**
- **Fear**
- **Body image concerns**

TREATMENTS

- **Medications (Viagra, Cialis, Levitra)**
 - Not for everyone!
- **Vacuum pump**
- **Suppositories, implants**
- **Moisturizers, lubricants (Replens, K-Y)**
- **Sex therapy, couples therapy, and/or psychotherapy**

TALKING WITH YOUR DOCTOR

- **Be assertive**
- **Introduce at beginning**
- **Ask other providers**



PARTNER'S FEARS

- **Normal reaction**
- **Communication**
- **Patience**



MAINTAINING INTIMACY

- **Talk about your feelings**
- **Participate in common activities**
- **Make alone time**
- **Use positions that require less energy.**
- **Have fun and don't put too much pressure on each other**

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- **Increase overall strength**
- **Healthy lifestyle**
- **Diabetes**
- **Intimacy– not just sex!**

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- **Ask your doctor if you may use your rescue inhaler prior to sexual activity.**
- **Use a well ventilated room.**
- **Plan to have sex at time of day when you have most energy.**
- **Avoid sex after heavy meal, excessive alcohol intake, or extreme temperatures.**

3 KEY POINTS

- **Seek information**
- **Communication**
- **Patience**