

## The WISH Clinic

This handout offers information on the Wellness, Intimacy and Sexual Health (WISH) Clinic. A gynecological or anal cancer and its treatments can cause emotional and physical changes affecting your sexual health (intimacy and sexual activity). This includes:

- Vaginal dryness, narrowing, or tightening
- Hot flashes and night sweats
- Low sexual desire
- Problems with arousal
- Problems with orgasm
- Painful intercourse
- Anxiety or fear related to sexual activity
- Changes or problems with intimacy
- Communication problems with partner
- Problems with body image

A nurse practitioner and a social worker from the WISH Clinic can offer information and support to help you manage these changes and improve your sexual health.

Appointments with a social worker focus on emotional changes affecting your sexual health. An appointment with the nurse practitioner is scheduled if you have physical symptoms.

### **Appointment with the social worker**

Your appointment with the social worker is scheduled as a telephone, video or in-person appointment at the cancer centre. This appointment is about 1½ to 2 hours in length. Have a list of your questions and concerns with you for this appointment. You may have 1 to 6 appointments with a social worker. This is decided by you and the social worker. Together, with the social worker you will talk about the emotional changes affecting your sexual health and make a plan to manage them.

### **Appointment with a nurse practitioner**

Your appointment with the nurse practitioner is scheduled as a telephone, video or in-person appointment at the cancer centre. You will only have 1 to 2 appointments with the nurse practitioner. During this appointment, the nurse practitioner works with you to make a plan to manage your physical symptoms.

If your appointment is scheduled as a video appointment, a clerk calls to give you instructions on how to join this video appointment. This appointment is about 1 hour in length.

If your appointment is scheduled as an in-person appointment, the nurse practitioner completes a physical (body) exam of your abdomen, pelvis and vaginal area.

How to prepare for your appointment with the nurse practitioner:

- Make a list of the physical symptoms or changes affecting your sexual health.
- Make a list of what you or your partner have tried to improve your sexual health. Include what has worked and what has not worked.
- Make a list of what you believe is causing the symptoms or changes affecting your sexual health.

Bring a list of the medications you are taking or your medication bottles or containers. We need to know the name of the medication, the dose, and how often you are taking it. This includes medications you do not have a prescription for (examples: antioxidants, Tylenol, Aspirin and vitamins).

Any information you share with the nurse practitioner and social worker remains confidential. Information is only shared with your healthcare team if needed to support your care and treatment.

How to schedule a WISH Clinic appointment:

- Ask a member of your healthcare team to refer you or
- Call 905-576-8711 extension 34641.

Call the clerk at 905-576-8711 extension 34641 if you need to cancel or change any WISH Clinic appointment.

Last reviewed: July 2024