

**Cancer and Sexuality – If “it” is adversely affected
Two new guidebooks providing information and help**

Cancer leaves traces, both in the body and the soul. Cancer and its treatment have an impact on many aspects of life. This can include sex life, which may be affected both “in your head” and physically. Young people affected by cancer also often worry whether they can later have children. Many patients and their partners find it hard to cope with such problems. However, people often feel ashamed to talk about these problems and even doctors rarely bring up the subject of sexuality of their own accord. The Cancer Information Service (Krebsinformationsdienst, KID) of the German Cancer Research Center (Deutsches Krebsforschungszentrum, DKFZ) has now addressed this taboo subject by publishing two brochures: one about female sexuality and another about male sexuality while and after being affected by cancer.

Studies suggest that many cancer patients are in need of support with sexual problems and wish to get advice and help. The uncovered need in this area manifests itself at the Cancer Information Service in a great demand for information material on cancer and sexuality. Therefore, the two new guidebooks close a gap in the range of available information material. Their publication was possible thanks to the close collaboration of the Cancer Information Service with the Swiss Cancer League, which made their own information brochures on this topic available for their Heidelberg colleagues to revise and adapt. They have now been made available in Germany in a new, appealing layout.

In the brochures, cancer sufferers and their partners will find information about causes and connections presented in a factual and at the same time sensitive way, along with answers to many frequently asked questions concerning cancer, sexuality, motherhood and fatherhood as well as recommendations for frequent problems – specifically for women and men respectively. They are also aimed at encouraging readers to formulate their own perceptions and wishes, to try to talk to their partners and seek professional advice and assistance if needed. Contacts and resources in Germany are listed in the appendix. Problems with sexuality while and after being affected by cancer are not unusual at all, but there are ways and means to find back to a satisfying sex life – this is the text’s message to readers.

The brochures entitled “Weibliche Sexualität und Krebs” (Female sexuality and cancer) and “Männliche Sexualität und Krebs” (Male sexuality and cancer) are available in German and can be obtained free of charge from the Cancer Information Service or by download from the KID website.

Ordering address:

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For 25 years now, the Cancer Information Service has been providing profound, reliable, independent and comprehensible information about all matters relating to cancer – by telephone at 0800-42 30 40, via e-mail at krebsinformationsdienst@dkfz.de, on the Internet at www.krebsinformationsdienst.de and by issuing fact sheets and brochures. In 2010, the Cancer Information Service answered more than 30,000 inquiries individually; the Internet service was accessed more than 70 million times.

The German Cancer Research Center (Deutsches Krebsforschungszentrum, DKFZ), employing over 2,500 staff members, is the largest biomedical research institute in Germany. More than 1,000 scientists are working to investigate the mechanisms of cancer development, identify cancer risk factors and develop new strategies for better cancer prevention, more precise diagnosis and effective treatment of cancer patients. In addition, the staff of the Cancer Information Service (KID) provides information about this widespread disease for patients, their families, and the general public. DKFZ is funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (90%) and the State of Baden-Wuerttemberg (10%) and is a member of the Helmholtz Association of National Research Centers.

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