

a couple with full force. Once again you will develop new expressions of intimacy and sexual love.

It is also important for you to take care of yourself. You don't want to resent your partner because so much attention is focused on his needs and so little on yours.

Communication must go in two directions; you must share your feelings and concerns with him and encourage him to speak to you. **No topic should be considered out of bounds.**

For more detailed information and suggestions we urge you to go to our website and click on: *What Wives, Friends or Partners Might Want to Know* There you will find information on all these topics and read frank discussions about sexuality, methods to address incontinence and ED, what to expect after treatment, hear the stories of others and pose your questions, in confidence, to others. If you would like to speak directly to a woman or man on a one to one basis just use the e-mail address on our site and someone will get back to you.

Check our website for a list of Maine Support Groups. ([www.mcfpc.org](http://www.mcfpc.org) )

Another excellent site is: [www.ustoo.com](http://www.ustoo.com)

**PCAI** offers open and frank discussion about the problems associated with intimacy and prostate cancer.

<http://www.prostatepointers.org/mlist/mlist.html>

Then click on Pcai (left column) and follow directions.



**MAINE  
COALITION**

**TO**

**FIGHT  
PROSTATE  
CANCER**

[www.mcfpc.org](http://www.mcfpc.org)

Email: [info@mcfpc.org](mailto:info@mcfpc.org))

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**LIFE WITH SOMEONE WHO  
HAS PROSTATE CANCER**

***WHAT WIVES, FRIENDS OR  
PARTNERS MIGHT WANT TO KNOW***



## LIFE WITH PROSTATE CANCER

### *What Wives, Friends or Partners Might*

#### *Want to Know*

Each man reacts differently when told he has Prostate Cancer. Your role as a loving partner is to support your man and there are many ways to do this effectively. Some men will want to talk. Listen with an open heart.

Some men do not want to talk. This must be respected. But sometimes men say "No!", but just aren't quite sure how to get started. It's ok to encourage them in the same way you always do. Don't let his cancer be a cop out for not communicating!

*As one man told his partner, "I am so glad that you pushed me to talk early on because I had so much locked inside of me that I didn't know how to get out. If you hadn't started talking to me, and insisting that I join in the conversation, especially about our intimate life, I would not have known how much that part of our life meant to you.*

***Knowing what a loss it was for you made me feel like I could grieve and cry about my loss."***

There are many support groups throughout the state where men (and their partners) can be in touch with others who are progressing through the Prostate Cancer journey

Hearing how others are coping with prostate cancer can often help with your treatment decisions. Knowing that what you are feeling is normal and there is definitely life after prostate cancer can be empowering and reassuring.

There are programs where one man can talk in confidence with another on a one to one basis.

Perhaps you can gather this information for him and encourage him to attend a support group or to make that phone call.

**We urge you to ask your spouse to let you be a part of this process from the start because this illness ultimately impacts both partners.** Couples who are able to go to appointments together and discuss all aspects of the illness and treatment can face this illness as a team. Questions can be written in advance and you can be a note taker so that later you can review the information together.

You might even want to consider having a notebook so you can keep records of test results, doctor visits, and appointments. Our website, [www.mcfpc.org](http://www.mcfpc.org) has a list of questions that you might want to ask the doctors.

Your partner may have selected an "active surveillance protocol" (watchful waiting) where the cancer is carefully monitored but NO treatment takes place. This is ideal for some men, but for others the

anxiety of living with cancer can be difficult.

There are numerous treatment options for prostate cancer. Perhaps he will choose surgery, hormone therapy, radiation or some other therapy. It is important to know that there are side effects to these treatments that might include incontinence or erectile dysfunction. (ED) The inability to have an erection.

For some men, there needs to be a new definition of what it means to be a man and your support is absolutely essential. The two of you working together will need to creatively find a new path for intimacy and sexual love.

There are various treatments available for ED and with the proper guidance most men can regain the ability to have an erection and to have intercourse using one or more of the ED treatments available. The "Prostate Cancer Intimacy List" (PCAI) is a great place to learn about ED and how to overcome ED post treatment.

Our web site has a list of books that deal with the issue of intimacy. It is a good idea to learn about these things prior to surgery/treatment in order to have a clearer picture of what one might expect post treatment.

Perhaps your partner has an advanced stage of prostate cancer that will, of course, affect both your lives and must be addressed.

Men can live many years with advanced prostate cancer and end of life issues might not be a concern for several years, but the immediate sexual changes resulting from hormone therapy can hit

