DISCUSSION GUIDE: SEX AND SEXUALITY AFTER A STROKE WEBINAR
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DISCUSSION TOPICS

1. What is the difference between “sex acts” and “sexuality”? How do you express your sexuality in your daily life? Are these expressions important to you and your identity?

2. Think about the physical effects of your stroke and their impact on your sexual life. What changes, if any, have you experienced? Discuss some ways that you (and your partner) can deal with these changes yourself (examples: have sex when rested, change positions, and try different sex acts) or get help from professionals.

3. Think about the emotional and cognitive effects of stroke on yourself and your relationship with your partner. How has the stroke affected your self-esteem? Your mood? Discuss some ways that you (and your partner) can manage these changes (examples: communicate more with each other, express affection regularly, and get treatment for depression).

4. How can you keep the romance in your relationship with your partner? Think about what made your relationship romantic, exciting and emotionally intimate before your stroke. Can you do those things now? Do you need to find new ways of being affectionate, intimate and close?

5. If you have aphasia, how can you (and your partner) communicate about sex? Think of some nonverbal ways to let your spouse know you are interested in sex. Think about how to let your spouse know what does or does not feel good (examples: use of gestures, pictures or sounds; singing/humming; expressing physical affection).

6. Do you need professional help to improve your sexual function, to enjoy sex more or to get advice on birth control? What are some barriers to seeking this type of help? (Examples: embarrassment, doctors don’t have time, don’t know what to ask.) How can you overcome these barriers? (Examples: partner can advocate for you, write down your questions, and know that you have a right to help.)

7. How can a single person date and find potential partners after a stroke? Think about your personal assets. How can you emphasize your strengths and talents when dating? How can you deal with negative attitudes toward stroke and disability?
8. For partners/caregivers of the stroke survivor: How has your partner’s stroke affected your sexual life? Think about changes in your partner, your role as a caregiver, changes in shared activities and so forth. Does anxiety, fatigue, lack of time or feeling like a “nurse” affect your sexual interest or pleasure? What can you do for yourself or with your spouse to improve your sex life? (Examples: get more help/respite, have more fun with partner, communicate more with partner, initiate sex if partner does not.)

RESOURCES


American Association of Sexuality Educators, Counselors and Therapists. This organization can help you find a sex therapist. Website: www.aasect.org


