



## Teenage and Young Adult (TYA) Unit

# Sexual health information sheet

You may or may not be sexually active and it can be difficult to discuss your sexual health and relationships. However, staff members will want to ask you some questions in order to keep you and any partners safe:

**Are you sexually active?**

**Have you been sexually active since we last saw you?**

**Have you got a sexual partner?**

**What kind of contraception are you using?**

These questions may feel embarrassing but please try to be honest. This is the only way we can help you and keep you and your partner safe.

Nurses may ask you about your sex life, relationships and whether you could be pregnant at different points during your treatment. They aren't being nosy! They are trying to make sure you have the right information and feel supported about this important area of your life. All discussions will be confidential.

There is also some very important information that you need to know when you are having treatment...

## Contraception

If you are having regular sex (with a man or a woman) you will need to use barrier methods (condoms and dams) to protect you and your partner. Chemotherapy can be passed from one individual to another via bodily fluids, and this could cause harm to your partner or any babies that are conceived. **We strongly advise you not to get pregnant or for your partner to get pregnant when you are having treatment.**

You will find three free condoms/dams inside this information pack. Free condoms are always available from the TYA unit staff. Please ask a member of staff if you would like more at any time.

For advice about contraception related to your cancer treatment please ask a nurse/doctor/your key worker on the TYA.

For general contraceptive advice, please call The Hathersage Centre in Manchester on **0161 701 1555**. If you choose to speak to them directly, please tell them if you are on active treatment as their advice may differ depending on where you are up to with your treatment and what treatment you are having.

## Cancer treatment

If you are anemic (low red cell count) and/or thrombocytopenic (low platelet count) you are more susceptible to bleeding and infection. Your cancer treatment can also lower your immune system. Please speak to your nurse if you are unsure if you should be having sex or not (You will also need to be mindful about the sort of sex you are having. For example anal sex increases the risk of bleeding when your counts are low).

It is really important that you let staff or your doctor know if you think you need an STI test (as you have had unprotected sex) or have a suspicion you have an STI. You will need to receive treatment for the STI in a safe way alongside your cancer treatment. **Please do not have treatment for an STI without first informing TYA unit staff.**

## Do you have a problem with your vagina or penis?

If so please talk to your nurse, doctor or key worker.

If you don't want to/can't discuss this with a member of the TYA unit team (and your problem is not related to your treatment) you can speak to specially trained staff at Withington Community Hospital in West Didsbury. They can be contacted on **0161 217 4939**. The service is free and confidential.

## Sexual health information for young people having cancer treatment... websites, helplines and leaflets/booklets

Information regarding sexual health in young people and sexual health in young people with cancer is available from a number of resources.

**\*\*\*Remember...all services are confidential, for those both under and over 16\*\*\***

## Information regarding sexual health in young people with cancer include:

[www.clic4tic.org](http://www.clic4tic.org)

[www.macmillan.org.uk](http://www.macmillan.org.uk)

Macmillan Cancer Support booklet 'Relationships, sex and fertility for young people affected by cancer'

'After Cure' by the UKCCSG (contains a range of information about issues after cancer treatment, including fertility issues)

**Paper copies of booklets (Including Macmillan's guide for young people about Sex and Relationships) are available from the TYA Unit. Please ask**

General information regarding sexual health, contraception and young people can be found at:

[www.anyplanstonight.co.uk](http://www.anyplanstonight.co.uk)

**Your local GP surgery** (whether it is information or discussion that is required)

### Contraception and Sexual Health Clinics (CASH)

(Formerly family planning clinics). Information regarding these clinics can be found at [www.ruthinking.co.uk](http://www.ruthinking.co.uk)

### Brook Advisory Centres

If you are under 25 and want information about sexual health please contact the Young People's helpline on **0800 0185 023** (Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm) or look on the website [www.brook.org.uk](http://www.brook.org.uk)

For information on key sexual health issues any time of day or night call the 24-hour information line **020 7950 7700**.

### fpa [www.fpa.org.uk](http://www.fpa.org.uk)

Provides confidential information and advice on contraception and sexual and reproductive health. You can also get details of family planning clinics, sexual health clinics and other sexual health services anywhere in the UK.

Helplines:

<b>0845 122 8690</b> (England and Wales)	9am-6pm Mon-Fri
<b>0141 576 5088</b> (Scotland)	9am-5pm Mon-Thurs, 9am-4.30pm Fri
<b>028 90 325 488</b> (Northern Ireland - Belfast)	9am-5pm Mon-Thurs, 9am-4.30pm Fri
<b>028 71 260 016</b> (Northern Ireland - Derry)	9am-5pm Mon-Thurs, 9am-4.30pm Fri

### London Lesbian and Gay Switchboard

24 hour telephone service to act as a UK wide source of information, support and referral to lesbians, gay men and bisexual people or anyone who needs support with LGB issues.

[www.llgs.org.uk](http://www.llgs.org.uk)

Telephone: **020 7837 7324**

### Sexwise

For young people aged 12-18. The website gives information on contraception, sex and relationships. Allows you to search for services anywhere in the UK.

[www.ruthinking.co.uk](http://www.ruthinking.co.uk)

Helpline: **0800 28 29 30**. Open from 7am-12.00am every day