

# Intimacy and Heart Disease: Your Emotions

Have you just learned that you have a heart problem? Or have you recently had a heart attack or heart surgery? If so, you may be concerned about your love life. You may not even feel a desire for sex right now. This is normal during an illness. But know that you can still enjoy sex. This sheet can help you understand your feelings. It can also help you work with your partner to rebuild intimacy and enjoy sex again.



"I'm afraid I'll have another heart attack if I have sex."

## Your Feelings Are Normal

Many people feel afraid, depressed, angry, or sad when they have heart trouble. This is normal. You may worry that your body will never be the same. You may be afraid for the future. You may even feel angry that this happened to you. These feelings can affect your desire for sex. But know that as your body starts to heal, your interest in sex will most likely return. Check with your doctor if you think your heart medications are reducing your sexual desire. And rest assured that having sex won't damage your heart or cause a heart attack.



"Am I still sexually attractive to my partner after my

surgery?"

## **Overcoming Negative Feelings**

Knowing what is troubling you is the first step toward overcoming negative feelings. Start by trying to:

- Acknowledge what you are feeling.
- Be patient with yourself.
- Talk with your partner about your feelings.

Remember: There is no need to prove yourself. But when you feel ready for sex, know it's safe to go ahead.