

The staff on the ward are always available to discuss these and any other issues with you, please do not hesitate to ask.

Equal opportunities

The hospital is committed to promoting an environment, which provides equal opportunities for all patients, visitors and staff. If you have any special requirements such as dietary needs, interpreter services, disability needs or a preference for a female doctor please do not hesitate to discuss this with a member of staff who will try to help you.


References:

Gynaecology, Shaw, Soutler & Stanton
Published by Churchill Livingstone

Our Bodies Ourselves, Jill Rakusen &
Angela Phillip
Published by Penguin

The Menopause, Rosetta Reitta
Published by Penguin

Hysterectomy - The Emotional Aspects
Published by Demnerstein, Wood &
Burrows

Liverpool Women's Hospital 
NHS Trust

Liverpool Women's Hospital
Crown Street, Liverpool L8 7SS

Telephone: 0151 708 9988

Visit our Web site at www.lwh.org.uk.



Hysterectomy Impact on Sex

Liverpool Women's Hospital 
NHS Trust

This information leaflet is a brief outline of this condition and is not intended to replace verbal communication with medical and nursing staff.

Will having a hysterectomy affect my sex life?

At one time it was believed that hysterectomy meant the end of a woman's sex life. This is not true. Women today, rightly, expect sexual pleasure and it is recognised that a woman's sexual feelings and her level of desire are equally as important as those of her partner.

Sexual pleasure undoubtedly has physical and emotional links and can be considered in 4 phases. The first phase of sexual response - Arousal - is when the blood flow to the pelvis increases. Following hysterectomy, the woman does not have a uterus or womb, this means that there is less tissue to hold the increased blood flow so sensations may be less intense. Also, during arousal the vagina expands in length and diameter, because of the removal of the uterus and neck of the womb this may prevent full expansion of the vagina.

During the second phase of the sexual response cycle known as the Plateau, the uterus usually elevates and increases in size. Obviously following hysterectomy this does not occur.

The third phase, Orgasm, is when the uterus contracts and therefore the sensation is

clearly less intense following hysterectomy.

The final phase known as Resolution is where the uterus, which holds the increased blood supply, begins to relax and some women experience additional orgasm at this stage. Due to the absence of the uterus this response is less notable.

If at the time of hysterectomy your ovaries are left behind, the sexual urge and response cycle will appear to be only slightly affected. Removal of the ovaries can lead to other problems such as, reduced vaginal lubrication, which is essential at the time of penetration.

Hysterectomy does not affect the sensations of the clitoris, which is a very major source of sexual pleasure for most women.

It is clearly evident that hysterectomy results in a number of physical changes, which may affect your sexuality. However, many women are not aware of the different stages of sexual arousal and to them their experience of making love is more emotionally linked than physically linked.

It is important to be aware of these possible effects so that you are prepared to deal with any changes in your sexual response. If you are concerned about this or any issue the staff on the ward can make a referral for advice from a trained counselor.