

CHAPTER 11

Experiences of Sexual Rehabilitation after Prostate Cancer

A Comparison of Gay and Bisexual Men with Heterosexual Men

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CHAPTER SUMMARY

In a study of sexual rehabilitation after prostate cancer, gay and bisexual men (GBM) were more likely than heterosexual men (79% versus 56%) to report having tried medical or other aids to address erectile dysfunction. GBM were also more likely to have tried more than one medical aid (GBM $M = 1.65$ aids, heterosexual men $M = 0.83$ aids), including medication, penile injection, penile implant, and vacuum pump, and to have sought information about sexual rehabilitation after prostate cancer on the Internet, through counseling, or through a support group. There were no differences between the groups in satisfaction with the use of sexual aids. Accounts of satisfaction described medical and sexual aids as indispensable in maintaining sexual functioning and relationships. However, the majority of men in the study described hindrances, both physical and social, associated with using medical or sexual aids, which resulted in discontinued use of such aids. These barriers were the perceived artificiality of medical and other sexual aids; loss of sexual spontaneity and necessity to plan for sex; physical side effects; failure to achieve erectile response; financial cost; and lack of access to sexual rehabilitation information and support.

KEY TERMS

erectile dysfunction, medical aids, penile implant, sexual aids, sexual rehabilitation, vacuum pump

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