

SaferSex4Seniors

Information you need to enjoy safer sexual pleasure!

Your Sexual Rights in Long-Term Care

Q. How does living in a long-term care facility impact my sex life?

Your sexual rights are to be respected no matter where you live. This includes the right to sexual freedom and privacy and the right to engage in mutually consensual intimate relations. When you research long-term care residences, ask administrators about their policies regarding intimate relationships. If they don't have policies in place (which is not unusual) or they seem uncomfortable talking about sex, it may not be the right setting for you or a loved one.

Q. What can I do to get residence administrators to address sexual health concerns?

Request that they invite a local health or educational organization to conduct programs on sexual health and safer sex for seniors, including instructions on using condoms and other sexual aids and toys.

Q. My residence discourages intimate relationships. Some of the staff try to split up budding romances and many of them make fun of our desire for privacy. What can I do?

Sexuality is physical, mental, emotional and spiritual. Sexual activity in the older-adult years is an indicator of physical health. Even people with physical disabilities and chronic health conditions have lifelong needs for intimate and sexual contact. Ask what kind of training the residence staff receive on the importance, complexity and joy of sex in older populations.

Q. Should I be worried about getting back into sexual activity if I haven't been active for years?

People at any age can celebrate their sexuality, regardless of whether or when they were last sexually active. You may need a medical checkup first, to ensure that you are healthy enough for sexual activity. If your doctor suggests limits on your activity, you may still enjoy many non-intercourse activities such as masturbation, mutual masturbation, oral sex, sex toys, and sensuous massage...whatever you can imagine! Good books on this subject are Joan Price's *Naked at Our Age* and Gina Ogden's *The Return of Desire*.

Q. How can I access condoms and sex toys if I live in a long-term care facility, especially if I don't drive anymore?

Ask a medical provider or social worker in your residence to ensure that condoms and personal lubricant are available to residents at a reasonable price. The staff should respect your request and your privacy. Good online sources for products are Good Clean Love <http://www.goodcleanlove.com> and Natural Contours <http://www.natural-contours.com>. Nice videos (hot and spicy as well as non-explicit and educational) created with older adults in mind are available from the Sinclair Institute <http://www.sexedvideo.com>

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