

SEX AND CANCER

INTIMACY, ROMANCE,
AND LOVE AFTER
DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT



Saketh Guntupalli, MD, and Maryann Karinch
Foreword by Camille Grammer

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Sex and Cancer

Intimacy, Romance, and Love after Diagnosis and Treatment

Saketh R. Guntupalli, M.D. and Maryann Karinch

Overview

An intimate partnership has physical and psychological components, both of which often take a hit when cancer enters the union. The prospect, and then the process, of treatments tend to alter the way the two people relate to each other. When the diagnosis is one of gynecologic or reproductive cancer for a woman, questions of sexual intimacy and function often color relationships, confuse partners, and raise concerns that other cancers might not.

With an estimated 83,000 women *a year* added to the roles of those battling gynecologic cancers and 300,000 women *a year* added to roles of those battling breast cancer, *Sex and Cancer* focuses on surviving and *thriving*—more than 70 percent of women with gynecologic cancers now survive!—and helps readers mitigate outcomes and overcome challenges of sexual dysfunction after a cancer diagnosis; reassess the priorities in an intimate relationship to support the patient’s struggle, healing, and libido; and learn to interact with the professionals tasked with saving lives and enhancing those areas affected by cancer diagnosis and treatment. *Sex and Cancer* features stories that illuminate insights about the impact of gynecologic and reproductive cancers on relationships. The stories give life to guidance that’s critical in shaping the effect that gynecologic cancer has on intimate relationships. And readers will find insight, comfort, and suggestions for addresses the questions about intimacy and sexual function that are often left unexpressed.

- **Publisher:** Rowman & Littlefield Publishers (July 8, 2017)
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- **List Price:** \$33

Review copies are available upon request. Please see contact information with the press release.



New Book *Sex and Cancer* Gives Hope to Millions of Couples

Leading female cancer physician and uterine cancer patient turn a “whispered” conversation into steps toward intimacy.

Denver, Colo. — Shows such as *Sex and the City* have made the topic of sex more acceptable, but that hasn't included an honest dialog on sex and cancer, an often unstated topic of interest to an American woman who faces a 37.5 percent risk of developing cancer over her lifetime. In 2017 alone it is estimated that more than 850,000 women will be diagnosed with cancer in the United States.

That silence around the sexual effect of cancer ends on July 8, 2017, when *Sex and Cancer: Love, Intimacy and Romance After Diagnosis* by Dr. Saketh Guntupalli and Maryann Karinch is published by Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

“Conversations about restoring intimacy after cancer had been held in whispers,” said Karinch, uterine cancer survivor and author of 26 books, most of which address human health and behavior. “Dr. Guntupalli and I wanted to turn up the volume, giving proven solutions and real hope to couples affected by cancer.”

The book frankly addresses how to heal from cancer while retaining, or regaining, intimacy and quality of a loving relationship. *Sex and Cancer* is a guidebook to sexual health after any cancer.

“This is an inspirational book that shares real life stories, research and advice about relationships and overcoming sexual dysfunction after cancer,” said Dr. Guntupalli, a nationally renowned gynecologic oncologist, medical school professor and researcher at the University of Colorado Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology. He noted that sexual dysfunction can be caused by both physical or psychological reasons and affects up to 70 percent of women with cancer.

The authors drew on Dr. Guntupalli's research on the sexual effects of chemotherapy in women with gynecologic cancers. They also drew on the questionnaire his patients filled out about their sexual experiences during and after treatment, as well as talking with sex therapists and physical therapists doing research on this topic.

The book's intimate, personal tone is enhanced by the stories throughout of women who have experienced these struggles on their own and share their advice. One patient who faced extreme surgeries to save her life explains how she and her husband discovered a “new normal” that involved a broad array of exercises in intimacy. The couple had to go online and to other sources to piece together answers. But now women and couples like them can turn to this book as the source to get much-needed advice and tips from other who have navigated these concerns before.



Sex and Cancer will be a must-read book for millions of individuals and couples who deserve a normal life of sex and intimacy following the trials of cancer.

“Dr. Guntupalli masterfully tackles the complex implications for love and intimacy that are too often overlooked and under discussed when it comes to cancer,” said Dr. Bill Frist, a nationally recognized transplant surgeon and former U.S. Senate Majority Leader. “Regaining intimacy accelerates the path to regaining health, and this book is an insightful, powerful guide to doing exactly that.”

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About University of Colorado Gynecologic Oncology

University of Colorado Gynecologic Oncology (CU Gyn Onc) is dedicated to treating, curing and providing support for women with gynecologic cancers or gynecological surgical needs, including the complex cases other doctors are not able to treat. CU Gyn Onc is the largest board-certified surgical gynecologic oncology team in Colorado and the only National Comprehensive Cancer Network center in the Rocky Mountain region. The practice is part of the University of Colorado Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, and has locations at the CU Cancer Center in Aurora and at the Lone Tree Health Center. Learn more at cancer.coloradowomenshealth.com.

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Saketh Guntupalli

Saketh Guntupalli, M.D., FACS, FACOG, is a gynecologic oncologist at the University of Colorado, where he serves as Vice Chairman for Clinical Affairs and Quality in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at the University Of Colorado School Of Medicine, Denver.



Drawing on real patient cases, extensive research on sexual dysfunction and his honest tips for real women, Dr. Guntupalli wrote the book *Sex and Cancer: Love, Intimacy and Romance After Diagnosis* in collaboration with one of his patients to help women heal, retain or regain intimacy and pursue a better quality of life and love after cancer.

Dr. Guntupalli is the principal investigator for the Gynecologic Oncology Group (GOG)/NRG research consortium for the University of Colorado and serves as the director of the gynecologic oncology fellowship program. Board certified in gynecologic oncology and obstetrics/gynecology, he is the recipient of two large grants to examine sexual dysfunction in women with cancer, as well as post-operative quality outcomes.

Dr. Guntupalli is a featured speaker at Aspen Ideas Festival Spotlight Health 2017

He also serves as director for the Placenta Accreta Response Team (PART) at the University of Colorado Hospital. He has a focused interest in minimally invasive surgery, such as robotics and laparoscopy, as well as novel, molecular therapeutics in the treatment of gynecologic cancer.

He has authored over 40 clinical papers in journals such as the *Journal of the National Cancer Institute*, *Obstetrics and Gynecology*, *Gynecologic Oncology*, and the *International Journal of Gynecologic Oncology*.

Maryann Karinch

Maryann Karinch is the author of 26 books, most of which focus on human health and behavior. Among them are *The Wandering Mind*, a book about dissociation that she co-authored with psychiatrist John Biever, and *Forging Healthy Connections*, about the healing power of relationships that she co-authored with marriage and family therapist Trevor Crow Mullineaux.



In recognition of her work as a dedicated explorer of the psyche and mind-body interaction, The Explorers Club elected her to membership in 2010. She is also a member of The Authors Guild. In 2004, Karinch founded The Rudy Agency, a literary agency representing fiction and nonfiction.

Among the international media outlets that have covered Karinch's human behavior work are ABC News, *Boston Globe*, *Fast Company*, Huffington Post, *Washington Post*, and NPR. She has also taught interpersonal skills, including lie detection and negotiation, to law enforcement professionals and a variety of business audiences.

Maryann met Dr. Guntupalli because she was his patient. She is one of his "thrivers."



Sex and Cancer

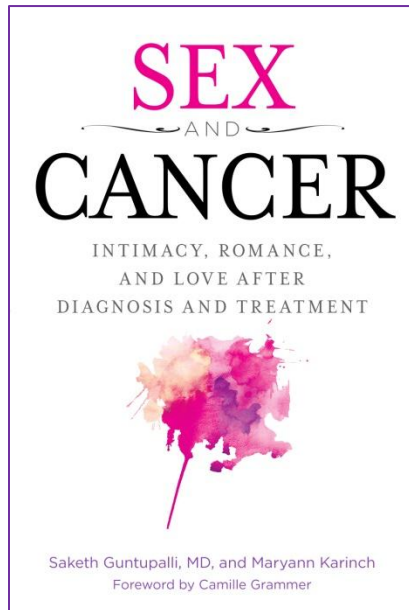
Intimacy, Romance, and Love after Diagnosis and Treatment

Ten Suggested Interview Questions for Dr. Guntupalli

1. What was your inspiration for writing this book? Whom did you want to reach by relating these stories?
2. How great a problem is sexual dysfunction as a result of a cancer diagnosis?
3. What kind of impact might cancer treatments have on intimate relationships?
4. What are the signs and symptoms of gynecologic cancers? Why are so many of these diseases diagnosed at a late stage?
5. Your study is the first to examine how women's cancer affects intimate relationships. What were your findings relative to that: Divorce rates? Infidelity? Lack of desire?
6. Your first few chapters focus on the basics of sex—"how it works." This may seem obvious to most people, but what are some common things many people really don't understand about sex?
7. What are some things that women diagnosed with breast or "below the belt" cancers can do to enhance intimacy and sex after treatment?
8. Many of your stories are inspiring and so moving. In Chapter 5 you talk about Allis, who had an extreme and rare, but necessary, surgery which removed all of her "female parts" as well as her bladder and rectum. How did Allis and her husband find their "new normal?"
9. In Chapter 7 you talk about a patient whose partner husband left her after she finished treatment. Were there any signs that hinted this might happen? What "risk factors" do you see in your practice that might make women more at risk for partner abandonment?
10. How do you think physicians and surgeons could do a better job of addressing issues of intimacy with their patients who are going through cancer?



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by Camille Grammer

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Foreword: We Are a Team

Camille Grammer

The Foundation for Women's Cancer (FWC) awarded "Real Housewives of Beverly Hills" star Camille Grammer with the 2016 Public Service Award at the 7th National Race to End Women's Cancer on Nov. 6, 2016.

Cancer runs in my family, but so does the strength to fight it. This book captures that kind of fighting spirit and the victories that women create to live renewed lives as beautiful, loving, and fully sexual beings.

My grandmother, mother, and I share many things, but one that we didn't want to share was a genetic predisposition to certain types of cancer. My grandmother battled endometrial cancer while my mother faced the devastating diagnosis of stage 3 ovarian cancer when she was just 47. Then when I was forty-four, my doctor told me the horrible news: "Camille, you have stage 2 endometrial cancer."

The first thing that happens is shock. Shortly after that, it's a radical hysterectomy. For someone of my age, that meant instant menopause. Then while the scars are still fresh, the chemotherapy starts. And just to make sure the evil cells are killed, there's internal radiation.

What's after that? Maybe a short pity party, and then we do what most women do: Try to be there for our family, tell our friends what the symptoms are, and be grateful the ordeal is over.

But it's vitally important that we do one more thing: Take care of ourselves so we return to full womanhood.

Below-the-belt cancers, as I often call them, not only threaten women's lives, but they also force women to go through a harsh transition—first losing a sense of femininity, and then struggling to regain it. In the meantime, at a time when we most need the reassurance of an intimate relationship, we don't have the self-esteem or energy to enjoy one.



This book is all about improving the experience of that transition. It's about revitalizing intimacy, love, and romance after a cancer diagnosis and treatment.

I started taking dance classes to feel feminine. I put on a bikini and decided to feel proud of my body—scars and all. I'm not just a survivor in my body and soul, I'm a thriver, and so are you if you are reading this book.

I am part of your team, cheering you on as you heal and regain your sense of total womanhood. So are all of the women who contributed to this book and all of the partners and children who are thrilled to have you alive. So are all of the women and men who support and participate in the events of the Foundation for Women's Cancer.

We are a team!



Invitation to Launch Event for *Sex and Cancer*

Members of the media are cordially invited to attend the book release party on Saturday, July 29, 2017 from 5-8 pm at the Privé at Dorchester in downtown Denver. Dr. Saketh Guntupalli, Maryann Karinch, and patients and experts who are featured in the book will be available for interviews.

Please RSVP to one of the media contacts if you would like attend, or would like to set up an interview with the authors or contributing experts at another time.