

## **FIGURE 6.**

# PATIENT EDUCATION TIP SHEET: TALKING ABOUT SEXUALITY AND INTIMACY

Sexual dysfunction is not the result of normal aging. Rather, it occurs because of physical illness, medications, psychological factors, or some combination of these conditions. After discussing these topics and questions with your healthcare provider, be sure to seek appropriate referrals.

### **TOPICS TO DISCUSS WITH YOUR HEALTHCARE PROVIDER**

It is important to discuss sexual concerns with your healthcare provider. The following are several topics to discuss if you are having difficulties engaging in sexual activity:

- I am not interested in having sexual intercourse but would like to be.
- Vaginal dryness
- Fearful of being touched by your partner
- Inability to obtain or maintain an erection during sexual intercourse
- Inability to achieve an orgasm
- Pain associated with intercourse

### **QUESTIONS TO DISCUSS WITH YOUR HEALTHCARE PROVIDER**

- How will my treatment affect my sexual activity?
- Are these changes in my sexual function normal?
- What precautions do I need to take while I am on treatment for multiple myeloma or after stem cell transplantation?
- Is oral sex safe while on therapy? What precautions should I take?

---

**Note.** Based on information from Clayton & Ramamurthy, 2008.