

# The Sweetest Taboo

By **Charissa Rice**

Shhh...not so loud. This is a topic or subject that not too many want to talk about. That's funny because most of us spend a lifetime trying to do it. So why is sex and anything pertaining to it so taboo? I guess as a patient with a chronic illness that should be the last thing on my mind.

I can remember when visiting my many doctors, hearing them discuss different symptoms and what I might expect with my many illnesses. I have lupus and also kidney failure. There are a lot of things that can cause my libido to be depleted, but it was really never brought up. I learned the hard way that what I was dealing with would affect my sex life.

I've been married for 18 years. Our early years were tough, because I didn't understand why I felt or didn't feel a certain way. I was young, so I didn't think anything physical was wrong. I also thought the doctor had gone through all the possible symptoms I might experience. Well I was on blood pressure meds, dealing



with lupus and kidney failure and at that time my biggest concern was why I had no interest in sex.

It wasn't until I started researching and reading for myself that I began to understand all the things my body was going through. Sometimes as patients we rely on the doctor to tell us everything, but we have to be more proactive. I had to do something, my husband had begun to suspect that I was cheating on him. Totally not the case. Another lesson learned is to talk to your mate and let them know what is going on.

What it all boils down to is that you will experience some changes. Some may not be drastic and others will really be life changing. The question is "How will you handle it?" I've learned to take control of



the situation and not sit by and let things just happen. How did I overcome the challenges of changes in my sex life? First I talked about it, put it all on the table of what was going on and what we could do about it. What has helped us is doing the things that made us fall in love with each other when we first met. Dates, phone calls, texts or love notes to each other. When there is extra money to splurge we get away just the two of us and spend time with each other.

Even though it takes a little more planning and fore play than others, spontaneity is key too. Surprises can help reignite or just light that dim light. Know that it's not over or the end of the world. You can still live and enjoy life, it just may take a little more effort to get there. ●

