

PATIENT FACTSHEET: GUIDE TO ERECTILE ISSUES

WHAT IS ERECTILE DYSFUNCTION?

If you're having problems getting and/or keeping an erection hard enough for sex, you might have symptoms of erectile dysfunction (ED). ED is the inability to maintain an erection that is firm enough or lasts long enough to have sexual intercourse.

Normal sexual function in a man involves four different functions: libido or sex drive, erectile function, ejaculation and orgasm.

The most common cause of ED is damage to nerves, arteries, smooth muscles and tissues.

This damage can be the result of:

- Diabetes
- Vascular disease
- Lifestyle factors: smoking, excess alcohol, lack of exercise
- Side effect of medications, prescribed or not
- Enlarged prostate (Benign Prostatic Hyperplasia)
- Prostatectomy
- Atherosclerosis
- Trauma or surgery (especially to pelvic area)
- Spinal cord injuries
- Aging
- Hormone problems
- Depression, anxiety, stress, guilt
- Low self-esteem and fear of sexual failure
- Multiple sclerosis

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

How common is ED?

ED is a surprisingly common condition, about 50 % of men over the age of 40 and 10 % of men below 40 are affected by ED¹

What causes ED?

ED can stem from a range of physical and psychological causes all of which can be discussed with your GP or urologist.²

Is ED part of aging?

While most men will experience occasional ED associated with stress, anxiety or substance abuse, the prevalence of ED may increase with age.

Can I just ignore ED?

No, ED can occur as a symptom of serious conditions such as Cardiovascular Disease and Diabetes.

What are my options?

Finding a treatment for ED can be a delightful event for many men and their partners.

ED treatment options fall into two categories:

SURGICAL

- Penile Implant

NON-SURGICAL

- Counselling
- Oral Medications
- Vacuum Erection Devices or Pump
- Penile Injections

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REFERENCE

1. Alpha One Andrology Group Study
2. Erectile Dysfunction causes*. Erection Problems (Erectile Dysfunction). Healthwise. 2006. <http://health.msn.com/centers/mensexualhealth/articlepage.aspx?cp-documentid=100062424>. Retrieved 2007-10-07.

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