

# ED IN MEN

## WHAT IS IT?

Erectile dysfunction (ED) is defined as the inability to achieve or maintain an erection that is either firm enough, and/or can be maintained for long enough, to allow for successful intercourse.

## WHO SUFFERS FROM IT?

Nearly all men will experience problems with their erections at some time in their life. Up to 50% of men between the ages of 45 and 70 years are affected by ED, and 70% of those over 70 years of age, as the risk for ED increases progressively with advancing age.

## WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT?

ED could indicate a more serious medical condition, as it often co-exists with other conditions, like diabetes, coronary heart disease and hypertension, and may even be the first indication of these conditions. This means that anyone presenting with ED should go and see their doctor as soon as possible to make early diagnosis possible and to manage any underlying conditions.

## WHAT CAUSES IT?

- Medical conditions – diabetes mellitus, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, swollen prostate
- Side effects from medication – blood pressure lowering medication, diuretics, antidepressants, antiepileptic medicine, anti-allergic medication
- Recreational drugs – tobacco, cocaine, ecstasy, marijuana
- Alcohol – excessive intake
- Psychological factors – performance anxiety, depression, stress, fatigue, marital problems, work/financial problems

## CAN IT BE TREATED?

Once the cause has been diagnosed, treatment will greatly improve the condition.

For instance, poorly controlled blood sugar in diabetic patients can cause or worsen ED, so improving blood sugar control by means of diet, exercise and medication may well improve erectile function. Controlling high blood pressure, normalising cholesterol levels, and cutting down on alcohol and smoking may all contribute to improved blood circulation and thus better erectile function. Studies have shown that losing weight and exercising regularly can result in improved erectile function.

## SPECIFIC TREATMENT

There are effective oral treatments that work quickly and reliably to relieve erectile difficulties. They are discreet and easy to use. Ask your doctor about these medications.

## CONCLUSION

If you are struggling in the bedroom, you are not alone. Good news is that there are many treatments available that will assist you to perform as normal. Speak to your doctor about a treatment that can help you.



# DISCLAIMER

## TAKE NOTE

The information provided in this article is for education purposes only and does not serve as a medical diagnosis. Members should always consult their healthcare provider with serious symptoms.

Please note that Heritage Health plans do not necessarily cover the costs of the condition/s described.

