



# Erectile dysfunction

With erectile dysfunction (ED), a male can't get or keep an erection long enough to have sexual intercourse. Sometimes, ED is called impotence. Impotence can be ED, but can also mean a lack of sexual desire and problems with orgasm.



## SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

- Not being able to get an erection at all
- An erection is too brief, weak, or painful for satisfying sex.
- An erection loses strength with penetration.

## CAUSES

Blood vessel diseases, diabetes, and other physical problems are the usual cause of ED. Other causes are smoking and a side effect of some medicines, such as depression and hypertension medications. Some cases are due to emotional factors, such as stress and fear of not being able to perform.

## TREATMENT

- Treatment for conditions that cause ED
- Medication
- Counseling
- A vacuum erection device
- Self-injection therapy or a penile implant

## TRIAGE QUESTIONS



Did ED occur with prostate or other surgery, trauma to the pelvis, or after taking prescribed medicines?

NO  
↓

YES ► **SEE DOCTOR**



Does ED cause a problem for you or your partner?

NO  
↓

YES ► **CALL DOCTOR**



**USE SELF-CARE**



## SELF-CARE / PREVENTION

- Take medicine for ED as prescribed.
- Check with your doctor before you take herbs, etc. sold for ED.
- If you have diabetes, follow your treatment plan.
- If you smoke, quit.
- Avoid or limit alcohol to 2 drinks a day.
- Relax. Manage stress. Get plenty of rest.
- Get regular physical activity. Lose weight if you have excess pounds.
- Share your fears, needs, etc. with your partner. Work through relationship issues.
- Don't focus just on performance. Find pleasure when you hug, kiss, and caress your partner.