Erectile dysfunction *facts*

Erectile dysfunction (ED) occurs when a man cannot get an erection or cannot keep an erection long enough to have sex. It can happen at any age but it is more common in men over the age of 75.

While it may seem like a symptom of aging, erectile dysfunction is not caused by the aging process. Instead, it may be a symptom of another health condition.

CAUSES

- Diabetes
- High blood pressure
- Some prescription medications
- Alcohol and tobacco use
- Atherosclerosis (hardening of the arteries)
- Fatigue
- Stress, anxiety, or depression
- Stroke
- Low testosterone
- Chronic kidney disease
- Multiple sclerosis
- Injury to the penis, bladder, prostate, or pelvis
- Being overweight
- Emotional or psychological factors

TREATMENT

Your doctor is the best resource to diagnose and treat ED. Proper treatment of ED depends on the exact cause. If a health condition causes ED, treatment to bring that condition under control may improve ED.

In the absence of a medical cause, it may be beneficial to explore psychological or emotional issues. Working with a licensed therapist can help.

Other treatment options include:

- Medication such as Viagra or Cialis
- Testosterone replacement
- Devices that assist in getting and maintaining an erection
- Surgery

PREVENTION

Some causes of ED are preventable. Protecting your overall health may decrease your chance of developing ED later in life.

Healthy habits may improve health issues such as being overweight, diabetes, high blood pressure, and atherosclerosis. Your doctor may recommend some of these healthy habits to address or prevent ED.

- Stop smoking
- Avoid excess alcohol intake
- Eat a healthy, balanced diet
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Be physically active