

Erectile dysfunction

Erectile **dysfunction** (ED), also known as **impotence**, is a type of sexual dysfunction characterized by the inability to develop or maintain an erection of the penis during sexual activity. Erectile dysfunction can have psychological consequences as it can be tied to relationship difficulties and self-image.

The most important organic causes of impotence are cardiovascular disease and diabetes, neurological problems (for example, trauma from prostatectomy surgery), hormonal insufficiencies (hypogonadism) and drug side effects. Psychological impotence is where erection or penetration fails due to thoughts or feelings (psychological reasons) rather than physical impossibility; this is somewhat less frequent but can often be helped. In psychological impotence, there is a strong response to placebo treatment.

Besides treating the underlying causes such as potassium deficiency or arsenic contamination of drinking water, the first line treatment of erectile dysfunction consists of a trial of PDE5 inhibitor (such as sildenafil). In some cases, treatment can involve prostaglandin tablets in the urethra, injections into the penis, a penile prosthesis, a penis pump or vascular reconstructive surgery.

Results suggest no significant improvement in overall erectile function postoperatively for patients with preoperative erectile dysfunction. This is important to address during patient counseling for **decompression** surgery candidates with **cervical spinal stenosis** and/or **lumbar canal stenosis** to manage expectations ¹⁾.

A study showed that ED is prevalent in male acromegaly patients and may be associated with systemic endothelial dysfunction induced by excessive **GH**. Further studies investigating the mechanism of GH and ED are required ²⁾.

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Wottrich S, Kha S, Thompson N, Bakar D, Yee P, Melillo A, Nash C, Healy AT, Steinmetz M, Mroz T. The Effect of Cervical and Lumbar Decompression Surgery for Spinal Stenosis on Erectile Dysfunction. Global Spine J. 2022 Oct 25:21925682221136493. doi: 10.1177/21925682221136493. Epub ahead of print. PMID: 36281560.

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Chen Z, Yu Y, He M, Shen M, Gong W, Wang M, Yang Y, Zhang Y, Shou X, Lu Y, Yang N, Cao X, Li S, Li Y, Zhao Y, Wang Y, Cai J, Zhang Z. HIGHER GROWTH HORMONE LEVELS ARE ASSOCIATED WITH ERECTILE DYSFUNCTION IN MALE PATIENTS WITH ACROMEGALY. Endocr Pract. 2019 Mar 13. doi: 10.4158/EP-2018-0518. [Epub ahead of print] PubMed PMID: 30865541.

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Last update: **2024/06/07 02:57**

