

Are you concerned?



Essential advice for men with diabetes



Man talk

- ✓ **Erectile dysfunction is a really common condition**
- ✓ **Diabetes can be a contributory cause**
- ✓ **There are now many treatments available**
- ✓ **Talk to your doctor or nurse about it - the earlier it's picked up, the easier it is to treat**

To find out more about the range of free diabetes information booklets from Roche Diagnostics call the Accu-Chek Customer Careline* on

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Diabetes and erectile dysfunction

More than 50% of men with diabetes have problems either obtaining or maintaining an erection.

Margaret Boyd,
Diabetes Specialist Nurse, Edinburgh



Whether you have diabetes or not, erectile dysfunction is a really common condition, and many men will experience it at some point in their life.

There are many names for this condition including impotence, erectile dysfunction or ED, but it is basically when a man is unable to get or keep an erection suitable for sexual intercourse.

Erectile dysfunction is treatable and is not a condition that you, or your partner, just have to live with. This leaflet sets out to explain the facts; what causes it and most importantly what you can do about it.



The usual suspects

I didn't realise some medicines are to blame.

Mike, 42

The physical ones

- 
- Diabetes
 - Heart problems
 - Surgery
 - Prescribed medication
 - High cholesterol
 - Drinking alcohol
 - Kidney disorders
 - Smoking



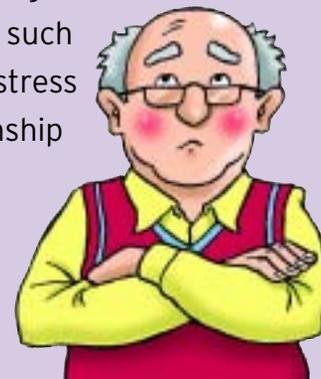
The emotional ones

- Stress or anxiety
- Relationship problems
- Worrying about performance



There are several reasons why a man may have erectile dysfunction. Physical reasons can include heart problems, side effects of prescribed medication or surgery. Having diabetes also increases the odds. This is because uncontrolled glucose levels can cause damage to the blood and nerve supply to the penis.

For some men erectile dysfunction may be caused by a combination of several physical factors. For others the problem may be psychological or emotional such as worry, stress or relationship problems.



Is it my diabetes?

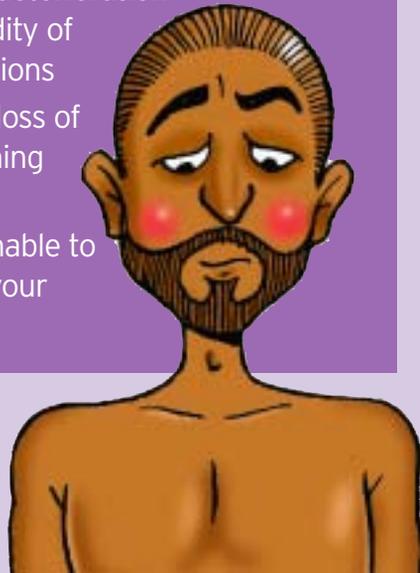
There are several factors, which may indicate that the problem is likely to be caused by your diabetes. (see box).

These symptoms generally appear gradually over a period of time.

However if the problem occurs suddenly, and you are still waking up in the morning with an erection, it is more likely that it has an emotionally related cause.

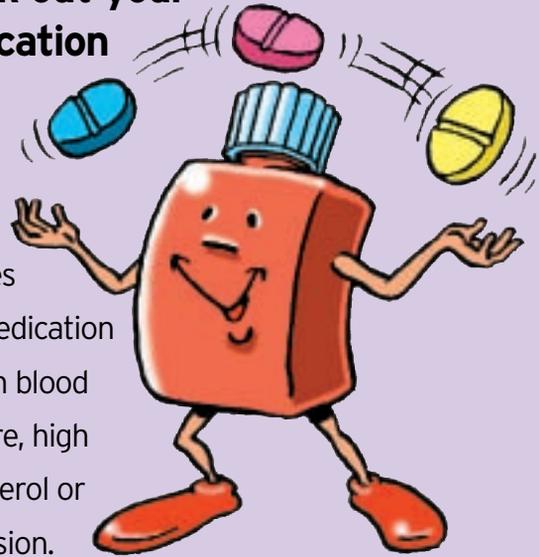
Have you noticed?

- a gradual deterioration in the frequency of your erections
- a gradual deterioration in the rigidity of your erections
- a gradual loss of your morning erections
- you are unable to maintain your erections



Check out your medication

Some people with diabetes take medication for high blood pressure, high cholesterol or depression.



Unfortunately, some medications needed to control these conditions can be a cause of, or contribute to, erectile dysfunction.

However, just because you take certain medicines doesn't mean you will automatically develop erectile dysfunction. And don't forget, keeping good control of your blood glucose levels will reduce the risk of developing long-term diabetes complications.

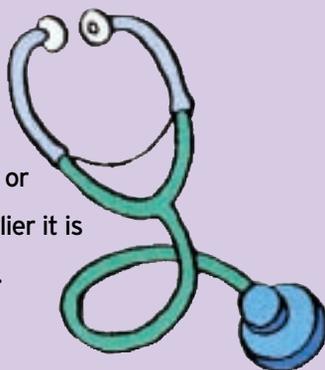
What to do about it

Don't be embarrassed to talk about it. Once the conversation got started, I was surprised how easy it was.

Paul, 58

Don't ignore it

If you think you have erectile dysfunction speak to your doctor or diabetes specialist nurse. The earlier it is picked up, the easier it is to treat.



Speak to your partner

Talk about your concerns and make sure they know that it is a common problem in men with diabetes. Often partners think it is their fault so they may need some reassurance too. Involve them as much as possible.

Ask about treatment options

Today there are many different treatments available. Your healthcare professional will discuss these with you and help you to decide which is the right one for you. They will also discuss any risks, side effects and usage restrictions which may be associated to your chosen treatment.

Try not to worry

Impotence can affect your personal relationship, overall well-being and self esteem. Worrying can make it worse, causing anxiety and stress. However be reassured that you are not alone. This condition is very common and treatable.

Did you know?

Men with diabetes are entitled to free erectile dysfunction therapy.



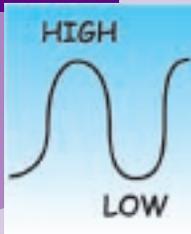
What you should know

It's good to talk

Talk to your doctor or diabetes specialist nurse as soon as the problem becomes apparent

Keep on top of your sugar

Good control of your blood glucose levels will reduce your chance of developing long-term complications of diabetes



Bad habits are bad news

Smoking and alcohol are both big no-no's - for your diabetes and your sex life. Ideally you should try to stop smoking and minimise your alcohol intake



It's better when you're fitter

Take up more exercise - you'll feel fitter, healthier and have more energy

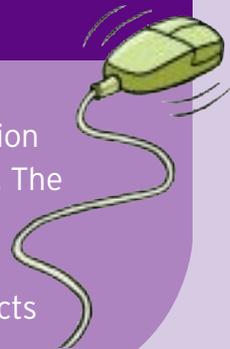


It takes two

Involve your partner in any decisions you make - their support can make a big difference

Get on the web

There are several helpful websites offering information about erectile dysfunction. The Diabetes UK website, www.diabetes.org.uk gives information about all aspects and problems of diabetes.



I suffered in silence for years. If only I knew then what I do now

Raj, 51