What is a Erectile Dysfunction (ED)?
Erectile Dysfunction (ED) is defined as the inability to produce or sustain an erection long enough for sexual activity. It is common and occurs in more than 30 million men worldwide. In fact, more than 50% of men over the age of 40 experience some degree of ED. However, it can occur at any age. While ED can impact relationships and a man's well-being, Yale Urology and our Men’s Health experts can discuss the many treatment options available and find a solution that will work for you.

Diagnosis
Erectile dysfunction is generally an indicator of another issue within the body, from high blood pressure or high cholesterol, to low testosterone, obesity, or the result of the removal of the prostate for treatment of prostate cancer. ED can also be an indicator of a more serious cardiovascular blockage. Making an appointment with a urologist is the first step toward restoring your sexual function. Your urologist will ask you questions about your health and medical history, as well as questions about stress in your life and relating to your personal experience with ED. A physical exam and a blood test may be performed to rule out physical health problems.

Appointments: (203) 785-2815
TREATMENT OPTIONS

For all men who experience erectile dysfunction, there are many options for treatment based on your urologist’s recommendation and your lifestyle.

Lifestyle Factors
Improving your physical and vascular health is the first step when reviewing treatment options for ED. Your urologist may recommend smoking cessation, dietary adjustments, and incorporating physical fitness into your lifestyle. Tools to manage and maintain your emotional health, including life stressors, may also be recommended, as well as a review of your prescription medications.

Oral Medications
There are many oral drug options available for treating erectile dysfunction, known as phosphodiesterase type-5 inhibitors (PDE type-5), which help improve blood flow to the penis. With any drug, it’s important to learn and understand the possible side effects that can occur. For men with low testosterone, testosterone therapy is also available on its own or in combination with PDE type-5 medication. However, testosterone therapy is more likely to help sexual interest more than erectile dysfunction.

Injectable Medications
In cases where oral medications are unsuccessful or not indicated, there are several other excellent options for consideration. Intracavernosal (ICI) injection therapy or self-injection therapy, involves the use of a very fine needle to inject a prescription medication into the side of your penis. Penile injection therapy is found to be a great option when oral therapies do not work as it has a very high success rate. Intraurethral therapy (IU) is when you insert a tiny medicated pellet into the urethra. While this is an alternative to ICI, it is not as successful and has more side effects.

Devices
The use of a vacuum erection device does not require medication and can be successful. However, it can be cumbersome and it is not discrete.

Surgery
The outpatient placement of an inflatable penile prosthesis is an excellent option for patients that find other treatments not ideal for them, or when other treatments are not successful. Malfunction and infection rates are low but can occur. Bendable, silicone implants are also an option, but are less concealing. Urologic surgeons at Yale Urology have extensive experience with both straightforward and complex penile implant cases.

As with any treatment, your provider will listen to your concerns and will help you to determine the best treatment option for you.

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