



How to overcome erectile dysfunction? Tip: it's not just drugs

Erectile dysfunction (ED) can be a distressing condition, but the good news is that there are various strategies and treatments available. The approach to overcoming ED can vary depending on its underlying causes, which may be physical, psychological, or a combination of both. Here are some steps to address and potentially overcome ED:



PROSTATE PROGNOSIS



Prostate Cancer UK
0800 0748383



prostateprognosis.org

Consult your doctor; If you're experiencing ED, the first step is to talk to a healthcare provider such as your GP or urologist. They can help determine the underlying cause and recommend appropriate treatment options.

Address underlying issues: ED can be a symptom of underlying health conditions, such as cancer (or its treatment), heart disease, diabetes or high blood pressure. Managing these conditions can improve ED. If you have any known health issues work with your healthcare provider to control them effectively.

Medications; Depending on the cause of your ED your healthcare provider may prescribe medications such as sildenafil (Viagra), tadalafil (Cialis), or vardenafil (Levitra). In the UK, these medications are currently available from pharmacies over the counter (OTC) and can help



improve blood flow to the penis, facilitating an erection. However, they should only be used under medical supervision.

Lifestyle changes; Adopting a healthy lifestyle can have a significant impact on ED. Consider the following changes:

- **Maintain a balanced diet with a focus on heart-healthy foods.**
- **Engage in regular physical activity to improve cardiovascular health.**
- **Manage stress through techniques like meditation, yoga, or relaxation exercises. Or if you have a condition such as cancer, ask about a counsellor or CBT referral.**
- **Stop smoking and limit alcohol consumption.**
- **Achieve and maintain a healthy weight.**

Psychological support; If your ED has a psychological component, such as performance anxiety or relationship issues, consider getting counselling. Cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) and other therapeutic approaches can also help address these psychological factors.

Vacuum erection devices; Vacuum erection devices (VEDs) can create an erection by drawing blood into the penis. They are non-invasive and can be used in combination with other treatments.

Penile injections; In some cases, self-injections of medication directly into the penis may be prescribed by a healthcare provider to induce an erection. This may be an option when you are restricted from taking oral medication.

Penile implants; For individuals with severe and persistent ED that doesn't respond to other treatments, penile implants may be an option.



There are inflatable and semi-rigid penile implants available.

Alternative remedies; Some natural remedies like ginseng, L-arginine and DHEA have been studied for their potential benefits in improving ED. However, their effectiveness varies and it's essential to consult with a healthcare provider before using them.

Communicate with your partner; Open and honest communication with your partner is crucial. Discussing your concerns and the impact of ED on your relationship can help by reducing overthinking, stress and ultimately help improve intimacy.

Overcoming ED may require time, patience and a combination of different approaches. What works best for you will depend on the specific cause of your ED and your individual circumstances. Always consult with a healthcare professional before trying any treatment or medication, as they can provide personalised guidance and recommendations.

Prostate Cancer UK is a leading charity dedicated to supporting people affected by prostate cancer. They offer a range of resources, including a FREEPHONE helpline **0800 0748383**. If you are struggling, the Samaritans are available 24/7 call free on **116 123** or Lifeline **998** in the USA. ProstatePrognosis.org provides details of assessments, prostate cancer treatment, news, events, forums, help and support leaflets and details of local support groups.

✉ [Click here to email this leaflet to a friend](#)

» [Click for more information about Prostate Cancer](#)