

# SEXUAL *Health*

Sexual problems and erectile dysfunction (ED, also known as impotence) are more common than most men like to admit. Erectile dysfunction is when a man is unable to get and/or keep an erection that allows sexual activity with penetration.

## • ABOUT 1 IN 3 • AUSTRALIAN MEN • OVER 40 HAVE • PROBLEMS GETTING • OR MAINTAINING • AN ERECTION.

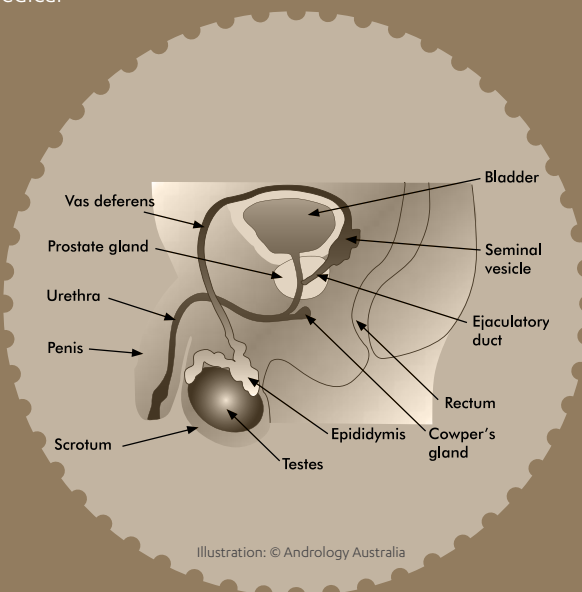
It is common to have an occasional episode of ED, but persistent ED is an important medical symptom. Apart from the personal and relationship effects, ED may be a pointer to serious medical problems, such as diabetes and heart disease. Factors such as smoking, diabetes, high blood pressure or high cholesterol are implicated in causing ED and heart disease.

Lots of other conditions may cause ED, including mental health disorders, stress, depression and anxiety. Men who develop persistent ED should see their family doctor to have this checked out and see if there is a treatable cause. The longer erectile dysfunction is left untreated, the greater the effect on your relationship.

There are treatments that will assist erections to happen and allow sexual activity to take place. There are also many companies willing to take advantage of men with ED, so stick with your GP who is best placed to help you work through your concerns.

Other sexual problems like early ejaculation, diminished interest in sex and an inability to come to climax are all areas that your doctor will be able to provide advice and assistance. Doctors are trained to deal with these issues – get help to sort it out.

The longer any of these problems go on, the more distressing it is for you and your partner and the harder it becomes to treat.



# SAFE *Sex*

A healthy sex life can make you feel good and improve your relationship. However, sexually transmissible infections are not good and are predominately contracted through unsafe sexual practices and can show no symptoms. If left untreated, STIs can have serious long-term consequences.

Unprotected sex and genital contact can put you at risk. It's not only HIV-AIDS or unwanted pregnancies you need to worry about, but common sexually transmitted diseases such as chlamydia, genital herpes, genital warts and gonorrhoea.

Condoms don't eliminate the risks but they can drastically reduce them. This advice is important at all ages – STDs have greatly increased among older men recently. If you are sexually active with more than one person, have regular check-ups. Take care of yourself and your sexual partner.

#### MORE INFORMATION

**[www.andrologyaustralia.org](http://www.andrologyaustralia.org)**  
has lots of information about men's sexual and reproductive health.

#### SEXUAL HEALTH CENTRES:

Melbourne sexual health centre

**[www.mshc.org.au](http://www.mshc.org.au)**

Sydney sexual health centre

**[www.sshc.org.au](http://www.sshc.org.au)**

or find one via **[www.nhsd.com.au](http://www.nhsd.com.au)**