

PERFORMANCE FOCUS



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Taking supplements and doing exercise is all well and good, but it's obviously not everything.

You need to take a look at your overall lifestyle so that you can get erections which are great for you and your partner.

Some small habits promote a blossoming sex life, while others sneak under the radar and kill your libido.

These habits are everyday actions which you carry out without necessarily thinking about what you're doing, but which can be either extremely beneficial or severely damaging for your manhood in the long term.

So, in two explanatory chapters, here are:

- ✓ Things that stimulate your virility every day
- ✓ Things that harm your manhood

Chapter 1: Things that stimulate your virility every day

Here is everything you can do on a daily basis to improve your erections:

Strengthen your perineum

Have you already heard people talk about Kegel exercises? They were invented in the 1940s by a medical doctor, and are aimed at working out your perineum, the area found in between your penis and anus.

These exercises are regularly used in rehabilitating women after they have given birth, but also for avoiding incontinence in both sexes.

However, they're mentioned here because they are able to improve men's sex lives by increasing both erection quality and pleasure during sex.

Identifying the muscles which you need to work is easy: they're the muscles which allow you to control the power of your stream of urine and move your erect penis.

Kegel exercises:

- ✓ Contract the muscles of the perineum for between 1 and 10 seconds, depending on how much you're able to do, and then release them slowly.
- ✓ Repeat between 10 and 20 times. Do this exercise 1 to 3 times per day.

SLEEP

Restorative sleep is crucial for great sexual health.

Even in young men, a lack of sleep has a very negative impact on testosterone production. One study has even shown that one night with 5 hours of sleep directly reduced testosterone levels by 15%. (1)

It's very unlikely that your erections will be strong if you have low testosterone levels.

If you suffer from erectile dysfunction and you don't sleep enough, then look no further.

- ✓ Try and go to bed earlier so that you can have at least 7 to 8 hours of sleep.
- ✓ The light that screens emit (PCs, mobile phones, tablets, and TVs) are detrimental for melatonin production; this is the hormone which regulates sleep cycles. Turn off all of your screens at least an hour before going to bed, or invest in some blue light blocking glasses.
- ✓ If your sleep is disturbed, for example if you wake up during the night, you could take melatonin or magnesium tablets before you go to bed.

It might be that even though you're sleeping for enough hours every night, you still wake up tired. If this is the case, you might suffer from sleep apnea, which is a condition which can have serious effects, not just on your erections, but on your whole cardiovascular system. If this is the case, you should consult a medical doctor as soon as possible.

FIGHT STRESS

Stress is one of your erection's worst enemies, and one of the main elements responsible for this is psychologically-induced impotence. So, it's best to try and reduce stress in any way possible:

Yoga

As well as being a type of exercise which works your core muscles and joints, and increases flexibility, yoga which combines movement with breathing is a good way of re-centering yourself. This is a good start before you try the following technique.

Meditation

That's right, meditation is a powerful tool in fighting stress, because it literally "reprograms" your brain.

That being said, there's no use in spending hours in the lotus position! A recent study has shown that 25 minutes of mindful meditation performed three days in a row is enough to reduce psychological stress and production of cortisol, the stress hormone (2).

Mindful meditation involves focusing on the present moment while breathing calmly. You just need to be attentive of everything around you (but not of your phone or the television), or carrying out everyday tasks, like cooking for example, being fully aware of each movement, each texture, or each smell.

Let parasitic thoughts go by without holding onto them, and make sure you stay in the moment. Admittedly, this isn't easy, but it has a really powerful effect!

HYPNOSIS

If you've tried everything, and stress is still eating away at you, you might want to try hypnotherapy. In a study from 1997, hypnotherapy proved to be more effective than acupuncture and the placebo effect when treating erectile dysfunction which had no obvious physiological cause. (3)

GET SOME SUN

Spending time in the fresh air, in the sunlight, and getting a tan during the summer months isn't just enjoyable; it's also an essential physiological necessity, including for your sex life.

Exposure to sunlight during spring and summer enables your body to produce vitamin D.

You've almost certainly already heard of the health problems linked to a lack of vitamin D during the winter months, but did you know that vitamin D was also crucial for strong erections and a great sex life?

In fact, vitamin D stimulates testosterone production. Studies have shown that men who lack vitamin D generally have below average testosterone levels. (4)

If you want to get enough vitamin D, you need to expose yourself to sunlight for between 30 minutes and one hour per day, from the first days of spring right through to October. If you can't take your shirt off (it's often frowned upon in cities), roll your sleeves up and let your face bathe in the sun.

Unfortunately, in the northern hemisphere, the sun is too low, and its rays too weak, for us to synthesize vitamin D.

Because of this, around our continents (Europe and North America), you will need to take regular supplements from October to the beginning of May if you want to have sufficient levels of vitamin D.

Specialists recommend taking between 1,000 and 2,000 IU of vitamin D per day, in supplement form. For maximum efficiency, take vitamin D3 (which is animal-based) instead of vitamin D2 (which is plant-based)

TAKE CARE OF YOUR PROSTATE

Problems with your prostate, whether it's benign prostate enlargement or cancer, can lead to problems with your erection, or intensify existing problems.

There's nothing like a healthy lifestyle for preventing prostate problems, especially if you have a higher risk because of your genetics (if your father or brother are affected).

- ✓ Follow a Mediterranean diet which is high in fruits and vegetables, organic whole grains, and nuts.
- ✓ Reduce meat and dairy consumption.
- ✓ Cook food on low temperatures, and avoid barbecues.
- ✓ Drink less alcohol.

Some ingredients have specific qualities which protect against prostate cancer: cabbage, pomegranate juice, cooked tomatoes, pink grapefruit, and watermelon.

Dealing with benign prostate enlargement by using plants, pumpkin seeds, Mediterranean dwarf palm extract and stinging nettle roots are reputed to be effective.

Furthermore, one study has proven that regular masturbation (to ejaculation) for men between 20 and 40 years old led to a reduced risk of prostate cancer. (5)

Masturbation as a method of prevention isn't that bad after all...

Chapter 2: Things That Harm Your Manhood.

JUNK FOOD AND SUGAR

Being overweight is a killer for your libido. In fact, excess body fat often leads to excessive estrogen production, and lower levels of testosterone.

Obesity is also a recognized factor in impotence. Losing enough weight to regain hormonal balance enables men who were previously overweight to get their sex drive back.

Sugar is of course an ingredient which is likely to lead to weight gain, but it also has a direct effect on erection problems:

Foods which are too high in sugar lead to lower levels of testosterone by freeing large amounts of insulin into the bloodstream.

Finally, consuming sugary foods leads to the appearance of the condition of the century: insulin resistance, followed by type 2 diabetes. One of the many effects of this illness is that it attacks your blood vessels, as well as the nervous system and hormonal balance. The result? 1 in 3 diabetics suffer from serious erectile dysfunction.

ENDOCRINE DISRUPTORS

Science has acknowledged these as being likely to increase the risk of obesity, cardiovascular disease, and insulin resistance, as well as lowering male testosterone production. We can put a large amount of male fertility problems down to these endocrine disruptors.

Endocrine disruptors are chemical products which are found in common consumer items. Plastic material, pesticides, preservatives in cosmetics, flame retardants in furniture... They mimic estrogen and disrupt your hormonal balance, leading to "feminization" in men.

How can you avoid them? Follow these recommendations:

- ✓ Avoid freshwater and fish farmed near estuaries.
- ✓ Only buy plastic which is guaranteed to be BPA free.
- ✓ Buy furniture which is labelled "eco" or only made from raw lumber.

- ✓ Use organic sunscreens which contain mineral filters. Some sun protectors are thought to be endocrine disruptors which are particularly harmful for male fertility.
- ✓ Eat organic fruit and vegetables so that you can avoid exposure to pesticides.
- ✓ Drink organic wine for the same reasons (a large amount of pesticides are used to treat vineyards).
- ✓ Never reheat food in a microwave or bain-marie if it's in a plastic container (plastic's xenoestrogens are attracted to fat when heat is applied).
- ✓ Use iron or steel pans instead of traditional non-stick pans.

CIGARETTES

Smoking leads to impotence; this is well known – it's even displayed on cigarette packets!

The fact is that tobacco has a hugely harmful effect on blood circulation; from tiny blood vessels (capillaries) to large arteries like those in the penis.

Smoking reduces blood circulation, and therefore erection quality, by hardening and restricting your arteries. When the arteries of the perineum are blocked, it's almost impossible to get an erection.

According to a huge Chinese study (6), the risk of suffering from erection problems because of tobacco is directly correlated with the amount of cigarettes smoked per day.

- ✓ Smoking 10 cigarettes per day increases the risk of erectile dysfunction by 16%.
- ✓ Smoking 11 to 20 cigarettes per day increases the risk by 36%.
- ✓ If you smoke more than one pack of cigarettes a day, the risk of erectile dysfunction is 60% higher than that of non-smokers.

If you ever needed another reason to stop smoking, this is it!

Beware of e-cigarettes: if they're infused with nicotine, they will still have a negative effect on your erection

ALCOHOL

Alcohol consumption may be considered a way of relaxing, and even for fighting psychologically-induced impotence.

However, the opposite often happens when you drink alcohol before a sexual encounter.

Alcohol abuse makes you lose your erection. As you know, alcohol slows down your nervous system and dehydrates your body. In bed, the result is that alcohol makes nerve endings less sensitive, and alters the blood flow which you need to get an erection.

How many drinks should you have? If you go beyond three, you run the risk of not being able to ejaculate, and you might not even be able to get hard at all.

In the long term, you might succumb to alcoholism, a serious illness with potentially fatal consequences, but also one of the main causes of erectile dysfunction and sexual problems in general (7).

Finally, alcohol abuse lowers men's testosterone levels, and this isn't good at all for your erection!

PRODUCTS WHICH FIGHT BALDNESS

This is one particular medicine which researchers are keeping an eye on, and so are men suffering from erectile dysfunction or fertility problems:

Finasteride, a molecule which is commonly prescribed for male baldness, may have side effects which range from a lower libido to complete impotence, via lower fertility rates. (8)

These problems range from slight issues to very serious ones. In some cases, erectile dysfunction even continues after treatment has been completed.

If you're following one of these treatments for baldness and you're not happy with your erections, it might be wise to stop using finasteride for a couple of months. If nothing has changed after this two month period, it means that it wasn't responsible for your problems. If your erections get better, you're going to have to make a decision.

To make up for the fact that you are stopping the treatment, try out some natural products which fight male baldness, such as stinging nettle roots and Mediterranean dwarf palm, which are also used to treat swollen prostates.

Conclusion

There are so many things which attack our virility, hiding behind even our most everyday actions. Having a pre-dinner drink, using an anti-hair loss lotion, having a cigarette, letting yourself go on your diet...

Luckily, now you know. And the good news is that other nice things like getting a good night's sleep or spending time in the sun can come to the rescue when it comes to your sex life.

Now nothing can stop you from getting rock hard erections if you follow our advice for a lifestyle which is completely focused on protecting your manhood.

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2. *Brief mindfulness meditation training alters psychological and neuroendocrine responses to social evaluative stress. Psychoneuroendocrinology, 2014*
3. *Acupuncture and hypnotic suggestions in the treatment of non-organic male sexual dysfunction. Scandinavian Journal of urology and nephrology, 1997.*
4. *Serum 25-hydroxyvitamin D levels and testosterone deficiency in middle-aged Korean men: a cross-sectional study. Asian journal of andrology, 2015*
5. *Sexual factors and prostate cancer. BJU International, 2003.*
6. *Cigarette Smoking and Erectile Dysfunction among Chinese Men without Clinical Vascular Disease. American Journal of Epidemiology, 2007.*
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