

Erectile Dysfunction(ED) | Premature Ejaculation (PE) | Infertility

Below is a definition of erectile dysfunction as provided by the Mayo Clinic:

Erectile dysfunction (impotence) is the inability to get and keep an erection firm enough for sex.

Erectile dysfunction symptoms might include persistent:

- Trouble getting an erection
- Trouble keeping an erection
- Reduced sexual desire

Male sexual arousal is a complex process that involves the brain, hormones, emotions, nerves, muscles and blood vessels. Erectile dysfunction can result from a problem with any of these. Likewise, stress and mental health concerns can cause or worsen erectile dysfunction.

Sometimes a combination of physical and psychological issues causes erectile dysfunction. For instance, a minor physical condition that slows your sexual response might cause anxiety about maintaining an erection. The resulting anxiety can lead to or worsen erectile dysfunction

The brain plays a key role in triggering the series of physical events that cause an erection, starting with feelings of sexual excitement. A number of things can interfere with sexual feelings and cause or worsen erectile dysfunction. These include:

- Depression, anxiety or other mental health conditions
- Stress
- Relationship problems due to stress, poor communication or other concerns

Complications resulting from erectile dysfunction can include:

- An unsatisfactory sex life
- Stress or anxiety
- Embarrassment or low self-esteem
- Relationship problems
- The inability to get your partner pregnant

MAYO CLINIC:

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/erectile-dysfunction/symptoms-causes/syc-20355776#:~:text=Erectile%20dysfunction%2C%20also%20known%20as,experience%20some%20form%20of%20ED.>

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We believe that erectile dysfunction stems from a lack of attraction to one's partner. Many times people with erectile dysfunction have created a template for arousal that requires fantasizing, pornography, adrenaline, or means that do not include a partner which prevents them from being aroused and/or attracted to their partner. Partner's commonly complain that when they want to engage sexually their partner is unable to maintain an erection or may not be able to get one to begin with. We believe this has to do with their inability to fantasize or arouse themselves before engaging in order to achieve erection.

Sexual arousal includes many parts: physical arousal, nervous system arousal, and mental/psychological arousal. Templates for arousal begin in childhood and are reinforced by the types of sexualized experiences a person has. When a template for arousal is reinforced over time, it will prevent someone from feeling aroused by other methods or templates. For many sex addicts, their initial templates for arousal are commonly adrenaline, anxiety, pornography and masturbation (fantasy and objectification). Pornography and masturbation create a template of fantasy and objectification as the means for arousal and this template is often reinforced for years prior to addicts getting with their current partner. This template will often allow addicts to engage sexually with someone that they have some emotional distance from but is no longer feasible once they get married or start living with their partner. The closer proximity prevents fantasy and self-arousal which then contradicts the templates for sex and connection the addict had prior to the relationship. If any of the parts necessary for real biological sexual arousal are not engaged there will be difficulty maintaining an erection or performing sexually.

A common coexisting trait of erectile dysfunction is premature ejaculation. This goes hand in hand with the inability to be aroused by their partner but needing to arouse themselves beforehand. Because they have aroused themselves beforehand they are ready to achieve climax before their partner is and will end up prematurely ejaculating. This causes shame and guilt for them and commonly also causes disappointment for their partner.

In order to maintain an erection or try to not prematurely ejaculate there are a lot of mind games that may be played in order to not climax such as closing eyes, thinking of nonsexual things, or in reverse hyper fixating on body parts, fantasizing, or trying to make sex more intense in order to stay erect.

It is very important to be fully present with our partners during sex, with eyes open, connecting, talking, and making sure it is a shared experience, not an objectifying or self satisfying experience.

In order to achieve a satisfactory sex life for both partners it is important to be open and honest about all sexual templates, arousal templates, and desires and if there is any anxiety, insecurities, or fears around sex. Commonly, pornography and masturbation are huge contributing factors to erectile dysfunction and this needs to be discussed with your partner to

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make sure your partner is aware. All secrets need to be disclosed in order to help with anxiety, to be able to truly connect with your partner, and to be able to experience full arousal and attraction to your partner.

Another name for erectile dysfunction is “impotence”. Although impotence is not sterility research has found that erectile dysfunction and premature ejaculation can lead to infertility. Erectile dysfunction and premature ejaculation which results from lack of true attraction and ability to experience full biological and physical arousal prevent the body from fully engaging the male’s testicles during sex which causes low sperm count in the semen. You can tell how much sperm is in your ejaculation based on the consistency and color of your ejaculation. Healthy semen should be thick and white. Ejaculation that is watery and translucent shows a very low sperm count which will affect the ability to get pregnant. Ultimately this is due to lack of attraction and the testicles not being engaged during intercourse. When the semen is watery and translucent this is a sign that the prostate is being used to orgasm and that the liquid coming out is not sperm but the secretion from the prostate that is designed to protect sperm. Another way to assess whether the testicles or prostate is being used during ejaculation is the way the body reacts. Is your body convulsing? Does it feel like your abdominal muscles are being used to push the ejaculation out? If so this is a sign that the prostate is being used to ejaculate, not your testicles. Is your body completely relaxed and do you feel pulsing in your testicles? Do your testicles get hard when aroused and is there a change in color in your penis? These are signs that there is true arousal and the testicles are being utilized. When there is anxiety, stress, or shame it is impossible to experience true arousal. It is very important to notice and understand what true arousal is so that sexual experiences can be what they are designed to be and so that infertility can be addressed. This also goes for the woman. When there are high levels of stress and anxiety the woman’s body stops producing estrogen and progesterone which are key hormones in fertility. When anxious and stressed the body is trying to focus on protecting itself and does not make fertility a priority. Because of this if there is an egg that becomes embedded in a woman's womb it is very likely that the body will miscarry due to the level of anxiety and feeling so unsafe. Our bodies are wired to protect and keep us safe and having a baby and getting pregnant is something that a woman’s body is wired to do when we feel safe and secure since it makes women so vulnerable. If you are having issues with becoming pregnant, we highly recommend you discuss this topic with someone on our team and your primary care physician to assess if this is an issue in your relationship.

Many addicts will come into relationships with unhealthy and/or unrealistic arousal templates based on pornography or sexualized experiences in the past. It's important that the addicts partner is aware of this so they can discuss and pray against it together. Arousal templates are things that can change with time, conversation, and God's help. However, you cannot heal or change something that is kept secret and the first step to healing is being honest with yourself and your partner about your past and current arousal templates.