



# HEALTH TIP OF THE WEEK

## 4/25: Erectile Dysfunction (ED)

### Safe and Scientific Nutritional Help for Erectile Dysfunction

Erectile dysfunction (ED) is defined as difficulty in getting or maintaining an erection sufficient enough for intercourse.

ED is the most common sexual problem that men report to their doctor. It affects as many as 30 million men, and 52% of men over age 50 report having symptoms of ED.

It is not uncommon for men to have occasional problems with having an erection. However, ED that is progressive or happens routinely is not normal and should definitely be evaluated by a urologist. This is because ED may be an early warning of serious illnesses like atherosclerosis, high blood pressure, or diabetes.

ED can be caused by:

- nerve damage
- limited blood flow in the penis
- various medications
- emotional stress
- low testosterone levels
- obesity
- unhealthy lifestyles such as smoking and excessive alcohol consumption



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Typical medical treatment of ED is the use of phosphodiesterase type 5 inhibitors (PDE-5) drugs. This is a big name for the category of drugs that we are familiar with – Viagra, Cialis, Levitra. However, like all other pharmaceutical interventions, there are always potential adverse reactions.

Overall, men who regularly use PDE5s are 85% more likely to develop serious vision-related side effects than men who don't take these medicines.

This highlights, that while not always possible, it is best if conditions can be managed through exercise, nutrition, supplements, and lifestyle change.

Because ED is such a common and distressing problem, there is big money to be made in treating it. Consequently, the Internet is full of remedies, most of which are sheer hype or outright fraud.

However, I want to make you aware of a legitimate nutritional intervention that may be helpful.



## L-Arginine Helps Improve Erectile Dysfunction

The Journal of Endocrinological Investigation published the findings of a recent trial confirming the benefit of supplementation with the amino acid L-arginine for men with mild to moderate erectile dysfunction (ED). Fifty-one men received six grams of L-arginine per day for three months, and 47 men received a placebo.

Questionnaires administered at the beginning and end of the study evaluated erectile function. Ultrasonographic examinations of the penis conducted at these times obtained measurements of penile cavernous arterial peak systolic flow velocity (PSV).

Men who received L-arginine had significant improvement in their questionnaire scores, while scores among the placebo group were unchanged. ED category improved among 74% of treated participants and 24% achieved scores indicating an absence of the condition.

Editor's Note: This trial included men with vasculogenic ED, which occurs when arteries and/or veins that deliver blood to and from the penis malfunction.

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