A NEW LEASE—on Life!

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If You Don't Use It, Do You Lose It?

Yep, we're talking about MED - male erectile dysfunction.Even though this problem affects approximately 30 percent of all adult males and 50 percent of all males over 40, many men prefer to avoid sexual contact than get help. Statistically, in the past only one in twenty of these men sought treatment.

Most chronic MED has a physiological cause. For instance, there is a direct link between heart disease and MED since the most common culprit is attributed to a decrease in blood flow to the penis. In fact MED often precedes a heart attack or stroke in these patients if the cause is related to impaired circulation. Other causes include:

* Excessive use of alcohol and street drugs

* Regular use of prescription medications such as cardiovascular drugs and some types of anti-depressants

* Cigarette smoking (restricts blood to penis)

* High cholesterol

* Diabetes (60% of diabetic men suffer from MED at some point)

* Radiation therapy to treat prostate or rectal cancer

* Pelvic and radical prostate cancer surgery (60% of these men have MED)

* Stroke or neurological disease such as Multiple Sclerosis, Parkinson's

* Trauma to the pelvic area due to accident (www.urologicalCare.com)

* Ongoing stress

* Lack of high quality, restorative sleep

Medications and/or hormonal testing. Up to 75% of patients will respond to Viagra and other similar medications. Others will need further diagnosis and treatment - hormone deficiency being another possible cause.

A natural product that has proven very effective in combating arterial plaque and as a result also assisting in erectile problems is the amino acid L-arginine. It increases microcirculation in genital tissues resulting in stronger erections. Compared to standard medications used in the treatment of MED, L-arginine has virtually no side-effects. According to a study in *European Urology* , Six grams of L-arginine combined with 6 mg of the herb yohimbine were successfully used in the treatment of MED. Foods highest in L-arginine are: eggs, whey, nuts and seeds, seaweed (spirulina), and coconut.

Exercise - primarily cardiovascular - of course is essential in cases where MED is caused by lack of circulation since movement enhances blood flow in general.

When all else fails there are internal penile pumps (IPP) also known as an inflatable implant is one of the best options since it does not interfere with sexual spontaneity. This water filled device is inserted during a brief outpatient procedure. Most men are satisfied with this option.

Use it or Lose It

This is a very controversial approach to MED because the reverse could be true - that men who have MED have sex or masturbate less frequently because they were having erection problems to begin with . . . but the reverse can also be true according to a European study that caused quite a stir in 2008 showing that infrequent sex can lead to erectile dysfunction. The study was in the *American Journal of Medicine,* tracking 989 men in their 50s, 60s and 70s for a period of five years. Results indicated that men who reported to have intercourse less than once a week were twice as likely to develop MED. In other words the less frequent the sex, the greater the risk of MED. So just as regular exercise preserves all other bodily functions, so could regular stimulation of the penis. After all, is it not a muscle with nerve fibers and blood vessels? Try this approach and enjoy - what have you got to lose?