Causes for Erectile Dysfunction as Explained in Ayurveda

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We all know symptomatic treatment is not the best treatment. Treating the root cause can help to eliminate problems permanently. Texts of Ayurveda explain causes of ED. When these causes are addressed the problem of Impotence or ED can be solved.
17 Causes for Erectile Dysfunction as Explained in Ayurveda

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A free Ayurveda E-Book
INTRODUCTION:
Erectile dysfunction is a common problem among men. It has been with us for ages causing problems for men (and also their partners) around the world. It affects men of any age, be they young or old. As men get older, the occurrence of erectile dysfunction increases. Approximately 5% of 40-year-old men and between 15 and 25% of men over 65 experience erectile dysfunction.

Texts of Ayurveda explain various causes for erectile Dysfunction. These causes are explained with examples in this e-book.

What is The Definition of Erectile Dysfunction?
Erectile dysfunction (ED) is the inability of a man to achieve or maintain an erection sufficient for his sexual needs or the needs of his partner. Erectile dysfunction is sometimes called as “impotence”.

Does Ayurveda Define Erectile Dysfunction?
Yes, Ayurveda defines erectile dysfunction as follows

\[
\text{Sankalpapravano nityam priyaam vashyaamapi sthreeyam ||}
\]

\[
\text{na yaathi lingashaithilyaath kadaachidyaathi vaa yadi}
\]

\[
\text{Shwaasaarthaha swinnagaatrshcha moghasankalpacheshtitaha ||}
\]

\[
\text{mlaanashishnashcha nirbeejaha syodetat klaibyalaxanam |}
\]
This means even though a man has a strong desire to perform sexual act with a cooperative partner, he cannot perform sexual act because of looseness (absence of erection) of his phallus (penis). Even if he performs sexual act with his determined efforts he does not get erection and gets afflicted with tiredness, perspiration and frustration to perform sex.

**How does erection occur?**

The shaft of Penis contains two chambers called Corpora cavernosa. These two chambers run throughout the organ and are filled with spongy tissue. The corpora cavernosa are surrounded by a membrane, called the tunica albuginea. The spongy tissue contains smooth muscles, fibrous tissues, spaces, veins, and arteries. The urethra, which is the channel for urine and semen, runs along underside of the corpora cavernosa.

![Diagram of penis showing various parts](image)

Due to sensory or mental stimulation, or both, the erection begins. Due to impulses from brain and local nerves the muscles of corpora cavernosa relax and allow blood to flow in and fill the spaces of spongy tissue.
The flow of blood creates pressure in the corpora cavernosa, making the penis expand. The tunica albuginea helps trap the blood in the chambers, thereby sustaining erection. When muscles in the penis contract to stop the inflow of blood and open outflow channels, erection recedes.

**Does Ayurveda Explain the Physiology of Erectile Dysfunction?**

Yes, Ayurveda explains physiology of erection as follows.

*Vrishunow basthimedram cha naabhyuuru vankshnow gudam*|

*Apaanasthaanamantrasthaha shukra mootra shakrunti cha||

The “apaanavayu” one of the five types of vayu is located in the testicles, urinary bladder, phallus, umbilicus, thighs, groin, anus and colon. Its functions are ejaculation of semen, voiding of urine and stools”.

Shushruta explains the process of erection and ejaculation as “When a man has desire (*iccha*) to have sex, his response to touch increases (Vayu located in skin causes flow of signals from skin to brain, thus causing sensation of touch). This causes arousal or *“harsha”*. Arousal or Harsha intensifies actions of vayu and at this moment highly active vayu liberates the *“teja”* or heat of pitta. Thus tejas and vayu increase body temperature, heart beat and blood flow causing erection.
How Erectile Dysfunction Occurs?

Erection requires a sequence of events. Erectile dysfunction can occur when any of the events is disturbed. Nerve impulses in the brain, spinal column, around the penis and response in muscles, fibrous tissues, veins, and arteries in and around the corpora cavernosa constitute this sequence of events. Injury to any of these parts which are part of this sequence (nerves, arteries, smooth muscles and fibrous tissues) can cause ED.
What are the Causes For ED?

There are various causes for ED. They are listed below.

1. Lowered Level of testosterone.
2. Increased physical exertion.
4. Disliking towards partner.
5. Neurological disorders.
6. Hypothyroidism,
7. Anemia,
8. Arthritis,
9. Endocrine disorders,
10. Diabetes,
11. Diseases related to cardiovascular system.
12. Regular use of medications for cholesterol, hypertension diabetes, antidepressants etc.
13. Smoking, gutka, Chewing pan and tobacco.
14. Alcohol
15. Drugs like Marijuana, recreational drugs etc.
16. Trauma to pelvic region.
17. Obesity
Can you explain these causes?

**Lowered level of testosterone hormone:**

![Testosterone molecule](image)

The primary male hormone is testosterone. After age 40, a man's testosterone level gradually declines. About 5% of men that doctors see for erectile dysfunction have low testosterone levels. In many of these cases, low testosterone causes lower sexual interest, not erectile dysfunction. The whole male body responds to testosterone.

**Is there any mention about testosterone in Ayurveda?**

Acharya Sushruta the pioneer of ayurvedic medicine and surgery, mentions about an element “Shukra” for which the whole body and male reproductive system respond.

He has said that

"**Yatha Payasi Sarpistu goodaschekshow raso yatha sharrereshu tatha shukram nrinaam vidyaadhbishagwara**"
This means "The shukra (the element which helps in reproduction) is present all over the body in hidden form as ghee is present in milk.

This can be explained with the following two examples.

- The ghee is present in milk in an invisible form. This is extracted from milk using many processes.

- The sugar is present all over the sugarcane. It is extracted by subjecting the sugarcane to number of processes.

Same way shukra is present all over the body. But the cream of shukra (semen) comes out of the body only during the process of ejaculation. But this process of ejaculation needs a joyful union of mind and body.

Decrease in production of “Shukra” or “shukra kshaya” causes erectile dysfunction.
Increased physical and mental exertion

- Working for long hours in office,
- Travelling for long distances
- mental stress at office and
- Stress at home,
- short temperedness ,
- insufficient sleep
- Anxiety
- Depression etc

All the above causes make body and mind tired. The physical and mental exertion drain the body energy and cause fatigue. Fatigue lowers sexual energy and libido causing ED

These causes are explained in ayurveda as "shoka chintaa, bhaya, traasaat .... " which means that erectile dysfunction or Impotence occurs due to grief, fear, anxiety and terror.
Strained relationship with sexual partner

Erectile dysfunction also occurs when there is a disliking towards sexual partner. A non-cooperative sexual partner makes man to feel inferior and he may suffer with guilt. These psychological changes may cause ED.

Ayurveda describes this as "naarinaamarasamjnatwaat..." means disliking for women can worsen the condition Erectile Dysfunction.
Neurological disorders which cause ED

- Alzheimer's disease.
- brain or spinal tumors.
- multiple sclerosis.
- stroke.
- temporal lobe epilepsy.
- Parkinson’s disease

Nerves play an important role in flow of signals from brain to target organs or from sense organs to brain. When there is a disruption to flow of signals due to diseases of nerves the flow of signals get interrupted. Erection involves flow of nerve signals. Neurological diseases can block this flow causing ED.

Ayurveda describes the origin of neurological diseases as vitiation of vata. Various vata vikaras which involves neurons can cause ED.
Anaemia:

Anaemia is reduced amount of haemoglobin. This condition usually causes fatigue. Fatigue lowers libido and can cause impotence.

Texts of Ayurveda mention “paandu” or anaemia as cause for erectile dysfunction
Hypothyroidism:

Loss of interest in sex and trouble having erections are symptoms that some men may have when they have hypothyroidism. Low energy and tiredness caused due to this condition lowers sex drive and may cause ED.

In a recent study when 24 men with hypothyroidism were compared with 66 men without hypothyroidism, men with hypothyroidism had higher rate of ED compared to men without this.
Arthritis:

Arthritis and joint pain may hinder the movement of men during sexual act. These painful movements disturb the attention and can cause receding of erection.

Vaata Dosha is the main cause for erectile dysfunction. Vitiation of vata occurs in arthritis causing erectile dysfunction.
Diabetes:

Men with diabetes usually face erectile dysfunction. About 75% of diabetic men suffer from erectile dysfunction or impotence. The erectile dysfunction develops earlier in diabetic men than non-diabetic men.

Diabetes damages blood vessels and nerves (neuropathy) throughout body. When blood vessels and nerves which control erection, are damaged, they do not communicate properly and the blood flow to penis tissue is impaired. This causes erectile dysfunction.

According to ayurvedic text “ashtanga sangraha”, diabetes is caused due to vitiation of vata, pitta, kapha and rakta (blood). Vitiated doshas affect almost all tissues of body in diabetes. According to ayurveda the process of erection occurs due to involvement of vata, pitta and rakta. The process of erection will be normal when vata, pitta and rakta are in normal and balanced condition. Vitiated vata fails to cause normal flow of signals and arousal does not occur. Vitiated pitta and rakta fail to complete the process of blood flow to penis. Texts of ayurveda recommend simple natural treatments for erectile dysfunction due to diabetes.
Diseases of Cardio Vascular System (Heart and blood circulation):

The most important mechanical process of creating and maintaining an erection is the cardio-vascular system. When a man is aroused, the arteries to the penis open up and allow more blood to flow into it. At the same time, the valves in the veins close off to keep this blood (and blood pressure) in the penis. As the man continues to be aroused, the cardio-vascular system keeps pumping blood into the penis and an erection is produced. This continual pressure of blood (pumped from the heart), helps maintain this erection. This how an erection is produced and controlled.

If the cardio-vascular system is weak, there is a chance that this might have an ill-effect on creating and maintaining an erection; especially if there are some restrictions in the vasculature to the penis.

Texts of Ayurveda mention impaired blood supply in “Hridroga” or Heart diseases.
Smoking can Cause ED

It is common knowledge that smoking actually causes a restriction of blood vessels which ultimately leads to artery blockages. If a man’s penis is receiving insufficient amounts of blood to and through it a man may not be able to achieve or maintain an erection.

Smoking is actually one of the most common reasons for impotence. Clinical studies have showed that being a smoker may increase a man’s risk of erectile dysfunction in men between 30 and 50 years by 50 percent.

Considerable Damage Is Done To Smokers. Not only does smoking affect a man’s ability to form an erection but it is also responsible for decreasing a man’s sperm count, increasing sperm mortality and decreasing a man’s sex drive.
Chewing tobacco harms sexual function in many ways.

1. It reduces blood flow through arteries. Less blood flow to penile arteries causes erectile dysfunction.
2. Tobacco chewing lowers sexual energy levels and causes ED.
3. It lowers testosterone levels. Lowered testosterone levels plummets the sperm count, sperm motility and libido.
Alcohol can be detrimental to sexual health

Chronic alcoholics develop Long-term erectile dysfunction. The risk for long-term erectile dysfunction has been linked to chronic heavy use of alcohol. In fact, studies show that men who are dependent on alcohol have a 60 to 70 percent chance of suffering from sexual problems. The most common of these are erectile dysfunction, premature ejaculation, and loss of sexual desire.

**Medicines can cause Impotence**

Recreational Drugs and Ganja – These also may cause erectile dysfunction as they act on mind.

Texts of Ayurveda describe the erectile dysfunction causes like alcohol, smoking, drugs and medicines these causes have been said in brief as "rukshamannapaanam tathoushadham" - "dry food, drinks and medicines" cause impotence or erectile dysfunction.
Certain medications can increase your risk of erectile dysfunction, including:

- Antihypertensives
- Antihistamines
- Antidepressants
- Tranquilizers
- Antipsychotics
- Histamine blockers
- Anti-cholesterol drugs like statins
- Nicotine

If you suspect a medication may be affecting your sexual functioning, talk with your doctor. Do not stop taking a medication without talking to your doctor first.
Trauma to Pelvic Region and Injuries to private parts:

Trauma, whether through an accident or surgery, can increase your risk of erectile dysfunction. Trauma includes:

- Vascular surgery
- Urologic surgery, such as prostate surgery
- Pelvic surgeries (particularly for prostate cancer)
- Spinal cord injury

The trauma to pelvic region and injury to private parts are explained as abhīghata (trauma), shastradantanaakhakshataha (injury from weapons, teeth and nail.) in Ayurveda.
Obesity affects the blood vessels of penis. Obesity leads to accumulation of cholesterol on the inner walls of penile artery (Atherosclerosis). The diameter of penile artery is very small. Atherosclerosis further reduces the penile artery’s diameter leading to reduced blood flow. Reduced blood flow to penis tissues causes erectile dysfunction.

The production of testosterone a male hormone is affected in men who are obese. The testosterone level is usually below normal in over weighted men. Low testosterone level causes erectile dysfunction and low libido. This condition is known as hypogonadism.

According to principles of ayurveda kapha dosha and medho dhatu are vitiated in obese persons. These doshas block srotas (different vital channels which carry signals, nutrients, blood etc ). When srotas are blocked the blood flow and supply of nutrients to male reproductive system...
gets affected. Even the flow of signals is interrupted. This leads to erectile dysfunction.

**Age takes its toll on sexual health:**

The incidence of erectile dysfunction rises with age, with about 5% at age 40, to 15%-25% at age 65 and older.

Ayurveda describes the cause of impotence or erectile dysfunction due to old age as follows. "diminution of - tissue elements, strength, energy, span of life, inability to take nourishing food, physical and mental fatigue lead to impotence"

**Scroll Down For Ayurveda Remedies For Erectile Dysfunction**
Ayurveda Remedies for Erectile Dysfunction

Ayurveda recommends Vajikarana Therapy For erectile Dysfunction.

Benefits of Vajikarana Therapy

- Increases sexual desire (libido)
- Boosts sexual energy and stamina
- Increases duration of hard erection.
- Reduces incidences of premature ejaculation.
- Boosts sperm count and motility
- Increases ejaculation volume.
- Slows down aging process.
- Elevates body energy level.
- Reduces fatigue.
- Detoxifies and Rejuvenates whole body and male reproductive system
- Can be used at the convenience of home
- There are separate formulated Vajikarana therapies for Obese men and men with diabetes.
- Can be consumed by men of age between 25 years to 75 years.

Get this vajikarana therapy formulated by Dr.Savitha Suri and Dr.Krishna Rao

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