

# **ED Treatment Guide**



*Disclaimer: if you have any medical concerns or questions, please talk to your healthcare provider. The following ED Treatment Guide is underpinned by peer-reviewed research and information drawn from medical institutions and governmental agencies. This source; however, does not substitute the professional advice, diagnosis, or treatment that would be provided by a medical provider.*

You've made it this far, then know we do in fact have some good news for you: ED is highly treatable. Typically, if there isn't any obvious underlying condition, the first step to treatment involves medications called phosphodiesterase type 5 (PDE5) inhibitors (Rew, 2016)

In some cases, PDE5 inhibitors may be prescribed as a preliminary measure while waiting for the underlying condition's treatment to kick into gear. Such treatments as prescribed by a licensed medical provider could include self-administered injections or suppositories placed under the urethra, or the use of vacuum constrictor devices (VCD). In more serious conditions, surgically implanted prostheses may be the best option available (Rew, 2016).

All in all, it's important to remember that ED is but a problem, not a disease. It can be the reflection of more serious issues that connect to other systems in your body. For which reason, exploring diagnostic testing options with your healthcare provider can help identify the root cause, if any.

## FDA-Approved Treatments



### Sildenafil

Sildenafil is the generic version and active ingredient found in Viagra. It improves blood flow to the penis by soothing muscles and relaxing blood vessels. Available in several different doses and is taken as-needed.



How soon does it start working  
**30-60 minutes**



How long does it last  
**4-5 hours**



### Viagra

Viagra® has been the leading treatment solution for ED for over 20 years. Men can now purchase it directly through brigo. Comes in several different doses and is taken as needed.



How soon does it start working  
**30-60 minutes**



How long does it last  
**4-5 hours**



### Tadalafil

Tadalafil is the generic version of Cialis®, made by Eli Lilly. It helps men with ED achieve and maintain an erection with ease. Comes in several doses and can be taken either daily or as needed.



How soon does it start working  
**30-45 minutes**



How long does it last  
**24-36 hours**



### Cialis

Cialis® is a simple daily pill that helps men achieve and maintain erections. Made by Eli Lilly, Cialis® stays in your system longer than other treatments. Comes in several doses and can be taken either daily or as needed.



How soon does it start working  
**30-45 minutes**



How long does it last  
**24-36 hours**



## How to know which one is right for me?

Though all these treatments are PDE5 inhibitor medications, they do have subtle differences in how they work. Your healthcare provider may suggest specific ones over the other due to health reasons for that individual. It is vital to ensure you discuss all medications you are currently taking with your provider during your online visit, as each of these treatments has potential drug interaction risks with nitrates.

Drug	How to take it	Available Dosage	How long it takes to work	How long it lasts	What to avoid when on treatment	Cost
Viagra	Orally, as needed	25mg 50mg 100mg	30-60 minutes	4-5 hours	Food, alcohol, certain medications	\$\$
Sildenafil	Orally, as needed	20mg 40mg 60mg 80mg 100mg	30-60 minutes	4-5 hours	Food, alcohol, certain medications	\$
Clalis	Orally, as needed	2.5mg 5mg 10mg 20mg	1-2 hours	Up to 36 hours	Food, alcohol, certain medications	\$\$
Tadalafil	Orally, as needed	2.5mg 5mg 10mg 20mg	30-60 minutes	Up to 36 hours	Food, alcohol, certain medications	\$

## Are there any side effects I should be aware of?

Side effects are not common, but they can occur. Here are some of the most common: runny nose or nasal congestion, nausea, fever, trouble sleeping, headache, upset stomach, trouble sleeping, back pain. Some more serious, but rarely reported side effects include sudden vision loss of none or both eyes, sudden hearing decrease or hearing loss, or an erection that lasts more than 4 hours (priapism). If you experience any of these serious side effects, contact a doctor immediately. You may also report side effects to the FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

## Alternative Treatment Options

Still not sure if you want to start one of the above treatments? No problem, incorporate these natural treatment and prevention ideas into your lifestyle:



### Exercise regularly

A little libido boost never hurt anyone! Regular exercise not only gives you better stamina, but it also releases the hormones that boost libido, but also stimulates the growth of blood vessels, and increases blood flow to the penis.



### Eat a healthy diet

Studies show that men that Mediterranean diets – lots of vegetables, fruits, whole grains, nuts, fiber, fish, virgin olive oil, and have a moderate wine intake – typically show lower risks of ED (Di Francesco, 2017).



### Stop smoking and reduce alcohol consumption

Smoking is a major risk factor for ED as it is also a risk factor for stroke, vascular disease, heart disease, and type 2 diabetes. Studies have found that quitting smoking can improve ED symptoms significantly (Pourmand, 2004).

On a similar note, it might not be a bad idea to rethink how many beers you're consuming. Research has found that 33% of alcohol-dependent men experience long-term ED effects the more often they drink (Arackal, 2007). Not a bad idea to cap alcohol intake to two drinks per day.



## Manage stress levels

Stress and erections are not the best of friends. If you're struggling to get or maintain an erection, consider adding some stress-relieving activities to your lifestyle like yoga or meditation. Mindfulness-based meditation has proven to be an effective way to help focus your thoughts on the present moment at hand. Even just 10 minutes of practice a day can make a huge difference.



## Sleep, sleep, sleep

Another remedy to stress is to take rest, and that's not a bad idea for your sex life either. Sleep helps to keep our immune system healthy and reduces stress levels. If you have trouble sleeping or face other sleep disorders, speak to a doctor for guidance on how to better manage these conditions.



## Consider therapy

Erectile dysfunction can be induced by psychological issues such as depression or performance anxiety. Exploring therapy from a trained psychologist, psychiatrist, or doctor can be helpful. Studies have found that for men that experience stress-induced ED, including their partner in therapy resolves the problem 50-70% of the time. If you're exploring counseling, it is most beneficial to explore including your partner.



## Take a break from porn

ED induced by porn is becoming more and more common amongst young men. Watching too much porn can desensitize you to sexual experiences in real life, leading to relationships and erectile difficulties.

Here are some ideas to explore to tackle the issue further:

- **Quit cold turkey.** Try it for at least 30 days, and then introduce masturbation again, but limit it to once or twice a week without porn. Keep your focus on imagining real-life experiences and then, after a few weeks, practice starting and stopping during masturbation to ensure you can maintain an erection.
- **Join an online support community.** Support from other people experiencing similar challenges can really help a lot. Explore communities like NoFap for support through this change.
- **Install an internet filter or an accountability program on all your devices.** Need a little more accountability? Explore programs like Covenant Eyes that help people overcome porn by monitoring their screen activity and sending a report to a trusted friend who holds them accountable for their online choices.



## Look into herbal supplements

If natural supplements are more your jam, there are a number of supplements that may help support healthy erections (especially if your ED is due to physical reasons).

Explore some of the following:

- **L-arginine and Pycnogenol** – L-arginine is an amino acid made naturally in the body and can also be found in certain protein-rich foods such as fish, red meat, and poultry. Pycnogenol is a plant extract from the pine tree. Some studies do show that in combination, these two ingredients boost the production of nitric oxide in the body, which helps improve blood flow in men with ED (Stanislavov, 2003).
- **Panax ginseng** – This Korean herbal remedy has been shown in several studies to be more effective than placebo at improving ED, however more rigorous research is still needed (Jang, 2008). It can also cause side effects such as insomnia, headaches, and low blood sugar, and may interact with other medicines.
- **Propionyl-L-carnitine** – This is an amino acid naturally produced in the body. It is possibly effective for treating symptoms of low levels of testosterone in men and is sometimes used alongside certain prescription ED medications to improve their effectiveness, especially in men whose ED is due to diabetes or poor circulation.

## References

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