

# What Exercise Might Do for Men's Sexual Health

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## Erectile dysfunction reduced in men who exercised regularly

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Parviz Kavoussi, MD is an expert in erectile dysfunction, sexual medicine and male infertility. He is in practice with his infertility specialist father and brother where they pride themselves in being a family that helps others start their families.

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(dailyRx News) Staying active could benefit more than just heart health in men.

In a recent study, older men who exercised reported less erectile dysfunction (ED).

"There is no question that exercise is good for sexual health and this is another piece of compelling data proving it," said Parviz Kavoussi, MD, a urologist and expert in male infertility and sexual medicine in Austin, TX, in an interview with dailyRx News. "For the most part, what's good for overall health is good for sexual health. There are a number of reasons for this. Men who exercise regularly are less likely to be obese, have heart disease, diabetes, or elevated cholesterol levels. These are all well-known disease processes that have an adverse impact on erectile function from either a nerve or blood flow standpoint."

Dr. Kavoussi continued, "Men who exercise regularly, typically carry less body fat as well. Fat cells are where men convert testosterone into estrogen, so the leaner a man is, the better his ability will be to keep a good testosterone level and minimize the estrogen level, which is also good for sexual function."

This is not the first study to show the sexual health benefits of exercise. However, "this study is the first to link the benefits of exercise in relation to improved erectile and sexual function in a racially diverse group of patients," said senior study author Adriana C. Vidal, PhD, of the Samuel Oschin Comprehensive Cancer Institute in Los Angeles, in a press release.

ED affects 60 percent of men older than 65, Dr. Vidal and team noted. ED is often due to poor blood flow to the penis.

Increased age is the greatest risk factor for developing ED. Dr. Vidal and team said. According to this study, "obesity, diabetes, sedentary lifestyle, smoking, coronary artery disease, and lower socioeconomic status have also been highly associated with the presence and progression of ED."

This study looked at the tie between exercise and erectile function in nearly 300 men between the ages of 58 and 65. Unlike other studies, which have

mostly included white or Asian men, this study included a large subset (32 percent) of black men.

Regardless of race, men who exercised more than 18 metabolic equivalents (MET) hours/week showed higher sexual function, Dr. Vidal and team found. MET hours/week is a measure of the amount of time exercised and the intensity of the exercise.

To reach 18 MET hours, a person could do the following:

- 2.5 hours of intense exercise (running or swimming)
- 4.5 hours of moderate exercise (light bicycling)
- six hours of light exercise (walking)

There was not a significant boost in sexual function for men who exercised less than 18 MET hours/week.

This study was published online March 20 in *The Journal of Sexual Medicine*. Dr. Vidal and team disclosed no funding sources or conflicts of interest.