

Health Awareness

This Indicator Of Diabetes May Surprise You

(NAPSA)—Many men suffer from a common condition that can be both a symptom of existing diabetes and a warning sign that they may be at increased risk to develop diabetes.

This condition, known as erectile dysfunction (ED), affects up to 30 million men in the United States and over 150 million men worldwide. Some men will ignore the fact that they have ED and others do not realize that they have erectile dysfunction because of confusion and uncertainty about the actual definition of the condition.

Many men believe that ED occurs when they cannot get any erection, but, in fact, the earliest symptom of erectile dysfunction occurs when a man has difficulty being able to keep or maintain a firm erection. Recognizing this early symptom of ED (poor maintenance of an erection) could empower men to be proactive about their health, leading to earlier detection and better management of medical conditions like diabetes.

Recent research has shown that men with ED are twice as likely to have diabetes. In fact, ED is three times more prevalent and can occur 10 to 15 years earlier in men with diabetes than in nondiabetic men. Damage to the nerves and arteries in the penis, a common complication in diabetes, is responsible for ED. Over time, if glucose levels are not managed, poor erectile function will persist and ED will get worse.

Talk To Your Doctor

Unfortunately, many men may not be comfortable sharing changes in their performance with their doctor. The National Medical Association (NMA) Diabetes Education Program believes sexual health may be an important motivating force to help men follow



If you are experiencing problems with your sexual performance, take the time to talk to your doctor or health care provider now.

necessary lifestyle changes and medical management.

Other Signs

Common symptoms of diabetes are:

- Frequent urination
- Increased fatigue
- Excessive thirst
- Irritability
- Extreme hunger
- Blurred vision
- Unusual weight loss.

If you experience any of these, see your doctor. The sooner treatment is started, the lower the chances of developing related complications of diabetes.

Other Reasons

The National Kidney and Urologic Diseases Information Clearinghouse reports that, in addition, such lifestyle choices as “smoking, drinking alcohol excessively, being overweight, and not exercising” can also cause ED.

Learn More

To learn more about diabetes, visit the National Medical Association’s diabetes Web site at www.NMAdiabetesnet.org or call (888) 693-6337 and ask for a free copy of “Your Game Plan to Prevent Type 2 Diabetes.” To learn more about ED, visit, www.kidney.niddk.nih.gov.