

Treatment of CV risk factors appears to improve sexual function in men with erectile dysfunction

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Lifestyle modifications and pharmaceutical treatment of risk factors for cardiovascular disease are associated with improvement in sexual function among men with erectile dysfunction (ED), according to a meta-analysis posted Online First today in *Archives of Internal Medicine*.

"Erectile dysfunction shares modifiable risks factors with atherosclerosis and [coronary artery disease](#) (CAD), including hypertension, diabetes, dyslipidemia, cigarette smoking, obesity, metabolic syndrome, and sedentary behavior," according to background information in the article. "Erectile dysfunction has a high prevalence in individuals with multiple cardiovascular (CV) risk factors and is an independent predictor of CV events and may serve as the sentinel marker for CV disease (CVD)."

Bhanu P. Gupta, M.D., and colleagues with the Mayo Clinic, Rochester, Minn., conducted a meta-analysis of six previous [randomized controlled trials](#) from four countries to evaluate the effects of [lifestyle intervention](#) and pharmaceutical treatment of [cardiovascular risk factors](#) on the severity of ED.

The six trials examined in the meta-analysis included a total of 740 participants, with the number of participants per trial ranging from 12 to 372. Average age of the participants was 55.4 years and the study duration ranged from 12 to 104 weeks. All studies included in the analysis showed improvement in ED with lifestyle changes and

improvement in [blood lipid](#) parameters.

The authors found that improvement in CV risk factors was associated with statistically significant improvement in sexual function in men with ED. When trials using pharmaceutical treatment were excluded and only studies using lifestyle interventions were examined, the improvement in sexual function was still statistically significant. Pharmaceutical treatment targeting CV risk factors also demonstrated improvement in sexual function.

"In summary, this study further strengthens the evidence of improvement in ED and maintenance of sexual function with lifestyle intervention and CV risk factor reduction," the authors write. "Men with ED provide an opportunity to identify CV risk factors and initiate lifestyle changes."

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