

Pelvic exercises may beat bedroom blues

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Credit: Jon Tyson

Physiotherapists from James Cook University in Australia say simple pelvic floor exercises may be a cure for some common problems men experience in the bedroom.

In a first of its kind study, JCU physiotherapy lecturers Chris Myers and Moira Smith analysed studies from around the world involving more than 650 men who had used [pelvic floor](#) exercises to combat their

[erectile dysfunction](#) (ED) or [premature ejaculation](#) (PE).

"ED and PE have been identified as being as high as 52% and 30% respectively in the general male population, but despite the cause being a potential muscular dysfunction in the pelvic floor, traditional management has consisted of lifestyle modification and drugs," said Mr Myers.

He said physiotherapists have plenty of experience helping people with pelvic floor dysfunction.

"Usually this is helping people control incontinence post-surgery and we thought the same principles of pelvic floor [muscle](#) training we use for that may be applicable to sexual dysfunction."

Mr. Myers said problems with the [pelvic floor muscles](#) often occur due to a lack of activation, control, or strength. "Reduction in tone and alterations in contractile patterns have been linked to incontinence and may directly impact erectile strength and the ejaculatory process."

The pelvic floor muscles can be identified by stopping urination midstream, or by drawing the testicles upwards. The exercises may then consist of tightening and holding these muscles periodically throughout the day in order to build their strength and control.

After analysing studies from around the world the researchers found there was a role for pelvic floor exercises in controlling the problem. "Patient reported cure rates were as high as 47% for ED and 83% for PE," said Mr. Myers.

He said that all the trials included within the review identified pelvic floor exercises as being effective in the management of the sexual dysfunctions, but further work was needed.

"Pelvic floor exercises to prevent ED and PE are a non-invasive and a cheaper option than traditional methods. However, the optimum combination of frequency and [exercise](#) will vary from individual to individual, and consultation with a pelvic floor physiotherapist is vital in ensuring correct prescription."

Mr. Myers said it is also important to acknowledge that both ED and PE may be a symptom of other underlying conditions, and that speaking with a doctor is an important first step in seeking help.

More information: Christopher Myers et al, Pelvic floor muscle training improves erectile dysfunction and premature ejaculation: a systematic review, *Physiotherapy* (2019). [DOI: 10.1016/j.physio.2019.01.002](#)

Provided by James Cook University

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