

Exercise found to be nearly as good as Viagra in overcoming erectile dysfunction

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A trio of medical researchers has found that many men experiencing erectile dysfunction can overcome much of the problem by simply engaging in aerobic exercise. In their study, [reported](#) in *The Journal of*

Sexual Medicine, Mohit Khera, Samir Bhattacharyya, and Larry Miller analyzed the results of 11 randomized, controlled trials that involved testing the impact of exercise and drugs like Viagra to treat men with erectile dysfunction.

Prior research has shown that many older men experience problems with achieving an erection when they want to have sex. In this new study, the researchers identified that some research has shown that erectile dysfunction is quite often associated with cardiovascular health and associated symptoms such as inflammation and narrowing and/or hardening of the arteries. They also noted that regular aerobic exercise has been shown to reduce symptoms of cardiovascular disease. This made them wonder if such an approach might work for men experiencing erectile dysfunction.

To find out, the researchers searched multiple databases of information related to research into erectile dysfunction. They found 11 randomized, controlled studies where some volunteers experiencing [erectile dysfunction](#) were given drugs to treat their symptoms while others were prescribed exercise.

The researchers found that prescribing aerobic exercise was nearly as effective as prescribing drugs like Viagra—provided the volunteers actually did the exercise prescribed. More specifically, out of 1,100 men involved in the [trials](#), 600 followed an exercise regimen that involved engaging in 30 to 60 minutes of [aerobic exercise](#) three to five times a week. Another 500 volunteers served as a [control group](#).

The researchers involved in the trials found that those volunteers who participated in the exercise regimens saw a 5-point improvement in erectile function. They also found that the more severe the condition, the greater the improvement. The researchers also noted that [volunteers](#) given Viagra or Cialis saw improvements of 4 to 8 points, while those

given testosterone saw improvements of just 2 points.

The research team pointed out that exercise, unlike drugs, rarely had any negative side effects.

More information: Mohit Khera et al, Effect of aerobic exercise on erectile function: systematic review and meta-analysis of randomized controlled trials, *The Journal of Sexual Medicine* (2023). [DOI: 10.1093/jsxmed/qdad130](https://doi.org/10.1093/jsxmed/qdad130)

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