

Acupuncture and Erectile Dysfunction

Erectile Dysfunction, formerly called impotence, is a topic that is not commonly discussed and for a long time was considered taboo. The inability of performing sexually can interfere with a man's self esteem and confidence leading to frustration, dissatisfaction and resentment.



Erectile Dysfunction can refer to a range of disorders. The most common is the "inability to obtain an adequate erection for satisfactory sexual activity." It can also include the curvature of the penis during erection, prolonged painful erection and premature ejaculation. We are gaining better understanding of the cause and sources of the disorder and, in order to understand where the problem lies, we must understand the physiological changes required to sustain a normal erection.

The physiological changes required include:

- Arousal
- Nervous System - Arousal signals the nervous system to increase blood flow to the penis
- Blood Vessels - The blood vessels relax allowing increased blood flow to the penis

If any of the above steps do not occur, an erection cannot be sustained. In addition, factors such as stress, anxiety, depression, fatigue and drugs can also cause this disorder. Drug-induced erectile dysfunction has been found to be more prevalent with the use of prescription drugs such as cimetidine (Tagamet), antihypertensives and MAO inhibitors.

Traditional Chinese Medicine and acupuncture can provide a safe natural alternative to helping men with this disorder. The practitioner makes a diagnosis based on Chinese medical theory, and then determines whether acupuncture or herbal medicine or a combination of both would be the best means of treatment.

According to Chinese Medical theory there are two main causes to this disorder. The disorders are determined by the other signs and symptoms that are presented in addition to erectile dysfunction.

Decline of Mingmen Fire:

Symptoms include:

- failure of the penis to erect
- weak erection
- cold extremities
- dizziness
- listlessness
- soreness and weakness of the lower back and knees
- frequent urination

Downward Flowing of Damp Heat:

Symptoms include:

- Inability of the penis to erect
- bitter taste in the mouth
- thirst
- hot and dark red urine
- soreness and weakness of the lower extremities

Traditional Chinese medical treatments can be very effective if treatment is pursued early. Both acupuncture and herbal therapy take a holistic approach accounting for mental, physical and environmental aspects. Acupuncture is based on the theory that there are 14 main energy pathways that run from head to toe along the body. A symptom or a disorder occurs when there is an imbalance in flow in these pathways. The insertion of hair-fine needles regulates the flow, eliminating the symptom.

When you think of erectile dysfunction, acupuncture is usually not the first thing that comes to mind. Many assume it would be a painful alternative to traditional treatments. Quite the contrary, acupuncture is not used locally to treat this particular disorder. Because the energy pathways run all along your entire body, acupuncture points on the extremities, abdomen and back are used to successfully relieve this problem. The inability to perform sexually can be frustrating for both the individual and his partner. Stop the silence and seek the solutions you need to lead a healthy mental, physical and sexual life.