

## IMPOTENCE (ERECTILE DYSFUNCTION)

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Impotence or Erectile Dysfunction is a condition in which a man is unable to obtain an erection or maintain it long enough for sexual intercourse. It is a common condition, occurring in a significant percentage of our population and is often a source of great frustration to the man and his partner. The percentage increases with increasing age, with more than 50 percent of men aged sixty and over having this problem. Fortunately it can be treated.

In about eighty percent of cases, the cause is physical. Physical causes include aging, diabetes, high blood pressure, hardening of the arteries, nerve problems, alcohol and smoking, pelvic surgery and, (rarely) hormonal problems. In fact, erection problems are often the first sign of blood vessel disease and therefore it is most important that men with this problem are thoroughly investigated as they may be at increased risk of future heart attacks or strokes.

Impotence can affect relationships between partners if left untreated. Many men feel embarrassed to talk to a Doctor about this problem and sometimes will fall victim to various frauds and scams. It is recommended that men always consult their Family Doctor before trying any treatment for erection problems as there are many safe and reliable treatments available through your Family Doctor. He or she will also know the reputable places to obtain advice on this problem. It is also recommended that men avoid answering emails offering cheap treatments for erection problems. It is usual that the treatments offered on these sites are fake and even dangerous. An example of this was 150 patients being admitted to hospitals in Singapore after taking fake treatments for erection problems and of these patients, four subsequently died from the effects of the fake medication. It is inherently dangerous to play "Russian Roulette" with your health by using these sites.

It is recognised that not only do men with erection problems want safe and reliable treatments, they also want privacy. There are many different reasons that men visit the rooms of Dr Michael Gillman. This ranges from annual health checks, prostate checks, male General Practice conditions such as coughs and colds as well as sexual problems. It is therefore not possible for patients in the waiting room to know what condition another patient is attending for.

The first consultation with Dr Michael Gillman will involve a thorough history and examination. There may be some pathology testing needed and sometimes a small test dose injection of a naturally occurring substance called Prostaglandin may be administered. Information gathered at this initial consultation will help in the decision of which therapy is best for you. Your partner is encouraged to attend also.

This initial consultation will take approximately twenty five minutes. Medicare does not fully cover the cost of this type of treatment, however you can claim the majority of the amount from Medicare. In order to keep the costs of consultations as low as possible, it would be appreciated if the fee was paid at the time of consultation and you can submit the receipt to Medicare for the reimbursement amount to be forwarded to you.