

Erectile dysfunction influenced by race and ethnicity

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According to a new study in *The Journal of Sexual Medicine*, erectile dysfunction (ED) is highly prevalent across white, black and Hispanic populations in the United States. For the first time in an adequately-sized, nationally representative probability sample, the effect of health and lifestyle variables on the odds of having ED were determined in order to estimate prevalence by race and ethnicity.

White men age 70 years and older, as well as those suffering from diabetes, were shown to be at greater risk for developing ED. Severe lower urinary tract symptoms were shown to be ED related in black men. Hispanic men over the age of 60, as well as those suffering from moderate lower urinary tract symptoms, hypertension and/or depression were increasingly likely to suffer from ED. Odds decreased in black men who exercised or had good partner relationships, and in Hispanic men with a high school or higher education.

"Consistent with numerous other studies, age has again been shown to be a very important risk factor for ED," says Ed Laumann, lead author of the study. "We have also learned from this study that different lifestyle and health conditions appear to play significantly different roles in different racial/ethnic groups. Further research is needed to clarify the mechanisms that account for these differences."

"The specific risk factors for sexual dysfunction in minority men have not been previously explored," according to Ray Rosen, co-author of the study. "This study shows the importance of psychosocial influences in ED, particularly the effects of depression and a poor partner relationship in minority men. Given the prevalence of physical risk factors (diabetes, hypertension) also in minority men, these results should alert clinicians to the particular relevance of sexual function in minority men to overall health and well-being."

"This is important new research in sexual medicine," observed Irwin Goldstein, Editor-in-Chief of *The Journal of Sexual Medicine*. "The United States is made up of numerous racial and ethnic populations. Previous epidemiologic studies have examined the prevalence of erectile dysfunction in populations largely of Caucasian men. Translation of the sexual medicine findings of one population group to another can only really be done by directly studying the specific ethnic/racial group."

Source: Blackwell Publishing

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