



Essential advice for men with Diabetes from **Accu-Chek**[®]



*Man
Talk*

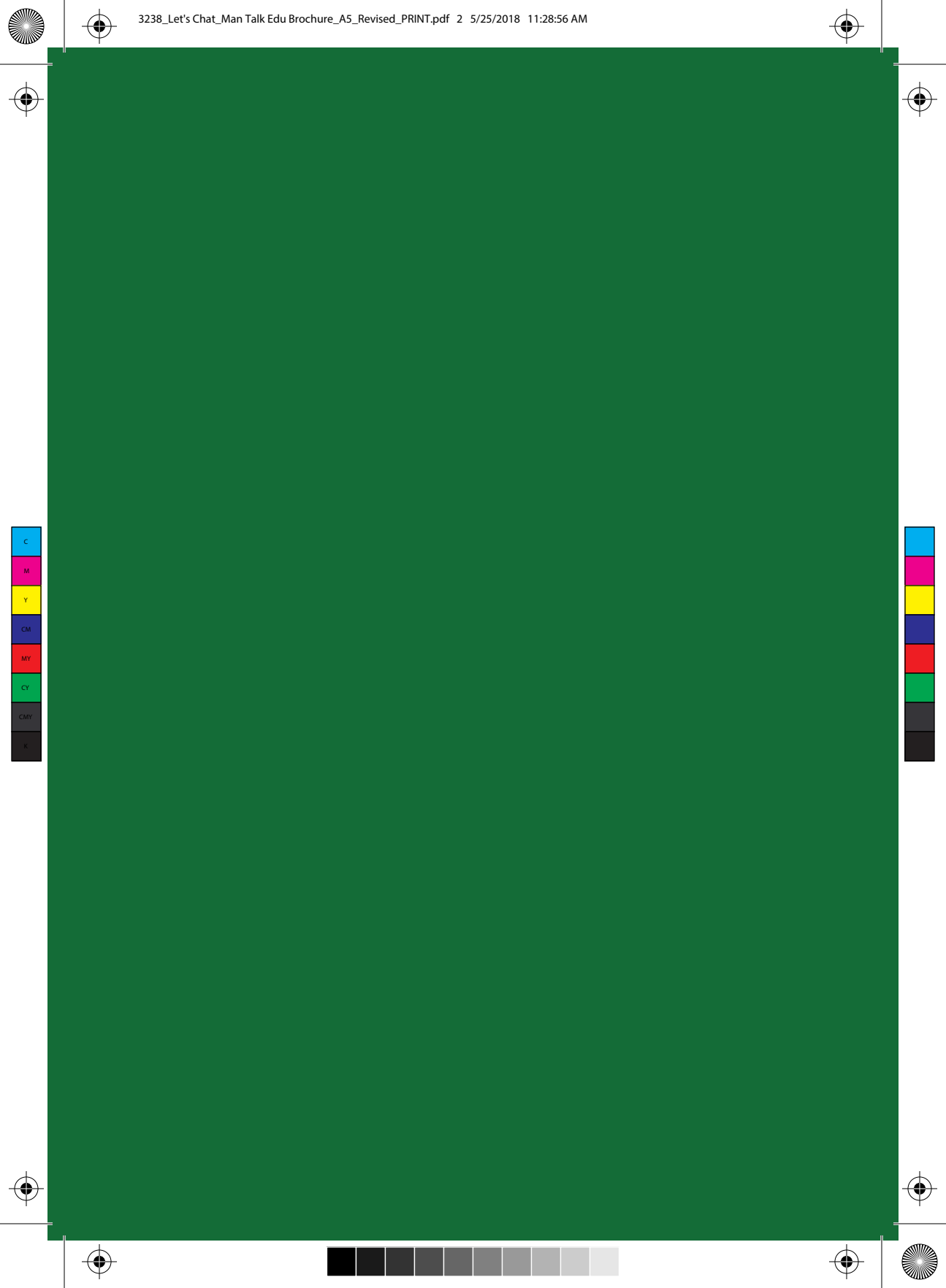


Diabetes matters
Let's Chat
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Diabetes and erectile dysfunction



Men with diabetes have an increased risk for erectile dysfunction (ED).¹ Men who have diabetes are thought to develop erectile dysfunction between 10 and 15 years earlier than men who do not suffer from the condition regardless of insulin dependency status¹.

To get an erection, men need healthy blood vessels, nerves, male hormones, and a desire to be sexually stimulated. Diabetes can damage the blood vessels and nerves that control erection. Therefore, even if you have normal amounts of male hormones and you have the desire to have sex, you still may not be able to achieve a firm erection².



The usual suspects



The most common cause of erectile dysfunction is damage to arteries, smooth muscles and fibrous tissues which can in turn be caused by diabetes, kidney disease and multiple sclerosis³.

Unfortunately, erectile dysfunction can also be a side effect of some common medications, for example those used for conditions such as high blood pressure and depression. Always ask your doctor if you're taking any medications that might be worsening your erectile problems as making a change to your medications might help⁴.

Even when the underlying cause of erectile dysfunction is physical such as diabetes, psychological factors like anxiety, can play an important secondary role, when a man who has had some erectile difficulty starts to anticipate and fear sexual failure³.



What to do about it



Treatment and Management of Erectile Dysfunction

Although you may feel uncomfortable at first, it is important to speak to your Health Care Professional as soon as possible so that they can determine the exact cause of your erectile dysfunction and work out a treatment plan accordingly.

Part of your treatment plan might include the following suggestions:



Maintain Good Glycaemic Control⁴

Erectile dysfunction stems from damage to nerves and blood vessels caused by poor long-term blood sugar control. Improving your blood sugar levels can help prevent nerve and blood vessel damage that can lead to erectile dysfunction. You will also feel better overall and improve your quality of life.



Say NO to bad habits^{3,4}

Try to limit habits such as smoking, and drinking alcohol³. Tobacco use, including smoking, can narrow your blood vessels which can lead to or worsen erectile dysfunction³. Excess alcohol can also contribute to erectile dysfunction so if you do

drink, choose to do so in moderation³. Try to limit your daily intake of alcohol to one drink a day for men older than 65, and up to two drinks a day for men age 65 and younger⁴. Follow a healthy, balanced eating plan and try to engage in regular exercise to help you lose weight, reduce stress and increase blood flow⁴.

Ask about other health problems⁴

It's common for men with diabetes to have other chronic conditions that can cause or worsen erectile dysfunction. Work with your doctor to make sure you are taking care of all health problems you may be dealing with.

Seek counselling⁴



Anxiety and stress can make erectile dysfunction worse and this could lead to having a negative impact on your intimate partner. Remember that in addition to the number of oral medications and even injections that are available to treat erectile dysfunction, a psychologist, counsellor or other mental health specialist can also be of great benefit in order to help you and your partner find ways to cope with this condition.

Most importantly, always speak to your Health Care Professional to find the right treatment plan for you that still enables optimal diabetes therapy.



References

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