



## **Confidence-robbing condition compromising mental wellbeing of one-in-three Aussie men aged 40+: new research**

*Prostate Cancer Foundation Australia championing men's ED awareness campaign*

**One-in-three Aussie men aged 40+ years report<sup>1</sup> experiencing a confidence-robbing condition<sup>2</sup> that is severely compromising their mental health and wellbeing, new research reveals.<sup>2-4</sup>**

**A common side-effect of prostate cancer treatment,<sup>1,5</sup> and other underlying medical conditions – diabetes, heart and blood vessel disorders, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol<sup>6-8</sup> – erectile dysfunction, or “ED,” affects 11 per cent of Queensland men aged 40+ at least once a month,<sup>2</sup> and 25 per cent at least once a week.<sup>2</sup>**

Urological Society of Australia and New Zealand (USANZ) President, Professor Helen O'Connell AO, Melbourne, said an underlying medical condition is often the root cause of ED, reinforcing the need for men to seek treatment.<sup>7,9</sup>

“Recognising early signs of ED is critical. ED symptoms can often present as the first sign of metabolic diseases, cardiovascular disease (disorders of the heart and blood vessels), high blood pressure, or high cholesterol.<sup>6-8</sup> Stress is also a risk factor for ED.<sup>10</sup>

Eighty per cent of ED cases occur due to compromised blood vessels.<sup>11</sup> Men living with diabetes are at heightened risk of developing ED because of damage caused to blood vessels and nerves due to the disease,<sup>7</sup> with almost two-in-three developing ED,”<sup>7,12</sup> said Prof O'Connell.

“ED is also a common complication of prostate cancer, and its treatment.<sup>13</sup> For some men, it can take up to two years or longer post-treatment to regain sexual function.”<sup>1,14,15</sup>

According to Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia's Chief of Mission and Head of Research, Professor Jeff Dunn AO, ED affects many Australian men and is a potential side-effect of treatment for our nation's most commonly diagnosed male cancer – prostate cancer.<sup>1,5,16-18</sup>

“Prostate cancer is a major threat to the health of Australian men, with one in five men likely to be diagnosed in their lifetime.<sup>19</sup>

“Erectile dysfunction is one of the more common potential side-effects of prostate cancer treatment and affects between 25-75 per cent of men who undergo surgery for the disease,”<sup>20</sup> said Prof Dunn.

“Helping men, and their partners, adjust to common, physical side-effects of prostate cancer treatment, including ED,<sup>13,21</sup> is crucial to optimising patient care and support, particularly because ED can significantly affect quality of life.<sup>3,22,23</sup>

“In fact, most men report their quality of life to be severely, or moderately affected by ED following prostate cancer treatment,”<sup>23</sup> Prof Dunn said.

“For those men who have been diagnosed and treated for prostate cancer, and are dealing with ED, access to evidence-based support is imperative.”

Director of Urology and Consultant Urologist, Darling Downs Hospital and Health Service, Toowoomba Hospital and Associate Professor, University of Queensland, Griffith University and University of Southern Queensland, Dr Devang Desai, Toowoomba, said 55 per cent of Queensland men who have experienced ED, describe the condition as “frustrating”, while 38 per cent claim it is “depressing.”<sup>2</sup>

ED can lead to shame, frustration and compromised mental health, including depression. It can even influence a man's view of himself as 'complete or whole.'<sup>3,4,24-26</sup>

"The new research reveals 64 per cent of Queensland men who have experienced ED, feel the condition robs them of intimacy with their partner, 40 per cent reported it strains their relationship, while 38 per cent reported it reduces relationship satisfaction with their partner,"<sup>2</sup> said Dr Desai.

"This does not however, need to be the case. There are many effective treatment options available to men living with ED."<sup>13,25</sup>

"Timely and effective treatment for ED is crucial, because the longer the condition continues, the more complicated it can be to treat,"<sup>27</sup> Dr Desai said.

"I encourage anyone living with ED to speak up and seek help."

Renowned Business Consultant, father-to-two, and grandfather-to-two, Peter, 64, Brisbane, was diagnosed with ED in 1992 following a traumatic, high-impact cricketing injury sustained several years prior.

The condition took a profound toll on Peter's physical and mental health and wellbeing. Physically, he struggled to maintain intimacy. Emotionally, the condition robbed him of confidence and self-worth, resulting in feelings of depression, anxiety and resentment.

"Eventually, I plucked up the courage to seek help. But it took me five years post-cricket injury, to visit my GP," said Peter.

After some initial trial and error exploring potential ED treatment options, Peter was thrilled to find a long-term solution, which restored his self-confidence.

"In our society, men are expected to be tough. But they don't need to 'suffer in silence', because this can result in many mental health issues and relationship breakdowns.

"Help is available. All you need to do is look and ask for help," Peter said.

**To learn more about the symptoms, management and treatment of ED, visit your doctor without delay, or head to: [performatyourpeak.com.au](https://performatyourpeak.com.au).**

#### **About YouGov market research**

Boston Scientific commissioned YouGov to perform an online quantitative survey on ED involving a nationally representative sample of 1,017 Australian men aged 40+ years between July 5 - 10, 2024. The data was weighted by age and region to reflect the latest Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) population estimates of Australian men aged 40+ years.

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<b>AVAILABLE FOR INTERVIEW</b>	
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<b>Sally Sara</b>	Director of Nursing, Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia, <b>ADELAIDE</b>
<b>Bernie Riley</b>	Head of Telenursing and Supportive Care Programs, Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia, <b>SYDNEY</b>
<b>QUEENSLANDERS WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED ED</b>	
<b>Peter, 64</b>	Business Consultant, father and grandfather who developed erectile dysfunction after a traumatic sporting injury, <b>BRISBANE</b>
<b>Doug, 73</b>	Retired serviceman and mining industry worker who developed ED after battling prostate cancer, <b>MOUNT COOLUM</b>
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