

Speedy Gonzalez

Men's Health Week is celebrated each year as the week leading up to, and including, Father's Day. Let's talk about a seldom discussed male topic: premature ejaculation.

A SATISFACTORY sexual experience is a vital factor in maintaining a close and fulfilling relationship. Most of us, however, are often reluctant and uncomfortable to discuss sexual issues with our partners or doctors, fearing embarrassment.

These issues will not "disappear over time" and the more one procrastinates in seeking professional advice, the more it affects our sexual wellbeing, and that of our partner.

The good news is that many sexual problems can be treated. According to the University of Chicago sociologist Edward Laumann, lead author of a comprehensive US sex study, 31% of men and 43% of women suffer from some form of sexual dysfunction.

One particular condition that affects as many as 20-30% of Asian men at some point in their lives is premature ejaculation (PE). It is defined by several major medical organisations as:

- Persistent or recurrent ejaculation that occurs with minimal stimulation before, on, or shortly after vaginal penetration.

- Inability to control or delay ejaculation.

- Has a negative impact on a man, such as distress or frustration.

Premature ejaculation is a common medical condition that affects all men at some point in their lives. In fact, it is an under-reported sexual dysfunction, with most of the attention on erectile dysfunction (ED) , which explains why men are often confused about both.



The term 'faster than a speeding bullet', irrevocably associated with that American icon with a penchant for wearing red underwear as outerwear, has a totally different connotation when it applies to a man in the bedroom. –AFP **Premature ejaculation is NOT the same thing as erectile dysfunction (ED)**

According to a recent study, the Asia Pacific Premature Ejaculation Prevalence and Attitude survey (AP PEPA) that involved over 5,000 heterosexual men, as many as 35% of respondents mistakenly believed PE and ED are very similar.

The majority of Malaysian respondents also believed that both conditions can be treated with the same medication. But in fact, they are not the same and should be treated differently! In Malaysia alone, 29% of men may be suffering from PE. PE means ejaculating too soon. ED on the other hand, means a man is unable to hold an erection. Both are different conditions and should never be confused with each other!

PE is actually a relatively common condition that is seen in all age groups of adult men, compared to ED, which usually affects men who are older. Some men are unaware that loss of erection after ejaculation is normal and may complain of ED when PE is the actual problem. While everyone knows that one of the ways to treat ED is to take that little blue pill, you

definitely can't treat PE by taking the same pill that treats ED and expect it to extend time to ejaculation. It's also a mistake to think that PE will disappear over time, as the condition can last a lifetime.

While PE can be associated with health problems such as hyperthyroidism or prostatic infection, is also caused by mental and physical factors such as a chemical imbalance in the body (such as lowered serotonin levels), anxiety, or depression.

In addition, men who have PE are more likely to report other forms of sexual dysfunction such as ED, the inability to reach orgasm, and low libido.