A GUIDE FOR MEN

ED & PE: *The Hidden Piece*

What most men are never told about erectile dysfunction and premature ejaculation, and how pelvic floor physical therapy addresses the root, not just the symptom.

Dr. Aisha, PT, DPT, Cert DN

Pelvic Health Physical Therapist | Prosper, TX

pivotphysio.com

draisha@pivotphysio.com

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What's *Inside*

A NOTE BEFORE YOU READ

This guide is not about quick fixes. It is about understanding what is actually happening in your body, and knowing that there is a path forward that most men are never shown. Read at your own pace. Return to any section. What you are dealing with is treatable.

SECTION 01

You Are *Not Alone*

> Most men who deal with ED or PE suffer in silence. They assume it is a personal failure, a sign of aging, or something they just have to live with. None of that is true.

Erectile dysfunction and premature ejaculation are among the most underreported health issues in men, not because they are rare, but because the stigma around them is enormous. Men are taught to push through, stay quiet, and handle things alone. That silence keeps them from getting help that works.

The numbers tell a different story.

52%
of men aged 40 to 70 experience some degree of erectile dysfunction*

1 in 3
men report experiencing premature ejaculation at some point in their life†

75%
of men with ED never seek treatment or discuss it with a provider‡

ED is not exclusively a condition of older men. Studies show that nearly 1 in 4 men seeking treatment for ED are under the age of 40. Among younger men, lifestyle factors, pelvic floor dysfunction, and psychological contributors are especially significant, and especially responsive to the right treatment.

PE affects men of every age. It is the most common male sexual dysfunction worldwide, yet most men have never been told that physical therapy exists as a treatment option.

> THE POINT
>
> If you are experiencing ED or PE, you are not broken. You are not alone. And you are almost certainly dealing with contributing factors that have never been assessed or addressed. That is exactly what this guide is about.

The medical system tends to treat these conditions as isolated problems with isolated solutions: a prescription, a procedure, a supplement. What is almost never discussed is the role of the pelvic floor, the neuromuscular system, and the body as a whole. That missing piece is what we are going to cover.

** Feldman HA, et al. (1994). Impotence and its medical and psychosocial correlates. J Urol, 151(1). † Serefoglu EC, et al. (2011). Prevalence of the complaint of ejaculating prematurely. J Sex Med, 8(8). ‡ Fisher WA, et al. (2010). Why are there unmet sexual health needs? J Sex Med, 7(1).*

SECTION 02

The Anatomy *Nobody Explains*

> Two muscles at the front of your pelvic floor are directly responsible for erection strength and ejaculatory control. Most men have never heard of them.

Ischiocavernosus

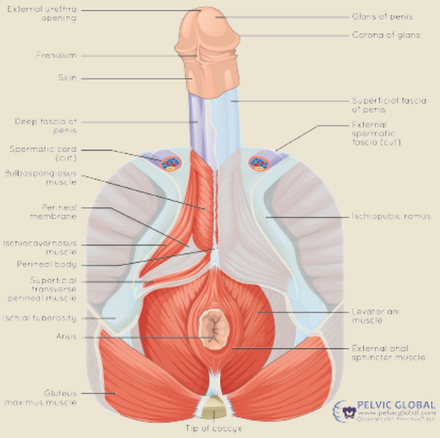
THE RIGIDITY MUSCLE

Wraps around the base of the erectile tissue and compresses it during arousal, trapping blood inside and dramatically increasing rigidity. When weak or poorly coordinated, the result is reduced hardness even when arousal and blood flow are normal.

Bulbospongiosus

THE CONTROL MUSCLE

Assists with engorgement and drives the rhythmic contractions during ejaculation. When it fires too early or without coordination, premature ejaculation results. When too weak, it contributes to reduced sensation and difficulty with arousal.



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These two muscles are part of the superficial layer of the pelvic floor. They are skeletal muscles, meaning they are trainable, just like any other muscle in the body. They respond to targeted exercise, manual therapy, and neuromuscular re-education.

The critical point is that standard blood flow tests, hormone panels, and psychological screenings do not assess these muscles. A man can have perfectly normal testosterone, normal vascular function, and no psychological barriers, and still have significant ED or PE because of what is happening in his pelvic floor.

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR YOU

If your current treatment addresses blood flow, hormones, or mental health but does not address the pelvic floor muscles themselves, you are missing a significant piece of the picture. These muscles can be assessed, treated, and retrained, and the results are often substantial.

SECTION 03

The Connections *Nobody Talks About*

> The pelvic floor does not operate in isolation. What happens in your hips, your low back, your core, and your thoracic spine feeds directly into how your pelvic floor functions.

When a man presents with ED or PE, the evaluation almost always focuses on the obvious: hormones, medications, mental health. What is rarely assessed is the musculoskeletal system that surrounds and supports the pelvis. The physical contributors are often the most treatable.

◎ Hip Tightness

The hip flexors and deep hip rotators share fascial connections with the pelvic floor. Chronic hip tightness, extremely common in men who sit for long periods, creates compressive forces on the pelvic bowl and contributes to a pelvic floor that cannot fully relax or engage properly. Tight hips also alter pelvic position, which changes the resting length and tension of the muscles at the base.

◎ Low Back Pain and Dysfunction

The lumbar spine and sacrum form the posterior wall of the pelvis. Chronic low back pain is associated with altered pelvic floor muscle activity. The muscles either brace excessively in response to pain or become inhibited. Either pattern disrupts the normal neuromuscular control that sexual function depends on. Many men with ED or PE have a concurrent low back issue that has never been connected to their pelvic symptoms.

◎ Poor Core Strength and Coordination

The pelvic floor is the base of the core canister. It works in coordination with the diaphragm, deep abdominals, and the multifidus. When core coordination is poor, the pelvic floor compensates by over-recruiting and becoming chronically elevated in tone. This sets the stage for reduced contractile capacity and poor relaxation, both of which contribute to sexual dysfunction.

◎ Restricted Thoracic Mobility

When the thoracic spine is stiff, compensatory movement patterns emerge throughout the kinetic chain, including at the pelvis. Restricted thoracic mobility also compromises diaphragmatic breathing, which directly affects pelvic floor tone and the autonomic nervous system response that drives arousal.

THE FULL PICTURE

Pelvic floor physical therapy is the only treatment modality that assesses and addresses all of these contributors together, because the pelvic floor does not exist in isolation, and neither does your dysfunction.

SECTION 04

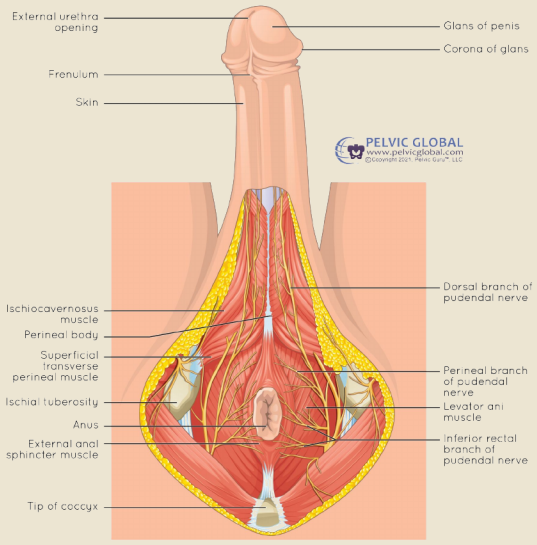
The Neuromuscular *Component*

> Sexual function is a neuromuscular event. It requires the right muscles to fire at the right time, in the right sequence, with the right amount of force, and then to let go.

Most men think about sexual dysfunction in terms of what they feel: not hard enough, finishing too fast, reduced sensation. Under those experiences is a series of neuromuscular events that either support function or undermine it. This is not about willpower. It is about motor control.

The tension pattern nobody talks about

Men tend to hold chronic tension in the pelvic floor. This is not a character flaw. It is a learned response to stress, to sedentary posture, to years of bracing and guarding. When the pelvic floor is chronically elevated in tone, the muscles lose their ability to generate a full contraction because they are already partway contracted. They also lose the ability to relax completely, which is essential for arousal, engorgement, and ejaculatory control.



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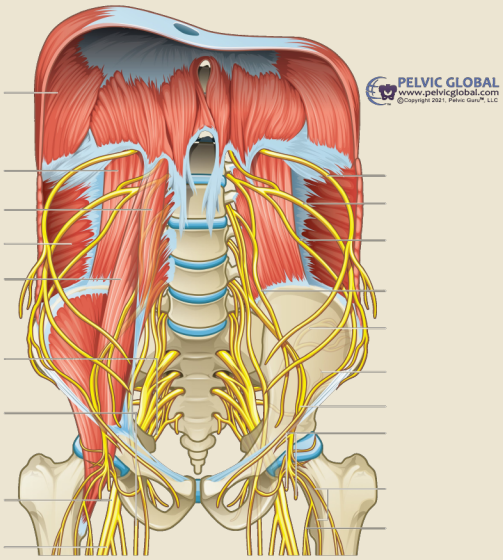
KEY DISTINCTION

High tone does not mean strong. A muscle that cannot relax is a muscle that cannot perform. Many men with ED or PE need to learn to release the pelvic floor first, before any strengthening work is appropriate.

The coordination problem

Even when tone is normalized, coordination is the next challenge. The pelvic floor needs to work with the breath, with the core, and with the deeper hip stabilizers. Men who have never been taught to access these muscles often struggle with the timing and grading of contractions. They cannot find the muscle, cannot feel when it is working, or cannot sustain or release a contraction on demand. This is trainable. Neuromuscular re-education, learning to consciously activate, hold, release, and coordinate the pelvic floor, is a core part of what pelvic PT does for men with ED and PE. The improvement in awareness alone is often clinically significant.

> *The nervous system connections between the lumbar spine, sacral plexus, and pelvic floor play a direct role in arousal, ejaculatory control, and sensation. This is why hip tightness, low back dysfunction, and pelvic floor tension so often occur together.*



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SECTION 05

The Mind-Body *Connection*

> Arousal begins in the nervous system. What the brain perceives, anticipates, and fears shapes what the body is able to do. The physical and psychological are not separate systems.

It is tempting to place ED and PE in one of two buckets: physical or psychological. The reality is that the vast majority of cases involve both, and they feed each other in a cycle that is difficult to break without addressing both dimensions.

Performance anxiety and the nervous system

Arousal is governed by the parasympathetic nervous system, the branch that allows blood to flow, muscles to relax, and the body to open to sensation. Performance anxiety activates the sympathetic nervous system, which does the opposite. It pulls blood to large muscle groups, increases muscle tone throughout the body including the pelvic floor, and suppresses the very physiological response that erection depends on.

> "*The fear of repeating the experience activates exactly the neurological pattern most likely to cause it to repeat.*"
>
> THIS IS NOT WEAKNESS. IT IS PHYSIOLOGY.

The role of pelvic PT

Pelvic PT does not replace psychological support when it is genuinely needed. But it does several things that directly calm the nervous system. Manual therapy and soft tissue work lower the overall tone of the pelvic floor and adjacent tissues, which signals safety to the nervous system. Breathwork directly engages the parasympathetic response. And the simple act of understanding what is physically happening reduces anxiety meaningfully on its own.

> FOR THE WHOLE PERSON
>
> When appropriate, Dr. Aisha collaborates with mental health professionals, sex therapists, and urologists to ensure care addresses every dimension. Pelvic PT is not a replacement for that team. It is often the missing member of it.

SECTION 06

Masturbation, Habit, *and Pelvic Function*

> This section addresses something most providers skip entirely. The relationship between masturbation habits and pelvic floor function, in men of every age, is clinically relevant and worth understanding clearly.

This is not a morality conversation. It is a physiology one. The question that matters clinically is whether the frequency, technique, and grip pattern associated with a man's habits are creating adaptations in the nervous system and pelvic floor that contribute to dysfunction during partnered sex.

Desensitization and grip intensity

High-frequency masturbation, particularly with a grip intensity or friction level that cannot be replicated during intercourse, can produce a pattern of desensitization. The nervous system adapts to the stimulus it receives most often. Over time, a level of stimulation that would be excessive in other contexts becomes the threshold for arousal and orgasm. The result is difficulty reaching or maintaining erection and difficulty achieving climax in the absence of that specific stimulus, a pattern sometimes called Death Grip Syndrome in popular literature and referred to clinically as a form of acquired anejaculation or arousal adaptation.[1]

Pelvic floor bracing

Men frequently develop a habit of bracing the pelvic floor, gluteal muscles, or thighs during masturbation. Over time, this patterned bracing becomes neurologically linked to the arousal cycle. During partnered sex, where that bracing pattern is absent, the neuromuscular cue that normally drives ejaculation is missing, leading to delayed ejaculation. Alternatively, the reflex to brace becomes overactive and fires too early, contributing to PE.

Younger men are often surprised to learn their sexual dysfunction has a physical explanation rooted in habit rather than health. Arousal adaptation and pelvic bracing patterns

Older men may find that habits that were not previously problematic become significant contributors as testosterone levels shift, neural conduction changes with age, and the pelvic floor

> Identifying and modifying contributing masturbation habits is part of a comprehensive pelvic health evaluation. This conversation is clinical, judgment-free, and often the piece that unlocks progress when other interventions have plateaued.

SECTION 07

How Pelvic PT Works *and Who It Works With*

> Pelvic floor physical therapy is not a replacement for the care you are already receiving. It is, in most cases, the piece that makes everything else work better.

Men often come to pelvic PT as a last resort, after medications, after procedures, after being told their test results are normal. Many of them wish they had come sooner. Pelvic PT is most powerful when it is part of a coordinated care picture.

Working alongside medication

PDE5 inhibitors like sildenafil and tadalafil address vascular function. They do not address pelvic floor muscle weakness, poor neuromuscular coordination, or the downstream effects of chronic hip tightness and poor thoracic mobility. Men who use these medications often find that pelvic PT improves their responsiveness to the medication, and that over time, they may need less of it as underlying physical contributors are resolved.

Working alongside hormone therapy

Testosterone replacement and other hormonal interventions address hormonal drivers of libido, energy, and tissue health. They do not retrain muscles. A man with optimized testosterone who still has a poorly coordinated or chronically tense pelvic floor will continue to experience functional limitations that TRT alone will not resolve.

Working alongside post-surgical recovery

Men recovering from prostatectomy, penile implant surgery, or other pelvic procedures benefit significantly from pelvic PT to restore neuromuscular function, manage scar tissue, and retrain coordination patterns that surgery disrupts. Early intervention produces dramatically better outcomes.

WHAT A FIRST VISIT LOOKS LIKE

Your first session begins with a thorough history and a full orthopedic and neuromuscular assessment, including hips, low back, core, thoracic mobility, and pelvic floor. Examination is external and internal, based on what is clinically indicated. Everything is explained before it happens.

Sessions are one-on-one with Dr. Aisha. No techs, no rotating staff, no insurance-driven visit caps. Quality-driven, individualized care.

SECTION 08

Why Breathing Matters *More Than You Think*

> It may seem like a small thing. It is not. The way you breathe is the most direct lever you have over your pelvic floor, your nervous system, and your physiological readiness for arousal.

The diaphragm and the pelvic floor move together as a pressure system. On every inhale, the diaphragm descends and the pelvic floor gently drops. On every exhale, both naturally rise and rebound. When this rhythm is disrupted through shallow chest breathing, breath-holding, or chronic bracing, the pelvic floor loses its natural oscillation and begins to default to a held, elevated position.

Most men breathe this way by default, particularly under stress or during physical effort.

The autonomic connection

Breathing is the one autonomic function you can consciously control. A slow, diaphragmatic exhale directly activates the vagus nerve and shifts the nervous system toward parasympathetic dominance, the state in which arousal is physiologically possible. This is not metaphor. It is measurable in heart rate variability, blood pressure, and muscle tone.

For men with performance anxiety, deliberate breathwork before and during a sexual encounter can meaningfully shift the neurological environment from one that suppresses arousal to one that supports it.

> A SIMPLE PRACTICE
>
> Try this: lie on your back with your knees bent. Place one hand on your chest and one on your belly. Inhale through your nose for a count of 4, letting only the belly rise. Exhale for a count of 6. Notice your pelvic floor soften on the exhale. That softening is what you are training toward.

Breathing during exercise

Breath-holding during exercise, particularly during core work or heavy lifting, generates high intra-abdominal pressure that loads the pelvic floor. For men with pelvic floor dysfunction, this habitual pressurization can sustain the very tension that contributes to their symptoms. Learning to exhale on exertion, use the breath as a pressure regulator, and avoid involuntary breath-holding is part of the rehabilitation process for most patients.

This is one of the reasons why a provider who understands the full system, not just the pelvis in isolation, produces better outcomes.

SECTION 09

Pelvic Floor Lengthening: *Where Most Men Need to Start*

> Before strengthening comes releasing. For most men with pelvic floor dysfunction, the first and most important work is learning to let go, not to contract harder.

The exercises below are pelvic floor lengthening and awareness movements. They are not Kegels. They are designed to reduce resting tone, restore the natural drop and rise of the pelvic floor with breathing, and bring conscious awareness to muscles most men have never felt before.

Supine Pelvic Floor Drop

FOUNDATION | DAILY | 5 MINUTES

Lie on your back with your knees bent and feet flat. Let your legs fall slightly outward if comfortable. Take a full breath in through your nose, letting your belly rise and your pelvic floor descend gently, as if widening and dropping toward the floor. On the exhale, allow a natural, passive rebound. Do not contract. Do not push. Simply let the floor of your pelvis soften on every inhale. If you feel nothing at first, that is normal. Over 10 to 15 cycles, most men begin to notice a distinct difference in pelvic tension.

90/90 Hip Opener with Pelvic Floor Release

HIP AND PELVIC FLOOR | DAILY | 60 SECONDS EACH SIDE

Lie on your back with both knees bent to 90 degrees and feet resting on a wall or chair. Allow one knee to drop slowly outward toward the floor while the other stays vertical. You will feel a stretch in the inner hip and groin. In this position, inhale and let the pelvic floor widen and descend into the stretch. Hold the drop for 2 to 3 seconds, then allow a passive exhale and rebound. Repeat 5 times per side.

Deep Squat Hold

FULL PELVIC FLOOR LENGTHENING | DAILY | 30 TO 60 SECONDS

Lower into a deep squat with your feet hip-width apart and slightly turned out. Use a doorframe or chair for support if needed. The goal is a relaxed, comfortable hold. In this position, take 5 slow breaths, focusing on allowing the pelvic floor to lengthen downward with each inhale. If you feel significant tension or discomfort, do not force depth. Work at the range where you can breathe and feel the floor of your pelvis respond.

SECTION 10

A Note *on Kegels*

> Kegels are everywhere. They are also frequently the wrong prescription, and in some cases, they actively make things worse.

Kegel exercises are a legitimate and effective tool for certain presentations. Men who have genuine pelvic floor weakness with no concurrent hypertonicity, good neuromuscular awareness, and a pelvic floor that can relax fully between contractions may benefit from a structured Kegel program. This is not the majority of men who walk through the door with ED or PE.

When Kegels are the wrong tool

If the pelvic floor is already elevated in tone, which is extremely common in men with pelvic floor dysfunction, adding contraction exercises increases tone further. The muscles become tighter, less mobile, and less able to generate the relaxation response that arousal and ejaculatory control both require. Men in this category often try Kegels, feel worse, and conclude that pelvic PT is not for them. In reality, they were doing the right work in the wrong direction.

> THE KEY QUESTION
>
> Can your pelvic floor fully relax? Not just release from a contraction, but genuinely drop, widen, and soften? If the answer is no, or if you have never assessed this, Kegels are premature. Assessment before prescription is the standard that protects you from working against yourself.

The sequencing matters

A properly designed pelvic floor program for men with ED or PE typically progresses in this order: awareness and sensation, lengthening and release, neuromuscular coordination, endurance and strength. Most popular advice skips the first three steps and goes directly to the last one. This is why so many self-directed programs fail.

The work in Section 09, the lengthening exercises, is where most men need to begin. Strengthening follows once the foundation is in place: a pelvic floor that can be felt, released, and moved with intention.

> THE BOTTOM LINE
>
> Kegels are not inherently wrong. Kegels without a proper assessment are. A pelvic floor PT evaluation takes the guesswork out of where you are in the spectrum and what your program should actually look like. That precision is the difference between progress and frustration.

YOU HAVE THE INFORMATION. HERE IS THE NEXT STEP.

Ready to Find *Your Missing Piece?*

What you have read in this guide describes conditions that are assessable, treatable, and responsive to the right care. The question is not whether this is fixable. The question is whether you are ready to find out what is actually driving your symptoms and address it directly.

PHONE
469-296-9176

EMAIL
draisha@pivotphysio.com

WEBSITE
pivotphysio.com

LOCATED AT
406 E Broadway St
Prosper, TX 75078

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