**Screening for Erectile Dysfunction in Diabetes**

Colton Leavitt\(^1\), Elijah Grillo\(^2\) MD

1. University of Colorado School of Medicine, Colorado Springs Branch
2. United States Air Force Academy 10th Medical Group

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**Background**

- The CDC reports that in 2015, 15.3 million men in the US had diabetes, and nearly 34% of the adult population had pre-diabetes.
- Erectile dysfunction (ED) is highly associated with diabetes and should be considered as a common complication along with nephropathy, neuropathy and retinopathy.
- A recent meta-analysis estimates that overall, 52.5% of men with all types of diabetes are affected by ED\(^1\).
- Age is not a limiting factor as men with diabetes experience ED 10-15 years earlier than men without diabetes\(^2\) with 37% of men with Type 1 Diabetes aged 18-35 experiencing ED\(^3\).
- Multiple recommendations exist for routine ED screening in patients with diabetes, yet it is not a common practice\(^4\).  
- ED is a highly distressing but easily treatable condition with impacts in multiple aspects of patients' lives.

**Intervention Objective**

By February 29, 2020, all male patients with diabetes presenting to the USAFA Internal Medicine clinic under the care of Dr. Grillo will be screened for erectile dysfunction using the Sexual Health Inventory for Men (SHIM) (IIEF-5), a validated short 5 question screening questionnaire.

**Intervention Description**

- Male patients with diabetes were given a SHIM questionnaire at their diabetes follow-up appointment.
- Patients identified to have ED were offered treatment and the results of the screening were noted in the patient’s chart.
- After the intervention, the charts of all eligible patients were reviewed to determine the rate and results of screening.

**Results**

- At completion, there were 29 total eligible patients. 57% were screened, 11% deferred to the next appointment, and 32% were unaddressed.
- The average Hemoglobin A1c was 7.95 (standard deviation 2.2)
- 63% of patients did not have a known diagnosis of ED
- Of all patients who were screened **without known ED**, 93% had some degree of ED (SHIM score <22); 46% of those were severe.
- Of screened patients, 60% agreed to treatment.

**Discussion**

- An overwhelming majority of diabetes patients likely have undiagnosed ED (88% in our population).
- Patients and providers alike often uncomfortable broaching the topic of sexual dysfunction, yet sexual dysfunction can impact patients in multiple aspects of their lives\(^5\).
- Primary care providers should screen for symptoms of erectile dysfunction in all men with any form of diabetes.
- A standardized verbal question or screening form such as the SHIM is a simple way to screen at-risk patients.
- Once the topic is addressed, patients are generally receptive to treatment (60% in our group), and treatment of ED is generally very successful.

**Conclusions**

- A significant percentage of male patients with diabetes have undiagnosed ED, and the topic is rarely addressed among this population. A simple screening form can be used successfully to initiate the conversation, and when positive, patients are often receptive to treatment.

**Reference**