ED Treatment Ladder

FREE BONUS 1 · FROM PILLS TO IMPLANTS BY NELSON VERGEL

The order to work through erectile dysfunction treatments, from Chapter 33 of the book. Mark where you are, then take this page to your doctor.

1 — Evaluate before treating
Separate desire from erection from orgasm. Note whether morning erections persist. Write down when it started and how it has changed. Score yourself on the IIEF. Review every medication. Get baseline labs and a cardiovascular check, because new erectile dysfunction is a screening event for vascular disease.

2 — Fix what is fixable
Exercise, weight, sleep and sleep apnea, blood sugar, alcohol, smoking. Ask your prescriber about erection-friendlier swaps for medications that interfere. Correct a genuine hormone deficiency, without chasing numbers.

3 — Give a PDE5 inhibitor a fair trial
Adequate dose, six to eight attempts, correct timing, real arousal. Try a second drug in the class before deciding the class has failed. Consider daily tadalafil.

4 — If pills fail, find out why
A penile duplex Doppler separates poor arterial inflow from venous leak. Correct HbA1c, free testosterone and SHBG, then reassess. These three predicted pill failure in the study covered in Chapter 7.

5 — Move to second-line therapy
Vacuum device, urethral suppository or injection therapy. Get trained and titrated in a clinic, and know the priapism precautions cold.

6 — Add adjuncts where evidence supports them
Intranasal vardenafil for speed. Shockwave for mild to moderate vascular ED with a partial pill response. PT-141 when the problem is desire rather than blood flow.

7 — Consider an implant when the alternatives have failed
Highest satisfaction of any option. Irreversible. Choose a high-volume surgeon.

How long to give each step

Step	Fair trial before moving on	Where the book covers it
Lifestyle	Months. Studies used about 160 minutes of aerobic exercise a week for six months. Keep it going alongside everything else.	Chapter 13
PDE5 inhibitor	Six to eight attempts at an adequate dose, timed correctly, with arousal. Then try a second drug in the class.	Chapter 14
Hormone and glucose correction	Retest after correcting HbA1c, free testosterone and SHBG, then retry the pills before escalating.	Chapters 7 and 15
Second-line therapy	Titrated under supervision, starting at the lowest dose.	Chapters 17 to 22

Where am I now?

Step I am on: _____ What I have tried so far: _____

Next step to discuss with my doctor: _____

Educational only, not medical advice. Decisions about treatment belong with you and your clinician.

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