

## Men Putting Off Seeking Advice

Men's Health Week took place recently, on 14th June and during that time, LloydsPharmacy and PJ Gallagher called on men around Ireland to make their health a priority and visit a health professional as soon as they have a concern.



Research conducted by iReach on behalf of LloydsPharmacy shows that 42% of men surveyed have put off seeking advice on health concerns and 41% of those men have done so out of fear of finding out what's wrong, compared to just 27% of women. As early intervention is crucial with health concerns, LloydsPharmacy want to encourage men to prioritise visiting their local pharmacist or GP when health concerns arise.

Despite listing weight, stress, blood pressure and depression as key health issues, almost half of men surveyed say they are not likely to reach out to their GP or health professional if they have a health concern. Research by Men's Health Forum Ireland shows men die, on average, up to four years younger than women, and have higher death rates than women for most of the leading causes of death.<sup>1</sup> The main causes of death for men in Ireland are cardiovascular diseases, cancers, and respiratory illnesses<sup>2</sup> however up to 80% of all heart disease is preventable through lifestyle changes and adjusting the risk factors associated with heart disease.<sup>3</sup>

45% of men who have put off seeking advice on health concerns have done so because of cost, the LloydsPharmacy Men's Health Check Service is a free service available in all 90 pharmacies nationwide. The service is available for those with concerns in heart disease, erectile dysfunction (ED), diabetes, asthma, smoking cessation, sexual health, hair loss and skin conditions.

All 89 pharmacies nationwide have a private care room where patients can have a one to one consultation with the Pharmacist about any of these issues or get a free blood pressure or BMI check. High blood pressure is a major risk factor for heart disease and regular monitoring with free checks in a local LloydsPharmacy store can help detect any problems early. The European Association of Urology state there is a high incidence of erectile dysfunction worldwide with one study reporting 52% of men aged 40-70 have experienced erectile dysfunction and another showed one in four had never heard of any of the seven most common treatments for ED.<sup>4</sup> Viagra Connect is now sold over the counter in all

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Denis O'Driscoll, Superintendent Pharmacist at LloydsPharmacy with comedian PJ Gallagher

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launched a Men's Oral Health Postcard on Men's Health Week (MHW) to encourage and empower men to 'choose the right tools' for their teeth and good oral health.

The pandemic has shone a light on 'Lifestyle Medicine' and the importance of diet, sleep, physical activity, avoiding risky substances and maintaining positive social connections. This postcard is a reminder of the importance of also maintaining good oral health, which is not just about the absence of disease such as tooth decay or gum disease.

Part of the overall mission of the Dental Health Foundation is to educate people about their oral health and all person health, and they ensure that their advice is underpinned by science.

Over half of Irish people aged between 65 and 74 have never used the internet. Men who took part in 'Sheds for Life' (the Dental Health Foundation is a partner organisation in this programme) increased their confidence in getting online and staying connected with family and friends online.

This new postcard is available for free in both hardcopy and a downloadable electronic copy from [www.dentalhealth.ie](http://www.dentalhealth.ie)

### References

- [1] Men's Health in Numbers <https://www.mhfi.org/>
- [2] Analysis of Underlying Cause of Death Data (2020) <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/fr/fr-uccd2020/analysisofunderlyingcauseofdeathdataincludingcovid-19januarytooctober2020/>
- [3] Croi Heart Conditions <https://croi.ie/health/heart-conditions/heart-attack/>
- [4] European Association of Urology- Male Sexual Dysfunction <https://uroweb.org/guideline/male-sexual-dysfunction/#3>

LloydsPharmacy stores without a prescription.

Denis O'Driscoll, Superintendent Pharmacist at LloydsPharmacy, said, "When it comes to healthcare, seeking advice from a health professional early on is crucial and for some health issues delaying engaging with health services can leave them untreatable. That's why this Men's Health Week LloydsPharmacy want to encourage men around Ireland to make their health a priority and not to delay visiting their GP or local pharmacist. The Men's Health Check service in LloydsPharmacy stores around Ireland is a private and free service that can help those with concerns around heart disease, erectile dysfunction, diabetes, smoking cessation, mental health, sexual health, hair loss and skin conditions. Free blood pressure and BMI checks are also available as part of the service so we would encourage anyone with concerns in these areas to drop into their local LloydsPharmacy now to talk to a pharmacist."

Meanwhile, the Dental Health Foundation of Ireland has just