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# Environmental Agents and Erectile Dysfunction: A Study in a Consulting Population

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We evaluated chemical and physical environmental agents as risk factors for erectile dysfunction among a consulting population. We studied 199 men who sought medical help for erectile disorders between 1996 and 1998 in 3 andrology units in the Litoral Sur region of Argentina. Patients were evaluated by monitoring nocturnal penile tumescence and rigidity, and were classified as having normal (n = 26), irregular (dissociation, short episode or low amplitude, n = 146), or flat erectile pattern (n = 26). Exposure to environmental agents was assessed by a detailed interview, and 4 groups were constituted: nonexposed, pesticide-exposed, solvent-exposed, and heat-exposed. A multivariate polytomous logistic regression model was used to calculate odds ratios (ORs) and 95% confidence intervals (CIs) for association between quality of nocturnal erections and exposure groups adjusted for confounding factors. Exposure to environmental agents was a risk factor for a flat erectile pattern (OR 7.1, 95% CI 1.5-33.0 for pesticides; OR 12.2, 95% CI 1.2-124.8 for solvents; and OR 1.7, 95% CI 0.3-9.4 for heat). Associations were much weaker for an irregular erectile pattern (OR 1.8, 95% CI 0.5-6.7 for pesticides; OR 2.1, 95% CI 0.3-17.9 for solvents; and OR 1.2, 95% CI 0.4-4.0 for heat). Our results suggest that environmental agents constitute a risk factor for erectile dysfunction by interfering with erectile ability.

Key words: Argentina, environment, pesticides, solvents

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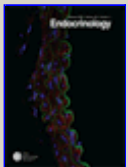
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