

# Hippocrates

Eugene Schoenfeld M.D.

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QUESTION: I have an unusual “problem” concerning my penis when I have an erection. When not aroused, it is small and appears to be very normal. When I have an erection, it grows very large and has a pronounced curve downwards. In other words, it is bent toward the ground.

Thus far, I have experienced no trouble with intercourse because of the curve I have experienced difficulty, because of my penis’ size, with gaining entry.

I have had several homosexual experiences and I know that mine is not a completely unknown “ailment”. I know little else about it, not having discussed it with anyone. What causes it? Should I consult a doctor?

P. S. I am very serious. Please answer.

ANSWER: As you know from your own experience, penises which curve downwards during erection are somewhat unusual but not unknown in medicine. One cause may be a kind of congenital defect which prevents part of the skin from stretching, thus producing the downward curve. Another, though less likely, reason could be a urethral stricture following chronic untreated gonorrhea.

Usually, the only problem, if any, is a cosmetic one; occasionally there is pain as well. In either case a urologist could set you straight.

QUESTION: As a result of a very puritanical upbringing, I became extremely self-conscious about my penis after the age of puberty and wore a very tight athletic supporter to avert the risk of any embarrassing bulges in my trousers in my pubic area.

Because of this—at least I assume it was the cause—my penis became somewhat curved in shape during erection. I wish to know if there is any method of alleviating this condition, and, if so, whom should I consult?

ANSWER: A lot of curves being thrown this week. Which way? Up?

Down? Left? Right? A slight curve up or a list to right or left is normal. For the names of urologists in your area call the nearest medical school or your county medical society.



Dr. Eugene Schoenfeld speaking at Community Arts Auditorium, May 28, 1969 at a benefit for Open City.  
Photo: Alan Gotkin.

QUESTION: When at home by myself sometimes walking around in the nude or while taking a shower, I get an erection. What bothers me is when I think of going to a public place like a gymnasium to work out or a Turkish bath or some other place where I may be taking off my clothes, I worry that I may get an erection in front of members of my fellow sex in such a place. I know that all men get erections but should I be concerned about getting one in a public place?

How do other men feel about this? Does this ever happen to them, and, if so, does it bother them? Should I consider this a problem? I have never brought this up to anybody before because I thought I might be abnormal.

ANSWER: Your “problem” is one that almost all men have worried about, especially younger men but these fears are usually never expressed, except, perhaps, to a psychiatrist.

Some solutions suggested by patients—jump into a cold shower, think of jumping into a cold shower, think of making it with one of the Johnson girls, try to make it with one of the Johnson girls, remember the first time a policeman’s flashlight shone into your car when you were making it in the back seat, think of Doris Day, recall a hospital or university cafeteria meal. The possibilities for turn-offs are endless. Another possibility is not to worry about it.

Dr. Schoenfeld welcomes your questions. Write to him c/o, P.O. Box 9002, Berkeley, Calif. 94719.

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