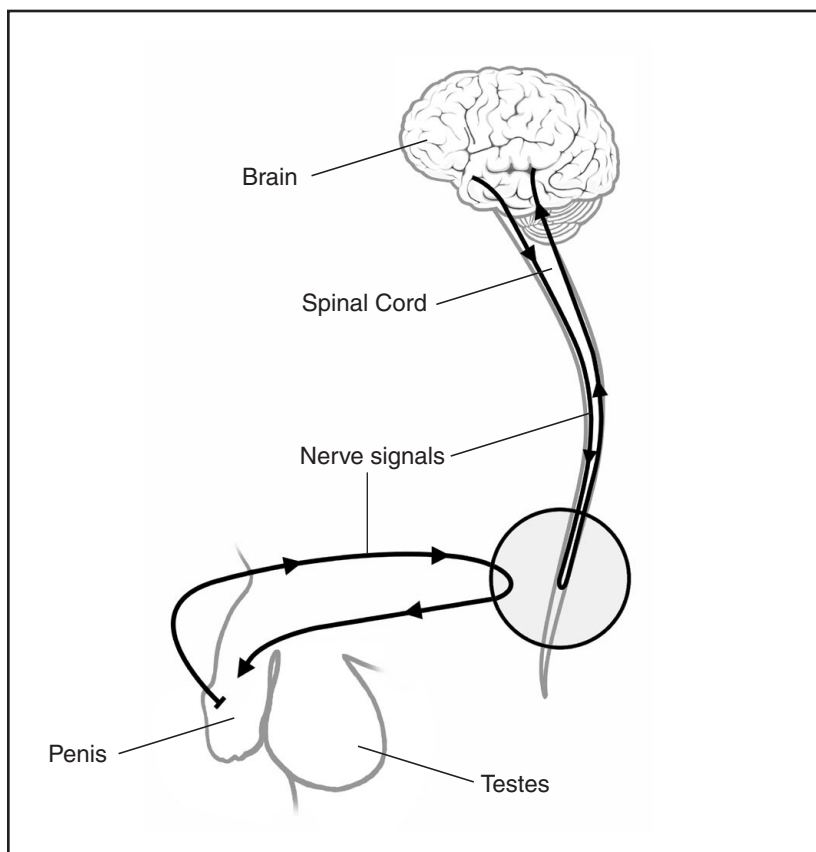


How does an erection occur?

An erection occurs when blood flow into the penis increases, making the penis larger and firmer.

Hormones, blood vessels, nerves, and muscles all work together to cause an erection. When your brain senses a sexual urge, it starts an erection



When your brain senses a sexual urge, it starts an erection by sending nerve signals to the penis.

by sending nerve signals to the **penis**. Touch may cause this urge. Other triggers may be things you see or hear, or sexual images or thoughts.

The nerve signals cause the muscles in the penis to relax and let blood flow into the spongy tissue in the penis. Blood collects in this tissue like water filling a sponge. The penis becomes larger and firmer, like a blown-up balloon. The veins then shut off to keep blood from flowing out. An erection requires healthy blood vessels.

After orgasm or when the man is no longer aroused, the veins open up and blood flows back into the body.