

Sexual Recovery

Pills for Treating Erectile Dysfunction



After prostate cancer treatment, erection pills can be used for penile rehabilitation or sexual activity.

Some doctors recommend erection pills in low doses after surgery for prostate cancer to create blood flow into the penis to keep the penis healthy, not to produce a full erection. Later in recovery, these pills can also work for many men to make erections strong enough for penetration.



Viagra®, Cialis®, Levitra® and Stendra® are some familiar brand names for erection pills. A new, generic medicine that is much cheaper is called Revatio® or Sildenafil. These pills are also known as “PDE-5 inhibitors” and work by blocking an enzyme called Phosphodiesterase (PDE-5).

How erection pills work

Your penis needs a healthy blood flow to achieve an erection. These pills relax the smooth muscles outside of the penis, making it easier for blood to flow and cause an erection.

Your doctor can prescribe erection pills and will work with you to find which pill is best for you.

Side effects

Although erection pills are helpful, they do come with some risks and side effects. Side effects may include:

- Headache
- Flushing (redness or warmth in your face, neck, or chest)
- Upset stomach
- Cold symptoms (stuffy nose)
- Back pain (Cialis®)

Contact your doctor immediately if any of these symptoms last longer than 4 hours, you have allergic reactions, or experience more severe symptoms.

Potential Risks

Blood pressure tends to drop slightly in men after they take erection pills. Avoid taking these pills with medicines that have nitrates because they also lower blood pressure. If you take erection pills and nitrates, your blood pressure can drop to life threatening levels. If you're unsure about what nitrates are, ask your doctor or pharmacist for more information.

Other types of medicines, such as alpha blockers (Cardura®, Hytrin®) used to treat high blood pressure, may cause bad interactions. Use caution if you have a history of prolonged erection (an erection that lasts for hours and is painful), heart attack, arrhythmias, stroke, or eye disease.

To avoid drug interactions or other possible risks, talk to your doctor about any health conditions or other medicines you're taking.



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