

Impotence pill - side effects: what is the risk of blindness or death?

23 million men have used Viagra since 1988, including 900,000 in the UK. Although few serious side effects have been seen, recent reports (2005) suggest a **possible risk of blindness** from **non-arteritic ischaemic optic neuropathy**

. This is a rare condition in which blood supply is reduced to the optic nerve causing permanent nerve damage, and research workers at the University of Minnesota believe they have detected a cluster of cases of blindness from this cause in men who have taken Viagra.

The US Food and Drug Administration has also identified 50 men with blindness who have taken Viagra, but who also had diabetes and heart disease. However these problems with blindness need to be seen in the context of 23 million users, most of which have experienced significant benefit to their sex lives, and the fact that blindness is a known risk in those with both diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

History of Viagra

Viagra was launched in mid April 1998 in the US, and was an instant hit to treat impotence and different degrees of erectile dysfunction. Within 14 days despite the high Viagra price, doctors were writing more than 110,000 Viagra scripts a week. In 14 weeks 2 million Viagra scripts had been written in the US alone and Viagra had become established as a new recreational drug in club culture world-wide, though non-medical supplies were rare in many countries with smuggled Viagra tablets fetching over \$100 each.

Soon after, the reports of Viagra side effects began to climb. Substitute viagra, free viagra, herbal viagra, cheap viagra, viagra sale online, natural viagra, viagra alternative - Viagra sales leapt and so did sales of every kind of aphrodisiac on the impotence market, all promising more for less.

As a result of all this, Pfizer's shares soared from \$45 to \$115. Wild claims were being made that Viagra had the power not only to cure impotence but also to give healthy, non-impotent older men the sexual performance of a twenty year old. Viagra created an overnight stampede

to millions of physicians by a generation of perfectly normal and healthy men, looking for the greatest Viagra enhanced sex they'd had in years. Sex up to six times a night has been reported after normal men take Viagra.

Viagra for impotence / erectile dysfunction causes

Viagra started off as a rather disappointing treatment for angina but doctors began to notice that patients were very reluctant to stop taking it, even after surgery had dealt with any angina problems. One by one the Viagra users confessed that a wonderful thing had happened after Viagra: their sex life had dramatically improved. Many of these Viagra patients had medical reasons why they may have had erectile problems, ranging from the impotence (erectile dysfunction) caused by blood pressure drugs, heart problems and general to health. Doctors are trained to report all unexpected side effects, and the reports on these positive Viagra "side effects" kept pouring in.

But was Viagra safe to use? Doctors reported that 70% were helped by Viagra to a better sex life, while 16% got headaches, 10% severely, others had other symptoms such as indigestion or a blue tinge to their sight.

These diamond shaped Viagra pills cost around \$12 for a single tablet. The effect soon wears off so the demand can only be guessed at. If just 2 million men decide to use Viagra regularly (twice a week) then the US demand alone will be around 200 million tablets a year or up to \$2 billion in market value. But that's just the US.. British private clinics are charging around double the US price per Viagra tablet (£16) but are reluctant to do so without a full diagnostic screen costing around £300-400.

And then people wondered about Viagra for women, so-called female Viagra (new drugs for female sexual dysfunction). Although there is little evidence that Viagra helps women who take it themselves to improve their love-life, Viagra may help pregnant women with placental insufficiency, by improving blood supply to the uterus. Some doctors also think it may have a slight effect in assisting conception in some forms of infertility - perhaps for the same reason.

Viagra sales online

So what of the future? As I predicted several years ago, the Viagra stampede has settled down, with a brisk black market developing, accelerated by the Internet which allows more than 70 million male web surfers to get in touch with other men who have got hold of tablets for their

own use, that they are willing to sell at grossly inflated prices. In addition a large number of online pharmacies have sprung up offering Viagra without a medical consultation, at heavily discounted prices.

Generic Viagra is also widely available, made by companies who are breaking the patent ownership. And then there is fake Viagra, containing little or no real Viagra.

Viagra will undoubtedly be shown to have some other undesirable side effects as time goes by. Expect Viagra (and the new generation of other drugs with similar action such as Cialis) to become widely used and abused by the wealthy of every nation, with refusal of [governments](#) and insurance companies to pay for Viagra without strong medical evidence of sexual dysfunction. This will cause embarrassing problems for them. How do you assess erectile dysfunction except during the act itself? Other tests give partial results. A generation of men will find, for once in their lives, that they are being encouraged to boast about how poor their sexual performance is, to try and convince doctors to part with another Viagra script.

Viagra is set therefore to join the growing family of other drugs like steroids as a performance enhancing drug for the healthy, and possession without medical authority is likely to be banned in due course by some [governments](#) who will see Viagra as a drug associated with abuse.

Viagra facts

- Viagra name: Sildenafil Citrate
- Viagra approved as an impotence pill by US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) 27 March 1998
- Viagra is made by Pfizer Pharmaceuticals, New York N.Y.
- 300,000 Viagra scripts written in three weeks in US

- Viagra costs \$10 a pill in US
- Recommended dose is 50mg an hour before effect is desired - some need 100mg Viagra, others
- Viagra side effects are headache, flushing and indigestion. 3% report changes in vision - mainly c
- Drop-out rates in treatment were low - 2.5% on Viagra compared to 2.3% on placebo
- Viagra confers no resistance to AIDS or other sexually transmitted diseases and may increase ris

Pfizer say only 5-10% of those with erectile dysfunction come forward for help, but they underestimate the fact that Viagra is already a "must have" for every sex shop in the world, for every catalogue of marital aids and will become a trendy, chic, fashion accessory. If normal men with ample performance are already taking it - then what's the shame for someone with real problems to go to a doctor and "pretend" he has problems in order to get Viagra?

Viagra has been available for ordering on-line (not recommended without proper consultation with physician) but some sites are now blocked / not operational.

Companies for some time have been taking faxed and on-line script orders from people for Viagra, so long as they are signed by a doctor.

Medical notes on Viagra - dangers of buying Viagra online

- Viagra should be prescribed only after a thorough medical history and examination to diagnose th
- Viagra should not be used with nitroglycerin patches or sublingual nitroglycerin and similar produ

- Viagra does not directly cause penile erections but enhances the normal sexual response.
- Viagra works by relaxing smooth muscle around arteries supplying the male organ increasing sup
- More than 3,000 men took part in Viagra trials but now women are asking if it will enhance their l
- Men in Viagra trials had diabetes, prostatic surgery in the past, spinal cord injury or no known phy
- Viagra trial participants kept detailed diaries of performance and Viagra side effects.
- Men in all groups improved on Viagra compared to those on placebo - with less Viagra effect on t
- Viagra trials were double-blind, placebo controlled so neither participants nor observers knew wh