



COSMOPOLITAN

EXPERTS

sex advice

from Amy Levine, Cosmo's Carnal Counselor

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"Can women take Viagra?"

Q What will happen if I take Viagra? Does it work on women, and is it dangerous to try?

A Viagra was developed to help men with erectile dysfunction. It works by allowing increased blood flow to the penis, which causes an erection. And, judging by the billions of dollars in sales, Viagra (and similar drugs) is the greatest invention since the wheel -- if you happen to be a man who can't get it up. However, the studies done to test its effectiveness on women have yielded less-than-stellar results, probably because men and women are fundamentally different when it comes to desire and arousal. Though the increased blood flow down below has caused some women who've tried the drug to experience physical arousal, it's had little effect on desire.

Should you try Viagra? No, absolutely not! For starters, the Food and Drug Administration has approved it only for men (even though some doctors still prescribe it to their female patients, but that's a whole other issue). And there has been little research on what kinds of side effects it might have on women. The most common reactions that men experience include headaches, indigestion, diarrhea, flushed skin and dizziness. It's even been known to cause heart attacks and strokes, especially when taken with certain other medications (including recreational drugs like cocaine or ecstasy). Plus, you shouldn't be thinking about taking any prescription medicine unless it's been prescribed for you by your physician!

There are plenty of other ways to heat up your sack sessions. (Take a look through the Carnal Counselor archives for some suggestions.) So, do yourself a favor and try to get creative in bed the old-fashioned way -- by relying on your brain, not a little blue pill.

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