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Cancer Center

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Evidence on whether Avlimil can improve sexual function in women is lacking.

Avlimil is a dietary supplement that contains sage leaf, red raspberry leaf, [kudzu](#) root extract, [red clover](#) extract, [capsicum pepper](#), [licorice](#) root, bayberry fruit, [damiana](#) leaf, [valerian](#) root, [ginger](#) root, and [black cohosh](#) root. It is being promoted to relieve symptoms of female sexual dysfunction. Sexual dysfunction may involve loss of sexual desire, arousal, difficulty in maintaining arousal, painful intercourse, or difficulty in achieving orgasm. This may result from factors such as stress, hormonal imbalances, use of antidepressants, menopause, and cancer treatments. The manufacturer claims that use of Avlimil results in improved sexual response. The herbal components of Avlimil are thought to enhance sexual satisfaction by increasing blood flow to the sex organs and by promoting muscle relaxation.

A small unpublished study suggests that Avlimil may have a positive effect on sexual response in normal women. Avlimil has not been studied in cancer patients. Since this product contains botanical ingredients that have estrogenic effects, patients with hormone sensitive cancers should consult with their physicians before using it.

What are the potential uses and benefits?

Female Sexual Dysfunction

One unpublished study suggests that Avlimil may improve sexual function in women when compared to placebo.

What are the side effects?

- Minor irritation
- Stomach upset

What else do I need to know?

Special Point:

Sexual dysfunction could be a result of other complex underlying physical, biological, or psychological disorders. Patients should consult and be monitored by a physician when using this product.

The Federal Trade Commission charged the marketers of Avlimil in making false and unsubstantiated claims. Avlimil's ingredients are not the same as the formula used in the clinical study cited in the advertisements.

If you have questions or concerns, contact your healthcare provider. A member of your care team will answer Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Outside those hours, you can leave a message or talk with another MSK provider. There is always a doctor or nurse on call. If you're not sure how to reach your healthcare provider, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit www.mskcc.org/pe to search our virtual library.

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