PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Vardenafil

This information from Lexicomp® explains what you need to know about this medication, including what it's used for, how to take it, its side effects, and when to call your healthcare provider.

Brand Names: US

Levitra [DSC]; Staxyn [DSC]

Brand Names: Canada

APO-Vardenafil; JAMP-Vardenafil; JAMP-Vardenafil ODT; Levitra [DSC]; MYLAN-VARDENAFIL; Staxyn [DSC]

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to treat erectile dysfunction (ED).
- It may be given to you for other reasons. Talk with the doctor.

What do I need to tell my doctor BEFORE I take this drug?

- If you are allergic to this drug; any part of this drug; or any other drugs, foods, or substances. Tell your

doctor about the allergy and what signs you had.

- If you have any of these health problems: Kidney disease or liver disease.
- If you have certain hereditary eye problems like retinitis pigmentosa.
- If you have been told that you are not healthy enough to have sex.
- If you have any of these health problems: Chest pain (includes chest pain during sex), heart disease, heart failure, or high or low blood pressure.
- If you have ever had a long QT on ECG.
- If you have had any of these health problems in the last 6 months: An abnormal heartbeat, heart attack, or stroke.
- If you are not able to break down fructose, talk with the doctor. Some of these products have sorbitol.
- If you use drugs called “poppers” like amyl nitrite and butyl nitrite.
- If you are taking any of these drugs: Cobicistat, isosorbide dinitrate, isosorbide mononitrate, nitroglycerin, riociguat, ritonavir, or vericiguat.
- If you are using another drug like this one. If you are not sure, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

- If you are taking any of these drugs: Atazanavir, clarithromycin, erythromycin, indinavir, itraconazole, ketoconazole, ritonavir, saquinavir, or drugs to treat a heartbeat that is not normal.
- If you are able to get pregnant or breast-feed. This drug is not approved for use in these patients. If you are pregnant, plan on getting pregnant, or are breast-feeding, talk with your doctor.
- If the patient is a child. This drug is not approved for use in children.

This is not a list of all drugs or health problems that interact with this drug.

Tell your doctor and pharmacist about all of your drugs (prescription or OTC, natural products, vitamins) and health problems. You must check to make sure that it is safe for you to take this drug with all of your drugs and health problems. Do not start, stop, or change the dose of any drug without checking with your doctor.

What are some things I need to know or do while I take this drug?

- Tell all of your health care providers that you take this drug. This includes your doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and dentists.

- There are different brands and forms of this drug. Do not switch between different brands or forms of this drug without calling the doctor who ordered it.
- Avoid driving and doing other tasks or actions that call for you to be alert until you see how this drug affects you.
- To lower the chance of feeling dizzy or passing out, rise slowly if you have been sitting or lying down. Be careful going up and down stairs.
- Talk with your doctor before you drink alcohol.
- Avoid grapefruit and grapefruit juice.
- This drug does not stop the spread of diseases like HIV or hepatitis that are passed through having sex. Do not have any kind of sex without using a latex or polyurethane condom. If you have questions, talk with your doctor.
- If you have phenylketonuria (PKU), talk with your doctor. Some products have phenylalanine.
- A very bad eye problem has rarely happened with this drug. This may lead to a change in eyesight and sometimes loss of eyesight, which may not come back. Talk with the doctor.
- If you are 65 or older, use this drug with care. You could have more side effects.

What are some side effects that I need to call my doctor about right away?

WARNING/CAUTION: Even though it may be rare, some people may have very bad and sometimes deadly side effects when taking a drug. Tell your doctor or get medical help right away if you have any of the following signs or symptoms that may be related to a very bad side effect:

- Signs of an allergic reaction, like rash; hives; itching; red, swollen, blistered, or peeling skin with or without fever; wheezing; tightness in the chest or throat; trouble breathing, swallowing, or talking; unusual hoarseness; or swelling of the mouth, face, lips, tongue, or throat.
- Chest pain or pressure, a fast heartbeat, or an abnormal heartbeat.
- Severe dizziness or passing out.
- Weakness on 1 side of the body, trouble speaking or thinking, change in balance, drooping on one side of the face, or blurred eyesight.
- Change in eyesight or in the way you see color.
- Loss of eyesight.
- Ringing in the ears, hearing loss, or any other changes in hearing.

- Call your doctor right away if you have a painful erection (hard penis) or an erection that lasts for longer than 4 hours. This may happen even when you are not having sex. If this is not treated right away, it may lead to lasting sex problems and you may not be able to have sex.

What are some other side effects of this drug?

All drugs may cause side effects. However, many people have no side effects or only have minor side effects. Call your doctor or get medical help if any of these side effects or any other side effects bother you or do not go away:

- Dizziness or headache.
- Flushing.
- Runny or stuffy nose.
- Upset stomach.
- Back pain.

These are not all of the side effects that may occur. If you have questions about side effects, call your doctor. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects.

You may report side effects to your national health agency.

You may report side effects to the FDA at 1-800-332-1088. You may also report side effects at https://www.fda.gov/medwatch.

How is this drug best taken?

Use this drug as ordered by your doctor. Read all information given to you. Follow all instructions closely.

All products:

- Take with or without food.
- Take 60 minutes before sex.

Oral-disintegrating tablet:

- Place on your tongue and let it dissolve. Water is not needed. Do not swallow it whole. Do not chew, break, or crush it.
- Do not take with liquid.
- Do not take this drug out of the blister pack until you are ready to take it. Take this drug right away after opening the blister pack. Do not store the removed drug for future use.

What do I do if I miss a dose?

- This drug is used on an as needed basis. Do not use more often than told by the doctor.

How do I store and/or throw out this drug?
All products:

- Store at room temperature protected from light. Store in a dry place. Do not store in a bathroom.
- Keep all drugs in a safe place. Keep all drugs out of the reach of children and pets.
- Throw away unused or expired drugs. Do not flush down a toilet or pour down a drain unless you are told to do so. Check with your pharmacist if you have questions about the best way to throw out drugs. There may be drug take-back programs in your area.

Oral-disintegrating tablet:

- Store in original container.

General drug facts

- If your symptoms or health problems do not get better or if they become worse, call your doctor.
- Do not share your drugs with others and do not take anyone else’s drugs.
- Some drugs may have another patient information leaflet. If you have any questions about this drug, please talk with your doctor, nurse, pharmacist, or other health care provider.

- Some drugs may have another patient information leaflet. Check with your pharmacist. If you have any questions about this drug, please talk with your doctor, nurse, pharmacist, or other health care provider.
- If you think there has been an overdose, call your poison control center or get medical care right away. Be ready to tell or show what was taken, how much, and when it happened.

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If you have any questions, contact a member of your care team directly. If you're a patient at MSK and you need to reach a provider after 5 p.m., during the weekend, or on a holiday, call 212-639-2000.

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

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