Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Sildenafil

This information from UpToDate® Lexidrug™ 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

Liqrev [DSC]; Revatio; Viagra; Vybrique

Brand Names: Canada

ACCEL-Sildenafil; AG-Sildenafil; APO-Sildenafil; AURO-Sildenafil; BIO-Sildenafil; JAMP-Sildenafil; JAMP-Sildenafil R; M-Sildenafil; Mar-Sildenafil; MINT-Sildenafil; NRA-Sildenafil; PMS-Sildenafil R; Priva-Sildenafil [DSC]; PRZ-Sildenafil; Revatio; RIVA-Sildenafil; TEVA-Sildenafil; TEVA-Sildenafil R; UPH-Sildenafil; Viagra

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to treat erectile dysfunction (ED).
- It is used to treat high blood pressure in the lungs.
- 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?

For all uses of 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 a health problem called pulmonary veno-occlusive disease (PVOD).

- If you have certain hereditary eye problems like retinitis pigmentosa.
- If you use drugs called “poppers” like amyl nitrite and butyl nitrite.
- If you are taking any of these drugs: Isosorbide dinitrate, isosorbide mononitrate, or nitroglycerin. Do not take these drugs with this drug. You may also need to avoid taking these drugs for some time after your last dose of this drug.
- If you are taking riociguat or vericiguat.
- If you take any other drugs (prescription or OTC, natural products, vitamins). There are many drugs that interact with this drug, like certain drugs that are used for HIV, infections, and other health problems.
- If you are taking another drug that has the same drug in it.
- If you are taking another drug like this one that is used to treat erectile dysfunction (ED) or high pressure in the lungs.

For erectile dysfunction (ED):

- If you have been told that you are not healthy enough to have sex.
- If you are female. This drug is not approved for use in females.
- If the patient is a child. This drug is not approved for use in children.
- 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 had any of these health problems in the last 6 months: An abnormal heartbeat, heart attack, or stroke.

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?

For all uses of this drug:

- Tell all of your health care providers that you take this drug. This includes your doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and dentists.
- 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.
- Rarely, certain side effects like abnormal heartbeat, heart attack, stroke, bleeding in the lungs, and very bad high blood pressure have happened with this drug. Sometimes, this has been deadly. Most of the time, these problems happened in people who had heart problems before taking this drug. It is not known if this drug caused these problems. If you have questions, talk with the doctor.
- Severe eye problems have rarely happened with this drug. Some of these may lead to a change in eyesight and sometimes loss of eyesight, which may not come back. Talk with the doctor.
- If you have sickle cell disease, talk with your doctor.
- If you are 65 or older, use this drug with care. You could have more side effects.

For erectile dysfunction (ED):

- This drug does not protect against infections that are spread through having sex like HIV or hepatitis. To protect against these infections, use a latex or polyurethane condom.

High pressure in the lungs:

- Tell your doctor if you are pregnant, plan on getting pregnant, or are breast-feeding. You will need to talk about the benefits and risks to you and the baby.

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.
- Dizziness or passing out.
- Severe upset stomach or throwing up.
- 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.
- Loss of eyesight.
- Ringing in the ears, hearing loss, or any other changes in hearing.
- Trouble breathing that is new or worse.
- Swelling in the arms or legs.
- Fever.
- Any unexplained bruising or bleeding.
- 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:

For all uses of this drug:

- Flushing.
- Headache.
- Heartburn.
- Upset stomach.
- Runny or stuffy nose.
- Muscle pain.

For erectile dysfunction (ED):

- Back pain.

High pressure in the lungs:

- Diarrhea.
- Nosebleed.
- Back, arm, or leg 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 oral products:

- Take with or without food.

For erectile dysfunction (ED):

- Take this drug before sex when you were told by your doctor. If you are not sure when to take this drug, talk with your doctor.
- Do not use more than what your doctor told you to use. Do not use more often or longer than what you were told. Doing any of these things may raise the chance of very bad side effects.

Oral film:

- Be sure your hands are dry before you touch this drug.
- Put the film on the tongue and let it dissolve. Water is not needed.
- Let the film dissolve all the way before swallowing it. Do not chew or split the film. Do not swallow the film whole.

High pressure in the lungs:

- Keep taking this drug as you have been told by your doctor or other health care provider, even if you feel well.

Liquid (suspension):

- Shake well before use.
- Measure liquid doses carefully. Be sure you know what type of measuring device to use and how to measure the dose. If you are not sure, talk with the doctor or pharmacist.

Injection:

- It is given as a shot into a vein.

What do I do if I miss a dose?
For erectile dysfunction (ED):

- This drug is used on an as needed basis. Do not use more often than told by the doctor.
- Do not take 2 doses on the same day.

High pressure in the lungs:

- Take a missed dose as soon as you think about it.
- If it is close to the time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and go back to your normal time.
- Do not take 2 doses at the same time or extra doses.

Injection:

- Call your doctor to find out what to do.

How do I store and/or throw out this drug?
Liquid (suspension):

- Store at room temperature. Do not freeze. Some brands of this drug may be stored in the refrigerator. Check with your pharmacist to see if your brand can be stored in the refrigerator.
- Some brands of this drug must be thrown away 60 days after being mixed. Some brands must be thrown away 90 days after opening. Write the date the container is opened on the container label. Be sure you know how long you can store your drug before it must be thrown away.

Tablets and oral film:

- Store at room temperature in a dry place. Do not store in a bathroom.

Injection:

- If you need to store this drug at home, talk with your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist about how to store it.

All products:

- 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.

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.

Consumer Information Use and Disclaimer

This generalized information is a limited summary of diagnosis, treatment, and/or medication information. It is not meant to be comprehensive and should be used as a tool to help the user understand and/or assess potential diagnostic and treatment options. It does NOT include all information about conditions, treatments, medications, side effects, or risks that may apply to a specific patient. It is not intended to be medical advice or a substitute for the medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment of a health care provider based on the health care provider's examination and assessment of a patient's specific and unique circumstances. Patients must speak with a health care provider for complete information about their health, medical questions, and treatment options, including any risks or benefits regarding use of medications. This information does not endorse any treatments or medications as safe, effective, or approved for treating a specific patient. UpToDate, Inc. and its affiliates disclaim any warranty or liability relating to this information or the use thereof. The use of this information is governed by the Terms of Use, available at https://www.wolterskluwer.com/en/know/clinical-effectiveness-terms.

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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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