

# Erectile Rehabilitation after Robotic Prostatectomy

**This is information about treatments used to help men after having Robotic Prostatectomy Surgery**

## **Medicines Viagra® (Sildenafil), Levitra® (Vardenafil), Cialis® (Tadalafil)**

Patients who take nitrates (e.g., Isordil, Isomo, Imur, Sorbitrate, Isosorbide, Nitroglycerin) **must not take** Viagra, Levitra or Cialis. Ask your doctor or pharmacist about other drug interactions for each of these drugs.

- **Viagra®**, also called **Sildenafil**, is an oral medication that a man would take to help with Erectile Dysfunction (ED). Viagra increases the blood flow to the penis so that when a man is sexually aroused, he can get and maintain an erection. If he is not sexually aroused, an erection will not happen. You will need to take the pill 1 hour to 2 hours before any sexual activity for the best results. It is also best to take this medicine on an empty stomach. If you do eat, make sure it is a low-fat meal. The medicine may take longer to work or not work at all if taken with a high fat meal or with alcohol. Do not drink grapefruit juice when taking Viagra.

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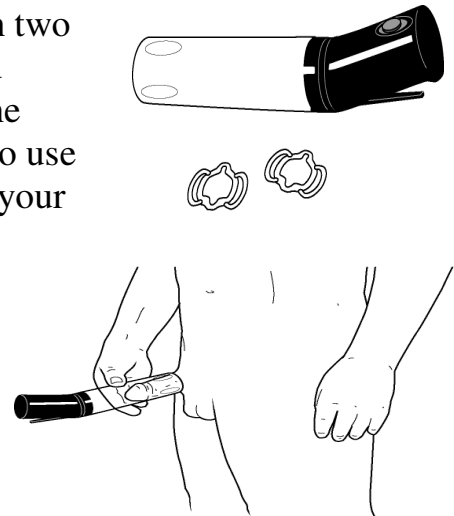
**Learn more about your health care.**

- **Levitra®**, also called **Vardenafil**, is another oral medication for ED. It has an effect similar to Viagra. Levitra causes an erection within 1 hour or less. Your erection may last up to 4 hours. You can take this medication with or without food.
- **Cialis®**, also called **Tadalafil**, is the third drug used to treat ED. After taking this medication erection usually occurs in 30 to 60 minutes and can improve function for up to 36 hours. You can take this medication with or without food; however, do not drink grapefruit juice or alcohol with Cialis.

### **Vacuum Constriction Device (VCD)**

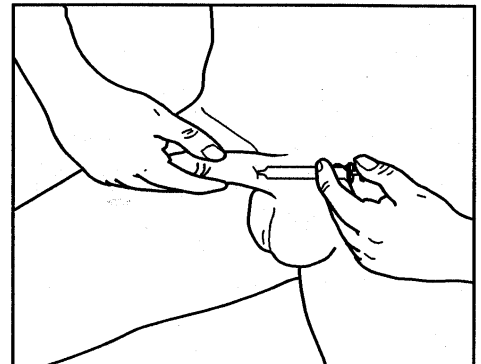
The vacuum (or suction) device is used to help in two ways. First it can help to increase blood flow and oxygen to your penis. It also serves to exercise the muscle (rehabilitation). You will be taught how to use this at your first doctor's appointment following your surgery.

You should do this twice a day until you are able to maintain an erection on your own. If you use the vacuum device for sexual activity you will need to use it with an oral medication such as Cialis®, Levitra® or Viagra®.



### **Injection Therapy**

This treatment is used to produce an erection for sexual activity and it will also help you with rehabilitation. You will inject a medicine into your penis every time you want to have intercourse. You will be taught how to inject this medication. The response to the medication is different for each person. Your doctor will



determine the amount of medicine that you need. If the injections work for you, your erection will be close to normal. Your erection will happen quickly after the injection and can last up to 1 hour. **You can only give yourself this injection every 48 hours.**

The benefits of this treatment vary from person to person. The cost varies with the amount of medication you are taking. Men can have fairly normal short-lasting erections with this treatment. Rare side effects are: slight bleeding or bruising at the injection area, scar tissue build-up or priapism (an erection that won't go away).

## Penile Implant

A penile implant is an artificial device surgically placed in the penis to help a man have an erection. Implants are made of silicone and come in three basic types:

- **Non-Inflatable**

This implant contains two silicone rods that usually have a metal core, such as stainless steel, that allows the device to be positioned. The implant remains firm once it is placed, so you will have a permanent erection.

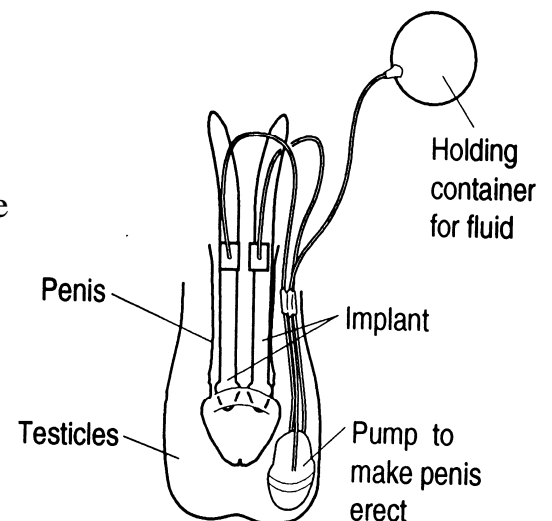
- **Self-Contained Inflatable**

This implant has silicone cylinders that have a pump and a fluid reservoir (container).

The implant can be inflated and deflated whenever you want. This allows for more control over your erection.

- **Three-Piece Inflatable**

An inflatable implant is a fluid-filled system with three parts: two cylinders, a fluid reservoir and a pump with a deflation valve. This implant gives the most natural result, because it expands to fill the penis and can be totally deflated so the penis is soft.



Penile implant surgery takes about 30 minutes to 2 hours. You will be in the hospital for one to three days after surgery, followed by several visits to your doctor. You will need time to heal from the surgery and your doctor will let you know when you can begin using your implant. Most men will be able to use their implant about six weeks after surgery. Your erection will depend on the type of implant that you choose.

The cost of the implant depends on the type of implant used. You are charged for the implant, the surgeon's fee and the hospital stay. Most insurance companies, including Medicare, cover treatments for impotence. Check with your insurance company about your benefits.

Problems can happen with your implant. Sometimes an implant can become infected. Your implant is a mechanical device and it can stop working. In rare cases, the implant can erode through the skin. If you have any of these problems or any questions or concerns about your implant please call your doctor's office.

✦ **Talk to your doctor or others on your health care team if you have questions. You may request more written information from the Library for Health Information (614) 293-3707 or email [health-info@osu.edu](mailto:health-info@osu.edu)**