

JOHN R. WOODWARD, M.D., P.A.
Gynecologic Endocrinology and Gynecologic Urology
7777 Forest Lane, suite A-338
Dallas, Texas 78230

SPECIAL BULLETIN
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Viagra, the pill used by 17 million Americans, has focused the treatment of sexual dysfunction on men. Pfizer pharmaceutical, its manufacturer, sold more than one billion dollars of Viagra in the first year. There are numerous attestations to its beneficial effects concerning obtaining or maintaining erections, as well as increasing the frequency of recurrent erections. But what about women? Results of studies using Viagra in women have been confusing and inconsistent. But sexual dysfunction is even more prevalent in women than in men. Forty three percent of women report some sort of dysfunction, particularly, but not exclusively, during the perimenopausal years. Can't we treat them too?

A massive amount of research is being carried on by numerous drug companies on two categories of treatment – hormone therapy, which restores desire, and other drugs, which amplify the sensation of arousal.

But the real gold rush is occurring in the other field – creating a drug to increase blood flow to the genitals, as Viagra does. One such company is partly owned (13%) by Bill Gates.

There are four basic kinds of **female sexual dysfunction**:

1. Sexual Arousal Disorder – sexual thoughts occur, but they are not communicated to the genitals.
2. Orgasmic Disorder – the inability to have orgasms and the as yet unnamed condition of “muffled orgasms”.
3. Hypoactive sexual Desire disorder – the genitals may or may not work, but it hardly matters because the patient lacks libido and the usual sexual thoughts or fantasies that precede a sexual encounter.
4. Sexual Pain disorder - including involuntary muscle spasms and general genital pain.

In my opinion, we already have the drugs to treat three of the four problems (numbers 1-3), but aren't availing ourselves of the opportunity we have now with Viagra. The first step is to obtain a free estradiol level (0.5-1.5 picograms/ml is normal). The second step is to obtain a free testosterone level (2.2-7.2 picograms/ml is normal). Only when the free **estradiol** level is normal does the **testosterone** work. Only when both the free estradiol level and free testosterone level is normal does the Viagra work. No studies done so far include free estradiol and free testosterone levels before using Viagra. In my experience, this has been very effective in correcting three of the four kinds of female sexual dysfunction described above.