



# CIALIS vs VIAGRA

Understanding Your Options



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Erectile dysfunction (ED) is a condition that occurs when a man faces persistent difficulty getting and maintaining an erection firm enough for sex. Nearly 15 – 30 million men, typically age 40 and above, experience ED symptoms every year, according to the Mayo Clinic.

Cialis and Viagra are medications commonly used to treat erectile dysfunction. Both of these medications use phosphodiesterase-5 (PDE5) inhibitors to treat ED. PDE5 inhibitors release nitric oxide (NO), a chemical released during arousal. NO then activates other chemicals that help relax the muscles inside the penis to enhance blood flow. While Cialis and Viagra both use this formula to help men achieve an erection, many men might wonder what the differences are and ultimately, which is the right option for them.



CIALIS

## A Closer Look at Cialis

Cialis is the brand name for the generic drug Tadalafil, and was first approved to treat ED in November 2003. It's mainly used for ED, but can also treat pulmonary arterial hypertension (PAH), enlarged prostate, and various other medical conditions. It helps reduce ED symptoms by increasing blood flow to the genitals, working within 30-60 minutes after taking the medication. Men who use Cialis also benefit from:

- Increased ability to get and maintain erections
- Improved ability to physically exercise (due to increased blood flow)
- Overall healthier physical condition



## What to Know Before Taking Cialis

Even though Cialis is a common medication, it's essential to talk to your doctor about your current health before you consider taking it. Be sure to discuss any allergies, kidney disease, liver disease, lung disease, chest tightness, or recent heart attacks. Men with liver and kidney problems typically should avoid Cialis because it reduces the effectiveness of medications used to treat these issues.

Cialis can potentially interact with other medications. If you take any of the following, you should inform your doctor:

- Nitrates of any kind
- Nitroglycerin
- Isosorbide mononitrate and dinitrate
- Street drugs known as “poppers”
- Ritonavir
- Erythromycin
- Ketoconazole
- Phenobarbital

Cialis can be used daily or on an as-needed basis depending on the dosage. The recommended starting dosage for Cialis is 10mg, which can be taken on a full or empty stomach. However, because it takes anywhere from 30-60 minutes to take full effect, you should take it an hour before any sexual activity. Your doctor may recommend adjusting the dosage if needed, but the maximum daily dose should not exceed 20 mg a day.

One of the main differences between Cialis and its leading competitor, Viagra, is that Cialis provides a longer time frame for an erection to occur. That's because the medication can remain in your system for up to 36 hours, regardless of the dose. Because of this, Cialis may be a better choice if you have a more active sexual lifestyle or are unsure of when sexual activity might occur.



## Side Effects of Cialis

Like most medications, there is a potential for side effects.

Dizziness, headaches, and lightheadedness are the most common because Cialis can lower your blood pressure. Less common side effects can include:

- Allergic reaction, such as rash, hives, itching, wheezing, blistered skin
- Throat tightness, trouble breathing, swallowing, or talking
- Chest pain or pressure
- Increased or irregular heartbeat
- Weakness on one side of the body
- Eye problems
- Ringing in the ears
- Muscle pain
- A painful erection lasting more than four hours

If you experience any of these, especially an erection lasting more than four hours, contact your doctor immediately. Fortunately, you can minimize the risk of side effects by:

- Notifying all of your healthcare providers that you are taking it
- Not exceeding the recommended maximum daily dosage (20mg)

- Limiting alcohol consumption after taking it
- Being cautious when getting up quickly or going up stairs
- Restricting your intake of grapefruit or grapefruit juice  
(this can intensify the side effects of Cialis by keeping it in the body longer than intended)

A photograph of a man and a woman laughing together at a table. The man is on the left, looking towards the woman on the right. They are both smiling broadly. In the foreground, there is a white teapot and two white cups on a table. The entire image has a blue color overlay.

VIAGRA

## A Closer Look at Viagra

Viagra is the brand version of the generic drug Sildenafil, first introduced in March 1998. Like Cialis, Viagra treats ED by increasing blood flow to the penis, helping men achieve erections. It's also prescribed to treat PAH and various other conditions. Viagra works within 30-60 minutes of being ingested. Unlike its counterpart, Viagra only remains in your system for 4-6 hours, so if you have a less active sex life or are taking additional medications that could interact with it, Viagra may be a better choice for you. Similar to Cialis, men who take Viagra can benefit from:

- Increased ability to get and maintain erections
- Improved ability to physically exercise (due to increased blood flow)
- Overall healthier physical condition



## What to Know Before Taking Viagra

Your doctor will help determine if you are healthy enough to take Viagra, so make sure to discuss any medical conditions you may have, such as allergies, heart issues, and vascular diseases. You should also consider your current medications because Viagra can potentially interact with other medications, such as:

- Nitrates, such as isosorbide dinitrate and mononitrate
- Ritonavir
- Nitroglycerin
- Rifampin
- Ketoconazole
- Itraconazole
- High blood pressure medicine
- Mibefradil
- Street drugs

Once you're ready to take Viagra, the usual starting dosage is 25mg, taken an hour before sexual activity. The appropriate dose range can vary depending on your age and specific issues with ED. You may only need 25mg, while others may need 100mg (the maximum daily dosage). Sildenafil (the active ingredient in Viagra) is available in doses as small as 20mg if you need to test what dosage works best for you. Unlike Cialis, Viagra is typically only taken as needed – unless it is treating a condition other than ED.



## Side Effects of Viagra

All medications come with the possibility of side effects – and Viagra is no different. Like Cialis, Viagra reduces blood pressure so you may experience a lightheaded, dizzy feeling after taking it. Less common side effects can include:

- Sudden loss of vision
- Sudden loss of hearing
- Diarrhea, nausea, stomach pain
- Difficulty breathing
- Rash or hives
- Inability to distinguish between green and blue (very rare, and only happens with Viagra)
- An erection lasting longer than four hours

Should you experience any of these symptoms, particularly the last one, contact your doctor. To minimize your chance of side effects, take these precautions:

- Notify all of your health care providers that you are taking it
- Do not exceed the recommended maximum daily dosage (100mg)
- Limit your alcohol intake after taking it
- Be cautious when standing up quickly or going up stairs



## Which Should You Choose?

The choice between Cialis and Viagra mostly comes down to your lifestyle because the main difference is how long they remain in your system. For example, Cialis can stay in your body for up to 36 hours, providing a larger window of time to achieve an erection. Viagra will only stay in your system for 4-6 hours. For men who are more active, or have more spontaneous sexual encounters, Cialis may work better for them.

It's also important to note that because Cialis stays in your system longer, there is an increased risk that it could interact with other drugs. If you take multiple medications, Cialis may not be recommended for you. You should also not take Cialis if you have a liver or kidney disease.

Additionally, Cialis can be taken with or without food, while Viagra works better on an empty stomach. Why? This is because food will slow the absorption rate of Viagra, and therefore could decrease its effectiveness for the 4-6 hours it's active in your body. Cialis, however, will remain active for a much longer period of time, so food intake is not an issue.

If you have trouble remembering to take a medication daily or prefer to take your medicine with food, this can impact your choice. Ultimately, the choice between Cialis and Viagra is up to you and your doctor – but either one can help treat your ED and help you regain your confidence!

## About MediSuite

As a wholesale, mail-order pharmacy, MediSuite provides men's health generic medications at *significant* cost savings. MediSuite only dispenses FDA-approved pharmaceuticals and we ship it right to your mailbox! Our most popular medications are the generic equivalents of Viagra (Sildenafil) and Cialis (Tadalafil), which produce the *exact* same results as their much more expensive brand-name versions. We offer these at much more affordable prices than your local pharmacies. Contact MediSuite to speak to a specialized pharmacist to answer more specific questions and to learn more about how we provide our medication.

Want to Learn More About Your Options?

Let's Talk



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