

Heart to Heart Talk

With Philip S. Chua, M.D.

Aphrodisiacs: For Sex Arousal

What are Aphrodisiacs?

Aphrodisiacs are prosexual drugs or substances that will heighten libido (sexual desire), orgasm (ecstasy and pleasure) and performance in males and females, not partner specific.

Are these substances new?

No, the cultural quest for aphrodisiacs has been the obsession of man, from ancient to modern times. Natural substances such as belladonna, datura and henbane were key ingredients in the sexual orgies of ancient fertility cults.

What is this popular drug Yohimbine?

Yohimbine is an alkaloid derivative found in the bark of yohimbe tree which has long been used by the natives of Africa to enhance their sexual prowess.

Is the new popular drug Viagra an aphrodisiac?

No, not in this strict medical sense. Viagra does not directly increase the libido (sexual desire) or orgasm (sexual pleasure), although it improves sexual performance of the male with Erectile Dysfunction (inability to maintain erection). Viagra acts by dilating and filling the veins in the penis with blood, causing engorgement and erection. Indirectly, it enhances sexual performance and adds to sexual pleasure. If there is no sexual desire between the partners, Viagra does not help. Aphrodisiacs, on the other hand, are substances that make a person want to have sex, almost an uncontrollable sexual desire with practically any person.

What medications or food items have an “aphrodisiac effect”?

Vitamin E, Ginseng, Oysters, Mandrake plants in medieval Europe, L-Dopa and Pergolide Mesylate (two drugs used for the treatment of Parkinson’s Disease), Quaalude,

Apomorphine, Nomifensine and Bupropion (anti-depression drugs), Bethanechol, Afrodex (combination of Yohimbine, testosterone and strychnine), Clomipiramine, Fluoxetine, Chinese Chan Su, “Love Stone”, “Hard Rock”, “Stud 100” are some of the food, drugs or substances that have been claimed to have some aphrodisiac effect.

What are causes of impotence?

There are a variety of causes of impotence. It could be psychogenic (stress or psychological problem), neurogenic (nerve injury), vascular (poor circulation), medication-related (as those patients taking high blood pressure pills), or anatomical (severe deformity of the organ), and, of course, aging (which normally reduces libido and the ability to maintain erection). The commonest are due to stress, medications for high blood pressure, and aging, and, fortunately, today, these conditions could be helped by Viagra.

Is Viagra a safe drug?

As we said in our article on Viagra (Generic name: Sildenafil) last June, this drug had been prescribed two million times (more than 3 million todate) for male Erectile Dysfunction and has been found to be as safe as any drug, provided it was taken under the supervision of a physician, and taken strictly as directed. We have also sounded the warning, and repeating it again today, that patients on any form of nitrates (drugs used by heart patients to open the arteries) should not take Viagra, as this could lead to shock and death. Nitrates come in various forms, sublingual (taken under the tongue), skin patches, tablets or injection. Some of brand names are Imdur, Isosorbide, Nitroglycerine, Peritrate, and many others. Consult your physician before taking Viagra.

What are the side-effects of Viagra?

The commonest reported side-effects of Viagra sensation of warmth, headache and fullness, slight blurring of vision, which are all temporary and wear off after four hours or so, varying in each person. The side-effects are due to vasodilation (opening of arteries) all over the body, giving more blood to all parts of the body, especially to the penis.

Is there any Aphrodisiac that is effective and safe?

Medical research and studies on aphrodisiacs have been ongoing for centuries, and have expanded in the modern times. The Food and Drug Administration in the United States has not approved any drug as an aphrodisiac per se. Drugs for the treatment of some illnesses, with “aphrodisiac-effect,” as mentioned earlier, have not been officially approved and recommended for use as aphrodisiacs. Most of the reports on their effectiveness are anecdotal. More scientific research is needed to determine their efficacy and safety, etc.

The main problem todate, even in the case of Yohimbine, is the absence of a definite and convincing medical proof of the consistency in its efficacy and safety of this substance.

Some people have tried some of the “aphrodisiac” drugs and substances mentioned above, (like Chinese Chan Su, Hard Rock, Chinese Love Stone, Stud 100) and have died from them. We are not aware of any safe and effective “legitimate” aphrodisiacs today.

What then can enhance the mood for a romantic encounter?

Feelings, situation and atmosphere are important, especially among females, in setting the mood for a romantic sexual rendezvous. There must be mutual liking and desire, and both partners must be in a happy frame of mind. All problems must be temporarily set aside. There must be good hygiene (both partners must have clean and good smelling body, no bad breath). If Viagra is needed, it must be taken about an hour to an hour and a half prior to sexual activity. And remember, protection, when needed, is very important for the peace of mind for both parties.

The ambiance must provide security, privacy and serenity, preferably with romantic music in the background. The bedroom encounter must be at least 3 to 4 hours after a meal, and, perhaps, following a glass of wine or an after-dinner drink for a more relaxed mind. Joyful flirtation and kind compliments from both sides would definitely help set the mood. During the act, uninhibited and spontaneous verbal expression of ecstasy on both partners will tremendously help enhance the pleasure. Females love to be wooed and foreplay is most essential. And don't underestimate the value of passionate kissing, as part of the foreplay and during the act itself. Both must try to be as natural and as spontaneous as can be. Some form of communication and body contact must be maintained after the act, so the partner does not feel abandoned “after use.” This, today, might be the safest “aphrodisiac” of all.

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