

SEXtalk)))

Answers to Your Questions about Sex and Relationships

Have a ??? Email sextalk@u.arizona.edu

factoid

The length of a typical man's penis is 4 inches (flaccid) and 5.7 inches (erect). (Sex Trivia, Rosart, 2002)

Q. I am writing about the recent onslaught of advertising for penis enlargement pills. I get about three e-mails a day for these products. Do these pills have any merit? Are there side effects? Can they really enlarge a penis "a guaranteed 2 to 5 inches"? What about vacuums or other ways?

A. If something sounds too good to be true, it almost always is. Researching the products available turned up a lot of hype and no controlled research studies... only "claims and testimonials"-- all of which are likely half-lies and untruths.

There are five basic categories of penis enlargement techniques: manual stretching and squeezing (or jelqing), stretching with penile weights and mechanical devices, vacuum pumps, surgery, and pills. All require a commitment of your money and time. The least damaging are probably the stretching techniques, although they can lead to scar formation, pain, and disfigurement. Pumps MAY lead to temporary penile expansion but often cause pain, hemorrhage (internal bleeding) and injury to the penis. Weights are very likely to incur injury. Penile augmentation surgery is relatively new and a recent study revealed that 68% of penile surgery patients were dissatisfied with the results. Only a board certified urologist should be considered for penile surgery.

The latest addition to the "bigger is better" market are pills and external liquids. It is interesting that while they back up their claims with a money back guarantee, they never cite research that proves the products work. Many of the "experts" cited are self-proclaimed "sexologists", not licensed professionals whose works are peer reviewed or subject to licensing and accreditation standards designed to protect patients. Just because a product is available, does NOT mean that it is safe or that it does what it claims to do (think health food supplements, weight loss scams, breast enlargement). Many products may not harm you, but they also won't measure up to their claims.

Despite what magazines, comedians, books, and movies tell us, the most important sex organ you have is your brain. You will benefit from learning to accept your natural body. Your time and money might be better spent on sexual technique manuals or videos to enhance your romantic and sexual repertoire. If a partner is pressuring you to change the natural you.... they are not a good match for you.

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