

SILDENAFIL (Revatio[®], Viagra[®])

What is sildenafil (Revatio[®], Viagra[®]) used for?

Sildenafil (Revatio[®], Viagra[®]) is a prescription medicine used to treat **pulmonary arterial hypertension** (PAH). PAH is defined by high blood pressure in the lungs resulting from the pulmonary arteries—the blood vessels that carry blood from the heart to the lungs—becoming narrowed or scarred.

How does it work?

Sildenafil (Revatio[®], Viagra[®]) is a **phosphodiesterase 5 inhibitor** (PDE-5 inhibitor) that lowers blood pressure in the lungs, making it easier for the heart to pump more effectively. Sildenafil (Revatio[®], Viagra[®]) prevents PDE-5 enzymes from degrading nitric oxide in the pulmonary arteries, which helps dilate the blood vessels.

Taking this medication may improve your ability to exercise and slow the progression of pulmonary arterial hypertension.

What do I need to know?

Do not take sildenafil (Revatio[®], Viagra[®]) if you:

- Are allergic to sildenafil (Revatio[®], Viagra[®]) or any of its ingredients
- Have had a prior episode of non-arteritic anterior ischemic optic neuropathy (NAION)
- Are taking medications that contain nitrates in any form (oral, spray, sublingual, ointment, and/or patch)
- Are taking riociguat (Adempas[®]).

Sildenafil (Revatio[®], Viagra[®]) should be avoided if you have severe liver disease.

Monitor your blood pressure.

Avoid grapefruit juice.

If you are pregnant or may become pregnant, contact your medical team right away.

How should I take sildenafil (Revatio[®], Viagra[®])?

Take tablets three times a day, 6–8 hours apart, with or without food.

Drug interactions

The following drugs may interact with sildenafil (Revatio[®], Viagra[®]):

- Some patients experience low blood pressure when taking sildenafil (Revatio[®], Viagra[®]) with **blood pressure medications, diuretics, or alcohol.**
- **Medications used to treat fungal infections**, e.g. ketoconazole (Apo-Ketoconazole[®]), itraconazole (Sporanox[®]), and voriconazole (Vfend[®])
- **Nitrates** in any form, e.g. nitroglycerin spray, tablets, ointments, or patch; isosorbide dinitrate or mononitrate
- **Medications for the treatment of HIV infection**, e.g. darunavir (Prezista[®]), ritonavir (Norvir[®]), nelfinavir (Viracept[®]), and saquinavir (Invirase[®])
- **Antibiotics**, e.g. erythromycin (Eryc[®]), clarithromycin (Biaxin[®]), telithromycin (Ketek[®]), and rifampin (Rofact[®])
- **Medications for seizure disorders**, e.g. phenytoin (Dilantin[®]) and carbamazepine (Tegretol[®])
- **Medications used to treat pulmonary hypertension and/or erectile dysfunction**, e.g. riociguat (Adempas[®]), tadalafil (Adcirca[®], Cialis[®]), and vardenafil (Levitra[®])

This is not a comprehensive list of drug interactions.

Tell your medical team about ALL the medicines you are taking, including over-the-counter drugs, vitamins, minerals, natural supplements, and alternative medications.

Speak to your medical team before starting any new medication.

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What are common side effects?

Some patients may experience side effects when taking this medication. If the side effects are severe or bothersome, please contact your medical team.

Side effects may include:

- Headache
- Flushing
- Muscle aches
- Nasal congestion
- Indigestion and heartburn
- Blurred or impaired vision
- Sudden vision or hearing loss.

When should I notify my pulmonary hypertension clinic or seek medical attention?

Contact your medical team or seek medical attention immediately if you develop:

- Sudden vision or hearing loss
- Painful or prolonged erection

Symptoms of worsening pulmonary hypertension:

- Difficulty breathing
- Fluid retention or weight gain
- Dizziness or passing out

An allergic reaction:

- Swelling of the mouth, tongue, face, or throat
- Itching
- Rash
- Difficulty breathing.

If you take more than your prescribed dose, contact your medical team immediately, even if you feel well.

Missed doses

If you miss a dose of sildenafil (Revatio[®], Viagra[®]), take your tablet as soon as you remember. Do not take two doses at the same time.

If it is almost time for your next dose, skip the missed dose. Just take the next dose at your regular time.

Do not stop taking sildenafil (Revatio[®], Viagra[®]) unless advised by your medical team.

Additional information

- Store out of reach of children.
- Store at room temperature (15°–30° C).
- Do not use expired medication.
- Ask your pharmacist how to dispose of medications you no longer require. Do not throw away any medication or flush it down the toilet.

For more information, please see [the full product monograph](#).

This educational resource was developed by the Canadian Pulmonary Hypertension Professionals Network (CPHPN), a PHA Canada network that brings together pulmonary hypertension nurses from across the country to enhance nursing care in the field through leadership, education, and professional development.

To learn more about pulmonary arterial hypertension, please visit www.phacanada.ca

The information provided in this resource is for educational purposes only. Please speak with your medical team to establish a personalized treatment plan and discuss any changes to your lifestyle or course of treatment.



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