

Shaykh Mashhūr Hasan Āl Salmān

(hafidhahullāh)

ON THE RULING ON USING VIAGRA¹

Many questions have arrived and in reality I feel ashamed to read them, some of these questions are from men and some from women. However, during these times wherein desires are agitated a person is not really surprised at these types of questions. Within these questions which have been asked often are in regards to the ruling of using Viagra and what is the ruling on using the Viagra tablets.

Firstly, Viagra was legally patented and approved for use on 27 March 1998 CE though clinical trials took place in 1991. A ruling on a thing can only be made after knowing about it so after one has correctly understood a thing one can then give a correct Shari' ruling. Thus, the Mufti has to know what he is being asked about and conduct research into the thing. Pharmaceutical companies began clinical trials of Viagra for use in angina with volunteers in 1991.²

Yet after a period of time the pharmaceutical companies did not find any beneficial results for oxygen reaching the blood vessels so they requested from the volunteers that they return the Viagra. However, those volunteers refused to return the medicine. The company was surprised at this and discovered that there was something in this, so after investigation and questioning it became apparent that while the tablets had no effect in one thing it had an effect in another thing! For the tablets had an effect on sexual energy in the man and then from this time the company began further studies until it was patented in 1998. If we want to look at how these tablets can be used in light of fiqh then we can say that:

¹ From the Shaykh's question and answer session dated Saturday 21 March 2009: www.mashhoor.net

² **Translator's note:** the main pharmaceutical company conducting this research was Pfizer in the UK.

"الوسائل لها حكم المقاصد"

“Means are judged by the same criteria as the intentions”

(so no beneficial medical aim should be obtained by impermissible means)

So if you want to use this thing what is your intent behind using it? So the means give the ruling of the intentions. So it is harām totally for the bachelor to use these [Viagra] tablets, the one who has no wife, and even for the one who is married it can be harām for him to use them when his wife is not with him. So if we contemplate on this matter from a fiqh-angle we could say that it is permissible (to use Viagra) with some conditions so that there is no confusion.

So the use of it for a person would have to come from an organised medical body who views that the person who is ill³ has to use them and so long as it does not contain anything impermissible and the prescription should come from an official medical body (such as a GP etc.) and should only be given to a man who is married. The corruption that can arise in it is that it can be a means to achieve the harām but if some conditions are present then the use of Viagra is not to be prevented like when a man uses it in order to keep himself or his wife chaste or if he seeks offspring and medical experts acknowledge that there is no harm in using it then in this case I do not view that there is any problem in this insha’Allāh.⁴

³ [TN]: i.e. with erectile dysfunction

⁴ [TN]: Viagra is mainly used for erectile dysfunction and a study in 2003 by Nurnberg et al. demonstrated that it has an effect in improved sexual function in men and those men who are on antidepressants. It can also help with hypertension and altitude sickness as suffered by mountain climbers.