

The Importance of Patient Education on Sexual Health Tools and Devices

Comprehensive sexual health education has many benefits including reducing the transmission of HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs) as well as the number of unplanned pregnancies.

However, patient sexual health education extends far beyond these topics. In fact, the World Health Organization defines sexual health as “a state of physical, emotional, mental and social well-being in relation to sexuality; it is not merely the absence of disease, dysfunction or infirmity.” Therefore, comprehensive sexual health education also involves teaching patients about practices, medications, tools, and/or devices that may enhance their sexual well-being.

Perhaps with this expansive view of sexual health care in mind, many health care providers, medical societies, non-profit organizations, and private businesses have been making strides to educate patients on tools and devices that can improve their sexual health. Educational articles and videos on personal vibrators, vacuum erection devices, constriction rings, and other sex tools are gaining popularity online.

The [inflatable penile prosthesis \(IPP\)](#), also called a penile implant, is arguably one of the most life-changing sexual health devices to date. An IPP is a device that is surgically implanted into the penis to allow men to achieve reliable, on-demand erections by using a pump located in the scrotum to fill two inflatable cylinders in the penis with fluid.

Interestingly, the first documentation of using an artificial penis for medical purposes dates back to the 16th century when Ambroise Pare created a penis from a wooden pipe for a patient to facilitate urination. In 1936, Nikolaj Bogoraz used rib cartilage to add rigidity to a penis, marking the first time a penile implant was used to treat [erectile dysfunction \(ED\)](#).

Today, the IPP is considered the gold standard of treatment for severe ED and may be a suitable treatment option for many men who suffer from this condition and have not responded well to ED medications.

It is estimated that more than half of men over the age of 60 suffer from ED, and many do not receive the treatment they need to continue to enjoy a fulfilling sex life. Many patients may not be aware of the possibility of getting an IPP, nor are they aware of how an IPP could potentially improve their sexual health.

With previous studies citing very [high satisfaction rates](#) among men after IPP implantation, (ranging from 75-98%), it may be more important than ever to educate patients about this potential treatment option for ED. Resources such as the [HARD The Fight to Solve ED](#) video series can help patients better understand the implications of getting an IPP as well as clear up misinformation around ED and IPP implantation.

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