

## Intracerebral Haemorrhage after Illicit Use of Sildenafil: A Case Report

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### ABSTRACT

Sildenafil (viagra) has become one of the top selling over the counter product for the treatment of male erectile dysfunction.<sup>(1)</sup> We report a case of 34year male patient admitted in our ICU with history of severe headache followed by sudden loss of consciousness after ingestion of two tablets of sildenafil(50mg) land up intracerebral bleed and died. There are many cases in the literature reporting intracerebral or subarachnoid haemorrhage associated with use of sildenafil while sexual contact.

**KEYWORDS:** Sildenafil, Intracerebral hemorrhage

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### INTRODUCTION

Sildenafil acts on the corpus cavernosum by increasing the concentration of c-GMP and nitric oxide in the smooth muscle cells which leads to vasodilatation and the erection of penis.<sup>(2)</sup> Many pharmacies and online commercial sites provide medicines without a prescription, creating a source of illicit drugs usage to anyone with an online connection.<sup>(3)</sup> There are many reported side effects of sildenafil in the literature like headache, visual and retinal disturbances and dizziness which explain systemic distribution into the microvasculature.<sup>(4)</sup> Although few cases of intracerebral haemorrhage following sildenafil ingestion have also been reported.

### CASE REPORT

We report a case of 34year male patient admitted in our ICU with history of severe headache followed by sudden loss of consciousness after ingestion of two tablets of sildenafil (50mg) half an hour prior to sexual intercourse as per wife. He had been free from any medical conditions, smoking, alcohol except the frequent drug intake of one tab sildenafil 25mg for past 6 years without any side effects. She denied for any medical prescription for this and stated the fact of its regular online purchase. On admission, Glasgow Coma Scale 4/15, BP 94/56 mmHg on vasopressors noradrenaline @ 01microgram/kg/min and adrenaline @ 01microgram/kg/min and vasopressin @ 0.1U/min. Computed tomography showed evidence of hyper dense area of 2.5x1.8cm bleed attenuation involving predominantly pons to lower midbrain suggestive of intracerebral bleed in brain stem [Figure 1]. Because of unstable haemodynamics and surgically inoperable state

patient was managed with fluids, vasopressors, antibiotics and mechanical ventilation. The patient failed to respond maximal therapy and died within 24 hrs. There are many cases in the literature reporting intracerebral or subarachnoid haemorrhage associated with the use of sildenafil while sexual contact.<sup>(2, 5, 6, 7)</sup> But because of social restrain and stigma many cases go undiagnosed and unreported.

### DISCUSSION

Through this correspondence we want to emphasise that sildenafil is a potential life-threatening drug so it's over the counter procurement should be discouraged as it may lead to overdosage with side effects. Its use over a long period of time or its overdosage may lead to serious neurological complication and may also lead to death. Online selling and purchase should be legally banned. Reclassification may be required in coming years from over the counter to prescription only medicine. Early computed tomography brain is crucial to make the diagnosis in such patients. There are many cases in the literature reporting intracerebral or subarachnoid haemorrhage associated with use of sildenafil while sexual contact.

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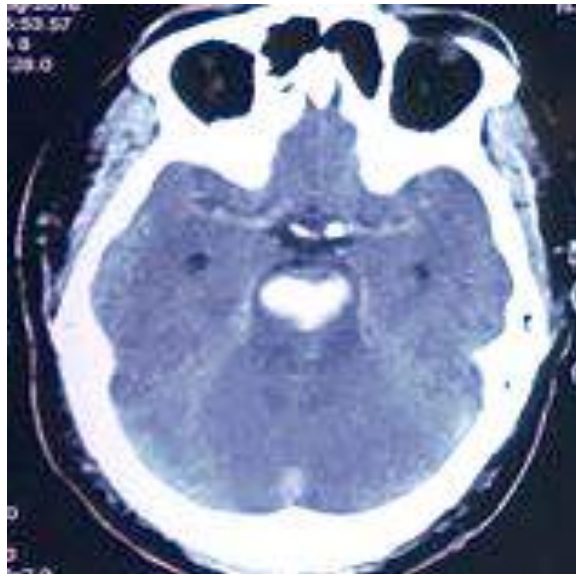


Figure.1. NCCT Head Suggestive Of Brain Stem Bleed