

Excuse me if I don't get excited

By SARAH RUSSELL
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When Viagra arrived on the scene, it did so with all guns blazing. Now Viacrème for women makes a more gentle entrance via another route. Whether this new development is in the interests of equal opportunity or merely a new marketing opportunity, one thing is certain: this new crème makes sex more topical than ever.

Viacrème is a topical crème that acts as a stimulant to the clitoral soft tissue. According to a recent press release, this pleasuring crème helps women's sexual "dysfunction" and makes our sex lives more promising than ever. We are told that every woman, whether we are multi-orgasmic or sexually frustrated, stands to benefit from the regular use of Viacrème. Apparently women just need to apply Viacrème to the clitoral tissue and bingo,

our lives will be transformed. We will achieve maximum sexual fulfillment, greater intimacy, and enhanced relationships.

There is, however, a rub to all this. Most intimate and loving relationships are based on much more than genital stimulation. While some may equate intimacy with intercourse and orgasms, others have a richer and more complex understanding of intimacy. For most adults, greater intimacy and enhanced relationships are not merely a product of the quality or quantity of orgasms. Many other issues come first.

Research indicates that the application of Viacrème results in women having a "vigorous tingle". However, it is not stated whether it is the process of the application, the person who assists in this process, or the ingredients of the crème itself that causes the "vigorous

tingle". Nonetheless, it is reassuring to know that Viacrème has been clinically evaluated by nurses and other women, including physicians.

The clinical evaluation of Viacrème appears to be a version of the 'Doctors and Nurses' game that many of us played in childhood. In the adult version, our orgasms are measured scientifically. It appears that those in the experimental group performed better on the orgasm scale than those in the control group.

Wrapped in sanitary, individual packs, Viacrème is convenient to use and can be discreetly carried in a woman's hand bag, perhaps alongside condoms and an emergency vibrator. Soon, women will need a bag that is designed specifically for carrying our sexual accoutrements. Maybe each purchaser of Viacrème could be given a free viacarry

show-bag. It would certainly make things less messy.

To purchase Viacrème, you do not need a medical prescription because the crème contains only menthol mixed with an amino acid that is found in many dietary products. The press release exclaims that "at long last, women can enjoy enhanced physical sensation, *naturally* with Viacrème". Even though we may be exhausted after a day of both paid and unpaid work, we can now have instant gratification by a dollop of crème between our legs. With Viacrème, some women may even decide to forget the hassle of relationships all together.

Rather than address the range of reasons some women do not achieve orgasm, the makers of Viacrème take a simple approach: when a woman experiences more enjoyment and fulfilment during intercourse, she will be more

inclined and even more desirous to have intercourse more frequently. This makes me wonder whether men, not women, will rush out to purchase Viacrème.

In the past, women enjoyed physical sensations with our partners, or indeed with ourselves. Now we have a new product to help us to do it *naturally*. Viacrème is just another product in a long line of products that attempts to improve human relationships. This time, the intent is to sell a product that increases female responsiveness to sex. Many of us, however, will continue to respond to the allure of romance. Attraction, love, lust, chemistry... these are commodities that can not be traded on the free market. You can buy sex, but you cannot buy intimacy.

Economic rationalism tries to reduce intimacy to sex. We see this every day in advertisements. Perhaps future

romantic playwrights will write scenes like:

Romeo! Romeo! Wherefore art thou, Romeo?'

'Just dashed off to the chemist's, dear, and damn! - she was out of Viagra and Viacrème. Looks like we'll have to wait till tomorrow night.'

With men popping Viagra and women applying Viacrème, orgasms are fast becoming pharmaceutical commodities. Soon, the question on everyone's lips will be: how much did you pay for yours? I don't want to rub it in, but sometimes the best things in life are free.

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