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Oh, my! Shot said to improve women's sex lives

February 8, 2013 | By Nicole Brochu, Staff writer

Men have Viagra and Cialis. Women have ... the O-Shot?

In a bid to inject some equity into the love life enhancement market, a pair of California doctors have devised a procedure they say greatly improves a woman's ability to achieve an orgasm — by using her body's own nutrient-rich plasma.

And a [Boca Raton](#) dermatologist is one of 32 doctors in the country whose patients are participating in a national study on the shot's effectiveness. Dr. Laura Skellchock said she knows firsthand the shot works — because she tried it before agreeing to participate in the study.

"I don't do anything on my patients unless I know what it feels like, and this definitely works," Skellchock said. "Not that I had any trouble before."

As part of the O-Shot's 30-minute proprietary technique, a patient has blood drawn, then platelet-rich plasma is derived from the sample, collected into a syringe and injected into the anterior wall at the front of the vagina.

In the natural biological process, platelets are the first responders in the body's battle to heal: They attract stem cells to an injured area, where they multiply at a rapid rate and grow new, healthy tissue.

Injecting the platelet-rich plasma into the sensitive tissue of the vagina — after a numbing cream is applied, of course — appears to regenerate new tissue, widening and enhancing the area of sensitivity, said Dr. Samuel Wood, a San Diego-based reproductive endocrinologist and one of the O-Shot's fathers.

"What bothers me is that men have always had so many things — Viagra, penile implants, supplements. They're not hurting," said Wood, who appeared on a recent segment of "The Doctors" TV show to explain the procedure. "There's absolutely nothing similar for women."

But not everyone in the medical community is sold on the concept. Like in the case of vaginal rejuvenation and vaginoplasty, cosmetic procedures designed to improve appearance or sexual satisfaction "are not medically indicated, and the safety and effectiveness of these procedures have not been documented," according to the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists.

The whole idea of such procedures "sounds a little scary to me," said Coral Springs OB/GYN Dr. Bruce Zafran, who added that, despite popular belief, "there is no such thing as a G-spot."

"I would just say that the idea of regenerative medicine in general, where stem cells or one's own blood products are used — the science isn't really there," he said. "The idea is that these things are thought to be more entrepreneurial than having real scientific value."

Wood — who invented the O-Shot technique in collaboration with "Vampire facelift" creator Dr. Charles Runels — agrees that the orgasm injection is purely experimental and advises that women try it only as part of a clinical research trial.

Wood and Runels have trained Skellchock and select others around the country — including Dr. Carlos Mercado in Orlando — in the technique, and the doctors are reporting their patients' reactions.

The shot costs \$1,500, which includes what Wood calls a "comprehensive sexual dysfunction assessment" to screen for other contributing factors, and it's not covered by insurance.

Wood said he is simultaneously conducting a double-blind, placebo-controlled study on the shot's effectiveness that will be peer-reviewed, even though that is not required and the technique is not subject to approval by the Food and Drug Administration.

"I'm not going to be involved in something that is not actively researched. We want to be really sure about it," Wood said, adding that one reason the technique is proprietary is to ensure that only those professionals with the proper credentials and training are offering it. "We don't want someone to take a

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good procedure and give it a bad name by doing it incorrectly."

Wood said the vast majority of pre-menopausal women in preliminary studies have reported an improved sexual response, and in a welcome additional side effect, the new tissue growth has helped reduce urinary incontinence in some women. Post-menopausal women have shown lower improvement rates because their sexual dysfunction may be exacerbated by age-related issues, such as low estrogen levels, he said.

Subsequent shots are recommended for anyone wanting to see even more improved results. "The more you do it, the more tissue you regenerate," Skellchock said. "It's perfectly natural. There are no side effects."

Some results are seen almost immediately, but Wood said it takes up to three weeks for the tissue to finish growing and the full results to kick in.

"It's about harnessing what your body already does," Wood said. "It's not voodoo."

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