Self injection with Papaverine or Prostaglandin E-1 (PGE-1) is a treatment that may help you achieve and maintain an erection. This treatment for impotence is not without risk. Some patients report such complications as bleeding, infection, severe scarring of the penis and prolonged painful erection.

Accordingly, the self injection regimen given below is safe for you only if performed under the continuous supervision of your doctor. Your doctor will have demonstrated this procedure and you will have practiced it under his supervision before performing it at home. To obtain an erection, follow this procedure carefully:

Step 1. Wipe the top of the medication bottle containing Papaverine or PGE-1 with an alcohol swab. Remove the protective covering from the needle. Carefully draw up the exact amount of medication your doctor has prescribed for you from the bottle into the syringe. Keep the needle sterile by not touching it with your hands or any other object.

Step 2. If an air bubble appears in the syringe, gently expel it by pressing on the plunger while keeping the needle pointed upwards. You may need to draw up more medication until you have the prescribed amount in the syringe. Set the syringe down but make sure the needle does not touch or rest on any non-sterile surface.

Step 3. Grasp your penis near its base and pull the skin taut upwards toward your trunk. Wipe the skin with an alcohol swab. Choose the injection site on the side of the penis as taught to you by your physician. Avoid injection in any visible veins. Now pick up the syringe and push the needle firmly through the skin until the entire needle is buried inside the penis.

Step 4. Holding the syringe, use your thumb to inject the entire amount of medication. Then, remove the needle from your penis and immediately apply pressure on the injection site with an alcohol sponge for at least three minutes. Make sure there is no bleeding.

Step 5. Replace the cover over the needle and dispose of the syringe unit.

Step 6. You are now ready to start sexual foreplay. You will soon have a full erection. Normally the erection will last anywhere from a half hour to one and a half hours. After you inject yourself, one of the following reactions may occur. If so, this is what you will need to do:

If you bleed from the injection site, apply pressure to the injection site with your thumb and index finger for at least three more minutes until the bleeding stops.
If you have severe pain and/or burning at the tip of the penis, please be reassured that this is “referred pain.” It usually subsides within two to three minutes.

If you have no erection or a poor erection, you may have injected into the wrong place or used an insufficient amount of medication. If you have injected into the wrong site, don’t be concerned. The medication will not harm you. However, do not inject yourself again until you have spoken with your doctor and told him what has happened. He will then advise you on how to proceed.

If you have no ejaculation, don’t be concerned. The important thing is that you have a good erection.

If you have a swollen or black and blue penis, compress the entire penis with your whole hand for ten minutes. This will usually stop further swelling.

If you have a prolonged erection that lasts more than two hours – take terbutaline 5 mg tablet – one, by mouth. If the erection has not softened within one hour, come to the Emergency Room at night or if it is during clinic hours, come directly to the Urology clinic. A prolonged erection may damage the penis and this is a urologic emergency.

**Guidelines for titration with Papverine Penile Injection**

Age:  
- < 50, start with 0.3cc's of 30mg/cc solution
- 50 – 60, start with 0.5cc's
- > 60, start with 1cc

Do not exceed a total of 2cc's unless directed by your urologist.

Increase your dose from the baseline by doubling your dose until you have a satisfactory erection that goes away between 30-60 minutes, although if a shorter duration of erection is satisfactory, then that’s ok.

**Warning:**

A prolonged erection is one of the possible complications of this treatment. It could permanently damage the erectile tissue and adversely affect your potential for future erections.

If your erection lasts more than 2 hours, go to the urology clinic if between 8 AM and 4 PM on weekdays or to the Emergency at other time for an antidote and possible drainage. (Usually epinephrine injection)

This information is not intended to diagnose health problems or to take the place of medical advice or care you receive from your physician or other health care professional. If you have persistent health problems, or if you have additional questions, please consult your doctor. If you have questions or need more information about your medication, please speak to your pharmacist. Kaiser Permanente does not endorse any brand names; any similar products may be used. Herbs and supplements are sold over-the-counter. Kaiser Permanente carries only herb categories for which some evidence exists to show that the herbs may be effective to treat certain medical conditions.

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