

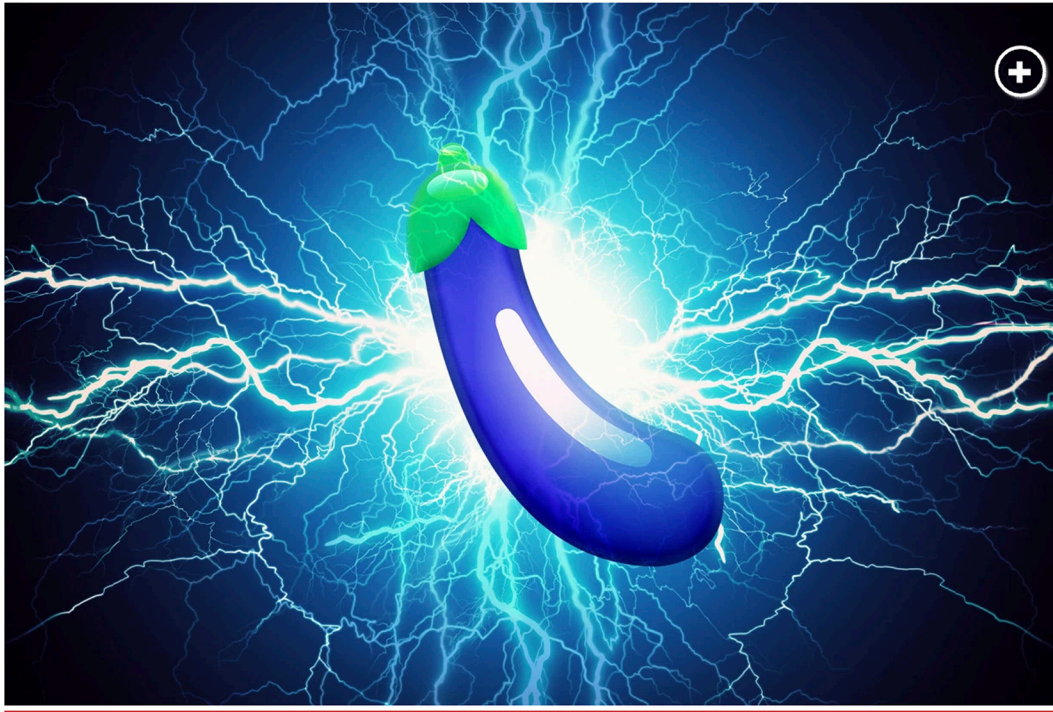


LIVING

Men are 'zapping' their penises to treat erectile dysfunction

By Lauren Steussy

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Move aside, Viagra — there's a new treatment for erectile dysfunction, and it's, well, shocking.

The procedure, called GainsWave, zaps tens of thousands of sound waves through a man's penis to improve blood flow and enable erections. Scary as it sounds, urologists and sexual-health proponents are getting excited about it.

"People in the community who deal with erectile dysfunction often use the word 'promising' when they talk about this therapy," says Dr. Michael Reitano, the physician-in-residence for men's health startup Roman, the creators of the erection-tracking app Morning Glory.

The therapy is available in a handful of practices [in New York City](#) and several more nationwide. Its

proponents say the sound wave pulses cause new blood vessels and nerve tissue to grow within the penis, enabling better blood flow and possibly improving tissue sensitivity.

But, Reitano notes, the science to support the procedure's benefits isn't quite there yet.

The Food and Drug Administration has yet to clear GainsWave for use in erectile dysfunction treatment, though it has approved the technology for other types of rehabilitation, [such as plantar fasciitis and lateral epicondylitis of the elbow](#).

Though [early clinical studies](#) have found the treatment to be safe and have seen some success, Reitano says larger and longer-term patient studies and trials are still needed to ensure its efficacy.

Even then, it's probably at best an alternative option for the 10 percent of men who had no luck with the little blue pill, Reitano says.

But for those men, GainsWave's therapy could be a total game changer in the bedroom and beyond, Dr. Kate Kass, a Washington state-based functional medicine physician who was one of the early adopters of GainsWave, tells The Post.

"It can mean everything for a man," says Kass, who piloted the GainsWave technology about two years ago at her practice after seeing its success in Europe. She uses it with her patients regularly now. "It takes away stress on their relationship, improves their self-confidence, and their confidence in other arenas of life. It can be a huge relief."

Gainswave [was recently highlighted](#) on biohacker Dave Asprey's podcast. Asprey, who hopes to live until he's 180 years old, gave the procedure a try with Kass. (Hey, he'll probably need something like this when he rounds 100.) In a video documenting the experience, Asprey applied a numbing cream to his penis. Then, Kass used a device that looks like a cross between a nail gun and a heavy-duty vibrator to shoot small jolts of sound waves all over the area. (She says some men experience a pins-and-needles-like sensation, but it's otherwise painless.)

Asprey described the sensation as "less trouble than a heavy workout" and ultimately "anticlimactic."

The therapy, which is administered by a doctor about once a week for six to 12 weeks, costs about \$3,000 and isn't covered by insurance. Kass, who has also tried erectile dysfunction therapies that involve injecting stem cells into the penis, says 75 to 80 percent of her patients experience success with the GainsWave therapy. Some go off meds like Viagra entirely, or use them far less.

But Kass says that men should first try to focus on living a healthy lifestyle before they decide whether shocking their penis is right for them.

"While diet, exercise and lowering your stress is not as sexy as injecting stem cells into your penis or shocking it with sound waves, those things really need to be addressed, and treatments like these will work better for you if you're addressing them."