

REGARDING HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR MEN DIAGNOSED AND TREATED FOR PROSTATE CANCER

A Prostate Cancer Patient's Experience of denial after denial after denial; Why?

Men treated for Prostate Cancer experience erectile dysfunction that more often than not cannot return without the prescribing of oral medications (PDE5 inhibitors Viagra, Levitra, Cialis) as well as vasodilator medications (papaverine, bimix, trimix) to be injected in the penis, both to provide the necessary arterial blood flow as well as oxygenation of penile tissue for rehabilitation of the male organ to at least some semblance of that organ prior to surgery or radiation. Other products such as a Vacuum Erection Device (VED) can help return reasonable length to the penis that has been traumatized by treatment. For many men they are unable to experience the return of erectile function despite the foregoing rehabilitation attempts. These are important issues to return from depression resulting from these experiences to a man's "manhood" to a reasonably normal, healthy, penis. This is an absolute necessity for men to once again feel like the man they were prior to treatment for Prostate Cancer.

Many men are unable to achieve the return of erectile function because of side effects from treatment for their cancer and can only achieve an erection by a physician prescribing the surgical installation of a penile implant.

To date, most health insurers, though providing all necessary medications or implants/augmentation to women experiencing similar issues from breast or other cancer, are refusing similar treatment to men. The capability to achieve an erection to a man is as important to that man's mental well-being as is breast augmentation to a woman, yet men are refused treatment while women are not. This must change and may take an Act of Congress or at least Congressional intervention to achieve.

Please consider forwarding this message and the below experience of a man following his treatment for prostate cancer to your representatives in the House of Representatives and Senate in Washington.

In the case of this man, he was seeking health insurance coverage for the installation of a penile implant because all efforts with PDE5 inhibitors and vasodilator penile injections had failed to bring about the male capability of an erection.

His remarks:

“It's called "gender inequity". I live in the world capitol of political correctness in Madison, WI area. My company's insurer denied coverage on pills prescribed for increased blood flow for healing. Then they denied implant coverage. I wrote a very articulate and compelling appeal. Denied. I hired a lawyer and did a final appeal. We appeared before a mixed gender board. I pulled out all the cards in that meeting. "By law, you cover reconstructive breast surgery that is for cosmetic purposes but you deny me coverage for a functioning body part? Gender inequity.... hell, discrimination against men and this particular body part. If I was incontinent from side effects from this same surgery, you'd pay for THAT implant. You had the nerve to call this a lifestyle surgery request but if I need a knee replacement because I eat myself to obesity and destroy my knees, you'll pay for that??? You won't pay for this surgery but you will pay for me to get counseling for depression this could cause and anti-depressants??? How dare you discriminate against the male gender this way!!!! I went into surgery a whole, functioning person and I am not now. The purpose of insurance is to make us whole again when we are sick or injured and yet you deny me?????!!!"

My attorney was awesome in dealing with a very sensitive topic. I left that room, went to my car and cried from the humiliation and pain that I was put through. Denied again. I own my business. I dropped off my policy I paid so much for and went on my then wife's policy because her policy specifically covers implants for injuries and cancer side effects BUT not if caused by self-neglect like obesity caused diseases.

We men get (expletive meaning “nothing”) from our government for support on this. It's OK to say breast or breast cancer in public. You can discuss nipple reconstruction but don't you dare say penis or prostate in public. THEN some insensitive person has the audacity to tell me I should have to disclose my implant before first intimacy? WHY?????!!- It's still a penis folks. It looks and feels the same which is more than I can say about most breast implants. It should not be seen any differently by ANYONE. It is just a part of me. If I should accept big fake, lumpy, soft ball looking and feeling breast implants someone did to look better in a sweater then, I'll be damned if I am going to be treated as a freak having to disclose it upfront. Like I said, I would not ask a woman if her breasts are real before first sex. It's kind of the same thing. We are not just a penis. We are human beings with feelings. I want honesty in my relationships. I learned the hard way that the time to discuss PCa treatments, side effects and implants is NOT at the moment when two impassioned people want to make love for the first time.

Buzz kill. Just be normal like your natural self. It's part of you like any other part. Talk about it outside the bedroom, sofa or wherever that first sweet, beautiful romantic event occurs when the time is right. If a woman loves you, she won't care that you squeezed a bulb in you scrotum to be up for her. She will see you being your own natural self and not make a big deal out of it. However, if you tell her about it way before the event is even in mind, be prepared to have your feelings hurt unless she cares enough or is curious enough to ask you questions to satisfy her concerns and fears.”

CONGRESSMEN, WE NEED YOUR HELP!