



New drug lifts Pfizer March 27, 1998: 3:42 p.m. ET

Drug company's shares rise on FDA approval of pill to treat impotence

NEW YORK (CNNfn) - Shares of pharmaceutical giant Pfizer Inc. were pushed higher Friday on news that the U.S. Food and Drug Administration has approved its treatment for impotence.

Pfizer stock ([PFE](#)) was 5/16 higher at 94-11/16 in late-afternoon trading. The shares have risen strongly from about 75 since the beginning of the year.

Pfizer's drug, marketed under the name Viagra, is the first pill to treat the condition which affects millions of men in the United States.

The drug acts by enhancing the muscle-relaxing effects of nitric oxide, a chemical normally released in the body. The relaxation allows the increased blood flow necessary for normal sexual function.

Viagra was evaluated by more than 3,000 men in clinical trials with varying degrees of impotence caused by diseases such as diabetes, spinal court injury or prostate surgery.

In all trials, men on Viagra reported success more often than on placebo. Among the most common side effects were headache and indigestion. About 3 percent also reported changes in vision, mainly altered color perception.

Shares of Pfizer competitor Vivus Inc. ([VUS](#)) were also up 7/8 to 11-1/16 on the news. Vivus manufactures Muse, a prescription suppository for treatment of impotence. ■

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