

Friday, October 31, 2003

Barbie Pill-Prescription For Perfection?



For years, Barbie has been the epitome of “perfection.” Now, some of her features, and more could one day be available in drug stores, and so far, the side effects that come along with the drug, may be better than you would ever expect.



According to many women, "Barbie's beautiful, she's 36-24-26, she's got long luxurious hair, creamy skin....Gorgeous, beautiful, perfect, she is."

So is it possible to have that perfection in a pill? Fox Carolina asked some area beauty consultants and their clients at Halton Hair Studio.

Researchers say they've been studying a drug called Melanotan II, better known as the Barbie Drug, which can give you a great tan, without damaging your skin with harmful UV rays.

Dr. Matthew Miller, a Dermatologist with Greenville Dermatology, "It actually stimulates the pigment producing cells to create more pigment and by doing that your skin color gets darker."

But that's not all, Urologist Dr. Norman Levine says, "It just so happened that one very astute observer reported to us that he was developing spontaneous erections."

That's right, researchers believe the Barbie Drug can increase your sex drive and help you lose weight, side effects that have many women begging to try it now.

Lori Mathews, with Halton Hair Studio says, "If you can have self-tanning without having to spend hours in the sun and you can suppress your appetite at the same time and the bonus would be the increased sex drive, I think that'd be...I want some."

As for a client, Elaine Frick, "I think the thing that could change your sex life is the best part of all....What woman wouldn't think that would be great, right?"

What about the men? Studies show, unlike Viagra, the Barbie Drug works directly on the brain, affecting sexual desire as well as physical performance.

Dr. Hunter Wessells says, "These men were not looking at erratic video tapes, they were not engaged in sexual activity, they were just sitting around and on the placebo, none of them got any erectile activity, zero."

But some men and women in the Upstate aren't sold on the "Prescription for Perfection."

Meg Oxford, a Massage Therapist says, "I know if you exercise, do you regular massage, take care of your skin, you don't need a Barbie pill, because we're all beautiful, beauty comes from the inside."

Another client, Paul Cline says, "Knocking down the appetite is good, not sure about the tanning from the inside out, that sounds kind of scary and the increased sex drive, I think we've got enough of that out in the market already."

But Doctor Miller says the Barbie Drug may be safer than exposing your skin to the sun. "It's safer than getting a tan from UV light, which we know can cause skin cancer, however, we don't know what the other side effects of this medication may be."

So does the prospect of a great tan, weight loss and an increased sex drive all in one pill seem a little outrageous?

Mathews says, "I think it sounds too good to be true, but who knows, these days you never know what they're gong to come out with."

Frick agrees, "That's why I'm laughing, because I can't image a pill doing that, I really can't....A lot of people just aren't going to believe it, but when they start seeing Barbie Dolls walking around everywhere, they might take it. I think that's great, really, I really do. I hope it's on the market sooner than 10 years."

The FDA is encouraging more studies and research be done to see the drug's full effect on the body, meaning about five to ten more years of testing before it'll be available to men and women.

-Jillian Simmons