

## S. Korea's presidential office explains Viagra purchase

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A scandal over South Korean President Park Geun-Hye's shadowy confidante took an even more bizarre turn Wednesday when Park's office was forced to explain a mass purchase of Viagra.

The revelations about Park's decades-long ties with close friend Choi Soon-Sil and with Choi's father—the late founder of a cult-like religious group—have sparked huge media interest in the president's personal life.

On Tuesday an opposition party lawmaker revealed that Park's office last year bought hundreds of pills which can treat erectile dysfunction, including Viagra and the generic version of the drug.

As the revelation sparked a media frenzy, Park's spokesman said the drug was purchased to ease possible mountain sickness during Park's visit in May to high-altitude African nations including Ethiopia.

"We bought it for the trip but did not use it," Jung Youn-Kuk told reporters, adding the drug is known to be effective in treating [altitude sickness](#).

Park has never married and has no known partner.

Her office in recent years also bought hundreds of injectable doses of human placenta extract and vitamin shots—commonly used for detoxification and anti-ageing treatment.

Jung said the doses were bought for workers at the presidential office including Park's bodyguards.

Prosecutors are investigating whether Park also had various injections prescribed for herself using Choi's name at private clinics, without the knowledge of the official presidential medical staff.

In a scandal which has engulfed the presidency, Park and Choi are accused of colluding to coerce local firms to donate tens of millions of dollars to dubious non-profit foundations controlled by Choi.

Choi allegedly used some of the money for personal gain. Park is also accused of letting Choi meddle in state affairs to the extent of nominating top officials and editing her speeches.

Park faces a criminal probe by prosecutors and a growing push for her impeachment. Hundreds of thousands have taken to the streets in recent weeks to call for her resignation.

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