

MEN HAVE HORMONES TOO

by
Susan Wilson, MD

What is hypogonadism, AKA low testosterone, AKA andropause? Testosterone is a hormone produced by the testicles that has effects on many bodily functions. Production declines with age at variable rates. Low testosterone (low T) is a decline in testosterone levels from normal, most commonly age related and frequently accompanied by the following symptoms: Lack of energy and fatigue during the day, loss of motivation, sleep disturbances, depressed mood or agitation, difficulty concentrating, reduced sexual desire and performance, decreased muscle strength, inability to lose weight despite diet and exercise, and weight gain, particularly around the mid-section.

What reasons drive men to seek treatment for low T?

The motivations are many and varied based on severity of symptoms and personal attitudes about health and wellness. Many men primarily seek relief of symptoms and improved sexual health. Others use it in an overall plan for improved health and better aging. Newer scientific evidence suggesting improved insulin sensitivity and lower fasting blood sugar, reduced overall body fat and improvements in cholesterol levels have added additional motivators for treatment.

What does replacement entail and how do I get started?

Consult with a health care provider with experience in all methods of hormonal optimization for men and obtain baseline blood chemistries and hormone levels. Dosing regimens should be customized based on clinical factors. Delivery methods include topical gels, patches and creams, as well as injectable formulas and implantable hormone pellets. Topical therapies custom made by local compounding pharmacies offer high quality replacement doses for men at much lower costs than topical products offered by Big pharma and are a great first step.

