



Testosterone Deficiency in Men

By Gerard L. Guillory, M.D.

Testosterone deficiency in men, also called andropause, has been receiving long overdue attention. This has come about as a result of the publicity created by new drugs for erectile dysfunction (Viagra, Levitra, Cialis) and the association of low testosterone with increased risk for cardiovascular disease.

Symptoms of low testosterone in men include diminished interest in sex, problems with erections, reduced muscle mass, decreased bone density, difficulty concentrating, depressed mood and fatigue.

Men with chronic conditions such as diabetes, elevated triglycerides, elevated cholesterol, obesity and hypertension, are more likely to have low testosterone.

It is normal for the testosterone level to decrease as men age. However, men with low testosterone levels or low normal levels associated with the above symptoms can be effectively treated with testosterone replacement.

Options for replacement include testosterone injections or the application of creams/gels to the skin. Currently, the best options include AndroGel or a testosterone cream prepared by a compounding pharmacy. Unfortunately, oral replacement is usually ineffective and may cause problems with the liver.

The bottom line is that if you have any of the above symptoms or elevated cholesterol, elevated triglycerides, diabetes, obesity or hypertension, consider having your blood testosterone level checked.

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