



## MALE MENOPAUSE CAN HAVE SEVERE CONSEQUENCES

Male menopause (andropause) occurs, but is not as sudden as menopause in women. However, it brings long-term consequences that can be just as severe if not treated.

Male menopause is “a clinical syndrome caused by inadequate testosterone production that is accompanied by a decline in sperm production by the testes”.

Half of healthy men between the ages of 50 and 70 years will have a testosterone level below the lowest level seen in healthy men who are 20-40 years of age.

Statin drugs, which are commonly prescribed for cardiac conditions, may contribute to low testosterone in males by making less cholesterol available for hormone production.

### Adam Questionnaire for screening sufferers

A screening questionnaire often used is the Adam Questionnaire to determine androgen deficiency in ageing males. Its questions include:

- Do you have a decrease in libido (sex drive)?
- Do you have a lack of energy?
- Do you have a decrease in strength and/or endurance?
- Have you lost height?
- Have you noticed a decreased enjoyment of life?
- Are you sad and/or grumpy?
- Are your erections less strong?
- Have you noted a recent deterioration in your ability to play sports?
- Are you falling asleep after dinner?
- Has there been a recent deterioration in your work performance?

Symptoms of testosterone deficiency can further be listed:

- Feeling more burned out, depressive, irritable, anxious and nervous
- Joint complaints, increased sweating, muscular weakness and physical exhaustion
- Sleep disturbances, need for more sleep
- Impaired sexual potency, fewer morning erections, disturbed libido,
- Decreased beard growth.

### Erectile dysfunction and testosterone deficiency

Low serum testosterone levels are often assoc with erectile dysfunction. However, erectile dysfunction is a complicated condition, and it is unlikely that testosterone treatment alone will help.

The classic testosterone deficiency triad in men is:

- Erectile dysfunction
- Metabolic syndrome, visceral obesity and/or diabetes
- Cardiovascular disease.

## Testosterone implications for men's health

Testosterone has a number of health benefits for men. Testosterone:

- Improves body composition, with more muscle, less fat and reversal of osteoporosis.
- Improves libido and erectile function.
- Reverses insulin resistance and metabolic syndrome.
- Reduces inflammation, pain, osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis.
- Reduces bad inflammatory markers.
- Increases IL-10 (anti-inflammatory messenger)
- Reduces depression and irritability
- Dilates coronary arteries
- Reverses angina
- Prevents arterial plaque rupture (which causes a heart attack)
- Reverses atherosclerosis
- Improves mood, cognitive function
- Helps prevent Alzheimers disease.

Studies have shown that andropause (low testosterone) is associated with diabetes, metabolic syndrome, and also affects brain, heart and bone health. It is a risk factor for heart disease, high CRP and metabolic syndrome.

Conversely, high testosterone is associated with low mortality from cardiovascular disease and cancer.

### Specific coronary benefits of testosterone

- Reduced angina, chest pain, increased cardiac exercise tolerance
- Improved exercise induced myocardial ischaemia - direct coronary relaxing effect
- Coronary blood flow
- Dilates coronary arteries; reduces atherosclerosis
- Lower atherosclerosis, stabilizes plaque, prevents plaque rupture.

Men with the highest levels of testosterone were found to be at reduced risk of benign prostatic hyperplasia.

### How to get tested and treated

The blood test is helpful but not entirely reliable. Sometimes saliva or urine tests can be used.

Until recently, fear of prostate cancer has kept men from testosterone therapy. However, research has found that it does not cause it.

An experienced doctor in New Zealand can be found by contacting:

- <http://www.pharmaceutical.co.nz>
- <http://www.optimushealth.co.nz>