

Patient Information about Testosterone Deficiency

<http://www.urologychannel.com/patient-information-testosterone-deficiency/index.shtml>

Testosterone is a hormone that controls the development of male reproductive organs and secondary sex characteristics, such as facial hair and vocal changes, and plays a role in men's energy level, mood, fertility, and sexual desire. Testosterone production involves a part of the brain called the hypothalamus, the pituitary gland, and the testes (testicles).

Testosterone levels normally decrease as a man ages; however, levels of the hormone can decrease abnormally if the hypothalamus, pituitary gland, or testes are damaged (e.g., by infection, tumor, trauma, chemotherapy, or radiation therapy). This condition, which is called testosterone deficiency (TD) or hypogonadism, also may be present at birth.

Obesity, hypertension, and diabetes are common risk factors for testosterone deficiency. Symptoms vary by age. Infants with TD may have underdeveloped genitals and men may experience erectile dysfunction, diminished sexual desire, muscle weakness, loss of body hair, and mood changes. If left untreated, testosterone deficiency can lead to muscle weakness, osteoporosis, changes in bone density, and increased risk for bone fracture.

Here are some questions to ask your doctor (e.g., urologist) about testosterone deficiency. **Print this page**, check off the questions you would like answered, and bring it with you to your doctor's appointment. The more you know about testosterone deficiency, the easier it will be to develop and follow a successful treatment plan.

Questions to Ask Your Doctor about Testosterone Deficiency

- Why do you suspect I might have testosterone deficiency?
- What kinds of blood and/or serum tests will be needed to diagnose testosterone deficiency?
- What do these tests involve?
- How should I prepare for these tests?
- Will a testicular biopsy be necessary? If so, how is this procedure done?
- What type of anesthesia will be used? Is biopsy painful? If so, how will my pain be controlled during and after the procedure?
- When can I expect to receive diagnostic test results?
- Will someone contact me or should I call for the results?

Telephone number to call:

- Might hormone replacement therapy (HRT) be used to treat my testosterone deficiency? Why or why not?
- What does HRT involve?
- What are the benefits, risks, and possible complications of this TD treatment?
- Will I need to wear a testosterone patch? If so, what does this treatment involve?
- Where should I apply the patch and how long should I leave it on?
- What should I do if the patch falls off?
- What are transdermal gels and mucoadhesive treatments? How do they work?
- If these treatments are recommended, what are the associated benefits, risks, and possible complications?
- Are there side effects related to these TD treatments?
- What can I do if treatment irritates my skin or I experience severe side effects?
Telephone number to call:
- How can hormone replacement therapy affect my liver and/or gastrointestinal system?
- Are testosterone injections an option for treating testosterone deficiency? Why or why not?
- For how long will I need HRT?
- If my treatment for testosterone deficiency is not successful, what other options are available?
- What is my general prognosis?
- Where can I find out more about testosterone deficiency and TD treatment? Can you recommend any books or online sources?
- Do you recommend that I participate in a testosterone deficiency clinical trial? Why or why not?

How often should I schedule follow-up appointments?

Next appointment:

Doctor:

Date:

Time:

Questions to Ask if the Patient Is a Child or Adolescent

What are the treatment options for children with testosterone deficiency?

How does hormone replacement therapy affect children and their growth and development?

Do you recommend testosterone deficiency treatment at this time? Why or why not?

Notes/Additional Information