

Low testosterone levels in men should not be ignored

By Mandy Kendall

We've all heard of menopause and the affects it can have on women. Well, low testosterone levels (or Low T) can be responsible for the male version (man-o-pause?) and it can affect men in many of the same ways.

Testosterone, known as the male hormone, is responsible for the typically male characteristics that appear during puberty such as facial hair growth, a deeper voice and muscle growth. Women produce testosterone too, but in much lower quantities than men.



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During adulthood, testosterone helps maintain energy, sex drive and is believed to play a significant role in supporting general physical health. However, as men age their levels of testosterone, like any hormone, can drop and it is estimated that 4.5 million men in the United States have low testosterone levels.

Symptoms vary from man to man but can include: fatigue, depression, increase in body fat, decrease in muscle mass, changes in sleep habits and low sex drive. Signs of Low T can appear insidiously over time and are often mistakenly attributed to general stress. Health experts advise men might

benefit from more exercise, a better diet, stress management and more sleep, however it is also recommended to find out if symptoms could be due to low levels of testosterone.

Other than making life somewhat unpleasant for the individual (not to mention those close to them) these signs and symptoms might not seem that urgent to treat, but Low T not only affects quality of life, it can also be detrimental to long-term health. Low T can be a symptom of a more serious health conditions such as Type 2 diabetes, infections, hormonal disorders or testicular cancer. Left untreated low testosterone levels can also cause conditions like reduced bone density or fertility problems.

A simple blood test will help measure testosterone levels and help determine if treatment is required. According to guidelines from the Endocrine Society, the healthy ranges of testosterone in men can vary widely but symptoms associated with Low T most generally appear when blood testosterone levels drop below 300 nanograms per deciliter (ng/dL).

The causes of Low T vary greatly as well. Aging, accidents, health conditions or even some medications can all play a part in low testosterone levels. Recent studies have found a strong link between obesity and Low T in men, especially in men who also suffer from Type 2 diabetes. It is known that fat tissue converts testosterone into estrogen, the female hormone, so reducing fat and building muscle is seen as an important part of maintaining sufficient testosterone levels. With this in mind, exercising with weights and resistance training is seen as an effective way of increasing the levels and circulation of testosterone as well as addressing some of the common symptoms of Low T.

For more information about how to help yourself or someone you know who may be suffering from Low T go online.

Until next time.

Mandy Kendall operates Health Connective in South Lake Tahoe, which aligns wellness seekers with their ideal wellness provider. If you have questions, would like some advice, or would like to request some Qwik-e tips on any health and well-being topic, drop her an email at connect@healthconnective.com or keep an eye out on Lake Tahoe News for regular Qwik-e tips on how to make healthy changes one Quick and Easy step at a time.