

Male Menopause - Symptoms and Treatment

Contributed by Webmaster

By Ben Needles

The term male menopause is used to refer to the condition of men who have hormone levels drop after mid-life. Male menopause is a subject of controversy in the medical society. In the case of women, menopause is related with the termination of a bodily operation, like when the monthly menstruation periods stop. Also, a critical drop in the hormone levels in women occurs along with menopause. For these reasons, doctors are debating on whether male menopause really exists.

In the case of men in their middle and elderly years, smaller quantities of testosterone are being created by the testicles. This is believed to be the underlying reasons behind the occurrence of symptoms of male menopause.

Men with menopause usually suffer from irritability, sleep disturbance, low sex drive, sweating, anxiety, sadness, memory problems, and erectile dysfunction.

In most cases, erectile dysfunction may be caused by other disorders. But testosterone deficiency may be one possibility.

It is important that men who suffer from symptoms related to low levels of testosterone be subjected to medical investigations like blood tests to evaluate testosterone levels.

Other reasons for having short testosterone levels include testicular dysfunction and probable inherited features.

As a treatment, hormone replacement therapy is being recommended for men with low levels of testosterone and symptoms that come with it. Hormone replacement may not be applicable to older men who seek treatment for their erectile dysfunction unless they actually have very minimal levels of androgen. As for younger men with known hormone deficiency, it has been proven that nominal doses of testosterone can improve interest in sex.

Testosterone replacement therapy, which is also called as androgen replacement therapy, aims to reduce the symptoms brought about by male menopause. This method is a lifelong treatment, since testosterone deficiency is generally a permanent condition.

Testosterone replacement therapy is usually given as an oral prescription, implants, or injections. The injection of testosterone is usually carried out once every two weeks.

The oral drugs are especially prescribed to those who can't stand injections or implants. The testosterone implants, which are being inserted under the skin of the buttock or abdomen work for a period of months. The implant works by releasing testosterone directly into the bloodstream.

Androgen therapy, however, comes with potential side effects and risks. With low testosterone levels, the prostate tends to shrink. Hormone replacement therapy cannot recover a physically reduced prostate since it does not have influence in the levels of prostate specific antigen. Androgen therapy may not be a cause of increased risk of prostate cancer for those who have naturally greater testosterone levels in the same age bracket.

On the other hand, the safety of hormone replacement therapy and its possible effects on the prostate, mental functioning, and cardiovascular system still need to undergo proper researches. Moreover, there is also a need to assess the probable benefits of androgen therapy on the bones and muscles.

Androgen therapy is said to increase the risk of heart diseases, although researches on this subject are uncertain. It is a known fact, however, that those with low testosterone levels have been found among heart attack victims. This opens the possibility that hormone replacement therapy could help prevent cardiovascular diseases. Older men undiagnosed of prostate cancer should also take caution when being applied with androgens.

Sleep apnea, or the cessation of breathing during sleep, is also considered as a rare risk with hormone therapy.

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