

Natural Ways To Raise Testosterone

“Testosterone increases the desire for sexual activity & promotes the building up of muscle, skin & bone in both men and women.”

How's your testosterone these days? What used to be a question at the muscle gyms is almost getting to be a household word for males over 40. Now the "Big Pharma" commercials are ramping up to tell the world about testosterone. Commercials on the radio are even advertising "Natural ways to raise testosterone." So let's consider the dangers of blindly adding hormones and then how to maximize this anabolic hormone naturally.

In both men and women testosterone increases the desire for sexual activity. Some people have called it the hormone of desire. So yes, low testosterone can cause decreased libido, etc.; but the bigger issue is aging.

The process of aging is largely a tissue breakdown or catabolic process. Testosterone on the other hand is tissue building or anabolic. It promotes the building up of body tissues like muscle, skin and bone for both men and women. Men with low testosterone double



their risk of metabolic syndrome. Since testosterone protects brain cells; men with low levels of free testosterone are at an increased risk of developing Alzheimer's.

What are some of the reasons for low testosterone? Stress is a major factor. Short term stress like exercise can increase testosterone. Long term chronic stresses caused by poor lifestyle, ongoing psychological stress, heavy metals, toxins, inflammation and illness will decrease testosterone.

If you would like to have an excellent crash course in an-

dropause and how to treat it, Donna DiMarco gave an outstanding webinar on how to assess and supplement. See the link below.

She suggests using an expansive male hormone saliva panel which includes DHEA, androstendione, progesterone, estrone, estradiol, free testosterone, DHT, FSH and LH. She masterfully follows the hormone pathways identifying what to do when metabolic blocks occur.

Let's look at a simplified chart on how testosterone is made. The starting point is cholesterol. Cholesterol is converted to

pregnenolone. Some of the pregnenolone is converted to progesterone and some to DHEA.

Let's follow the progesterone pathway. We need progesterone to make adrenal hormones. So if your patient is extremely stressed out the pregnenolone might be shunted or rerouted to make adrenal hormones, specifically cortisol. This is called the pregnenolone steal, because the body steals pregnenolone to make cortisol and the rest of the hormones suffer.

Now look at the other pathway for pregnenolone, DHEA. This is where things get interesting. DHEA is converted to androstendione, the hormone Mark McGuire of the St. Louis Cardinals was taking when he broke the home run record in 1998. Progesterone also converts to androstendione. Androstendione converts to testosterone or the female hormone estrone. Testosterone can then be converted to DHT or estradiol.

You can see from this chart that too much Testosterone can enable the pathway to DHT. DHT is the dark side of testosterone. Increases of DHT are related to increases in prostate cancer. Too much testosterone can also lead to excess estradiol another potential cancer causing agent.

As we all know, an excess of refined carbohydrates will cause increased insulin. Insulin encourages androstendione to convert to estrone as well as blocks the conversion to testosterone. Here's one more reason to make sure your patient is on an anti-inflammatory diet which addresses dysglycemia. You can see why patients taking exogenous testosterone or any other hormone should be evaluated on a regular basis.

I am not a fan of exogenous testosterone. Testosterone is an anabolic hormone and I like anabolic hormones made naturally. I am a big

fan of adaptogenic compounds that feed the pathways needed to make hormones. One such adaptogenic compound is b-Vital. B-Vital contains 750 mg of Peruvian maca and 50 mg of velvet deer antler from living elk.

Because Maca has been a staple in Peru for thousands of years we can be assured of its safety. Men and women have used Peruvian maca to increase endurance, fertility and virility. Although we think of it for men, it is also used for women with menopause as well.

Deer elk antler has been used in traditional Chinese medicine for thousands of years as a tonic providing a revitalizing effect especially for those weakened by illness or other stress. A preliminary study of men (unpublished), ages 45-55, found that supplementation with b-VITAL for 30 days increased salivary free testosterone in 100% of subjects. My experience matches the preliminary study in both men and women; b-Vital consistently increases saliva levels of free testosterone.

So for healthy aging, consider teaching both men and women to use high intensity interval training exercises like Sprint 8 to increase growth hormone and downstream hormones like testosterone, reduce insulin and use compounds that have been used for thousands of years safely like b-Vital.

If you choose to do testing or want more information, below I have provided a check list of nutrients to consider as well as the chart we just discussed.

More and more baby boomers are looking for ways to enhance their life quotient. In today's changing health care system I encourage you to become an expert in things people want.

Thanks for reading this week's edition. I'll see you next Tuesday.