

Low Testosterone



What Is Low Testosterone?

Testosterone is a male sex hormone. It plays a key role in male sexual and physical health. Low testosterone, or Low T, is when a man's body does not make enough of the hormone. As men age, the amount of testosterone in their body gets lower. Low T can impact your sex drive, mood, bone health, and fertility. Conditions that may cause or contribute to Low T are:

- Obesity
- Type 2 diabetes
- Chronic kidney disease
- Liver disease
- Treatment with certain steroids or painkillers
- Injury or infection of the testicles



What Are the Warning Signs of Low Testosterone?

- Feeling less interested in sex than normal
- Experiencing erectile dysfunction and infertility
- Having less muscle mass
- Having less beard and body hair growth
- Losing bone mass (osteoporosis)
- Developing breast tissue
- Feeling tired and having trouble concentrating



How Is Low Testosterone Diagnosed?

- Your doctor will ask you questions about your symptoms and give you a physical exam.
- If you have signs and symptoms of Low T, your doctor may order a test to measure the amount of testosterone in your blood.
- If the blood test shows that you have Low T you may need more tests to help find out the cause. Talk to your doctor about which tests you may need.



How Is Low Testosterone Treated?

Low T can be treated with testosterone replacement therapy. This can bring back sexual function and sex drive and improve your sense of well-being. It can also build muscle strength and prevent bone loss. This treatment comes with a doctor's prescription as an injection, patch, cream, or gel.

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Questions for My Doctor

- Will I always have low T?
- What treatment is best for me?
- What are the risks or side effects of treatment?
- How long will it take for testosterone replacement therapy to work?
- Will I have to take medicine for the rest of my life?



Bottom Line

- Low T is when the body doesn't produce enough testosterone. Testosterone is a hormone that plays an important role in male sexual function and physical health.
- Symptoms of Low T include feeling less interested and able to have sex, having less muscle mass and less beard and body hair growth, and developing breast tissue.
- Your doctor can order a test that will measure the amount of testosterone in your blood. If the test shows you have Low T, more tests may be needed to find the cause.
- There are medicines that can replace the testosterone in your body.

For More Information

- **Medline Plus:** www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/001195.htm
www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/patientinstructions/000722.htm

Notes:
