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Men's Hormone Packet

Testosterone Deficiency (Low T) and Hormone Replacement Pellet Therapy for Men

Testosterone deficiency or Low T (sometimes also called andropause) is now recognized to play an important role in men's health and well-being. Testosterone is the most significant sex hormone produced by men and it plays a major part in libido, energy, muscle mass, bone density and mortality. Testosterone levels drop naturally in men. Some men may lose 1% to 3% of their testosterone by age 30. This drop in hormone levels may lead to the following symptoms.

*Fatigue *Insomnia *Irritability and Mood Swings *Lack of Mental Clarity and Focus
*Anxiety *Depression *Decreased Stamina *Decreased Sex Drive

Low levels of testosterone in men can be detrimental and may contribute to more serious long-term health conditions such as:

*Cancer *Diabetes *Heart Disease *Dementia *Alzheimer's

What Are Pellets?

Pellets or Implants are made up of **bio-identical hormones** (i.e., testosterone) that are the exact formula your body produces and are derived from plants that are pressed or fused into very small solid cylinders. These pellets are larger than a grain of rice and smaller than a "TicTac". In the United States, the majority of pellets are made by compounding pharmacists and delivered in sterile glass vials.

Why Pellets?

Pellets deliver consistent, healthy levels of hormones for 5-6 months in men. They avoid the fluctuations, or ups and downs of hormone levels (roller coaster effect) seen with other methods of delivery. This is important for optimal health and disease prevention.

Testosterone delivered by pellets have been used to treat hormone imbalance in both men and women. **Testosterone has been shown to increase energy, relieve depression, increase sense of well-being, relieve anxiety and improve memory and concentration. Testosterone, delivered by pellet implant, increases lean body mass (muscle strength, bone density) and decreases fat mass.** Men and women need adequate levels of testosterone for optimal and physical health and for the prevention of chronic illnesses like Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease, which are associated with low testosterone levels.

Even patients who have failed other types of hormone therapy have a very high success rate with pellets. **There is no other method of hormone delivery that is as convenient for the patient as pellets.** Pellets have been used in both men and women since the 1930s and there is significant data that supports their usefulness.

What Side Effects Can You Expect?

One of the greatest benefits of pellets is they cause minimal side effects, which can vary by person. The most common side effects include bruising, minor bleeding, infection or extrusion of the pellet. However, complications beyond these are extremely rare.

How Long Until A Patient Feels Better After Pellets Are Inserted?

Some patients begin to "feel better" within 24-48 hours while others may take 10-14 days to notice a difference. Diet and lifestyle (exercise), along with hormone balance are critical for optimal health. Stress is a major contributor to hormone imbalance and illness. Side effects and adverse drug events from prescription medications may interfere with the beneficial effects of the hormone pellets.

How Long Do Pellets Last?

Pellets usually last around 5-6 months in men. The pellets do not need to be removed. They completely dissolve on their own.

How Are Hormones Monitored During Therapy?

Hormone levels may be drawn and evaluated before therapy is started. Men need a PSA (prostate specific antigen), serum estradiol, testosterone (free and total), liver profile and a complete blood count prior to starting therapy.

Follow up levels, including a PSA, blood count, estradiol and testosterone levels will be obtained prior to subsequent testosterone implantation. Men are recommended to see a primary care physician and obtain a digital rectal exam each year.

How Much Do Pellets Cost?

The cost of insertion of pellets is \$365 for women and \$720 for men. Men need a much larger dose of testosterone than women therefore, the cost is higher. Pellets need to be inserted 2 to 4 times a year depending on how rapidly a patient metabolizes hormones; most men average 2x a year. When compared to the cost of drugs to treat the individual symptoms of hormone decline, pellets are very cost effective.

Will Insurance Cover The Procedure?

Insurance companies **DO NOT** cover the cost of pellets. Payment is required prior to insertion. **Prevention is much more cost effective than disease.**

For more information, contact our office:

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WHAT'S UP WITH LOW T?



In case, you haven't noticed, testosterone treatments for men are becoming more common. Drug manufacturers have blanketed the airwaves and cable sports channels with commercials about the negative effects of "Low T". But, a one-minute ad can only tell you so much. Let's look at the whole picture.

As the most important sex hormone in the male body, testosterone plays a key role in libido, energy, muscle mass, bone density and mortality. Testosterone levels naturally drop with age. Low testosterone affects about 20 percent of men over 60, about 30 percent of men over 70 and half of men over 80, reports the American Urological Association. Diabetes, excess weight, stress, hypertension and high cholesterol also can lower testosterone.

Having adequate amounts of testosterone is important for overall health. In fact, men with too little testosterone have a higher risk of dying sooner than those with optimum levels.

A nine-year Australian study of nearly 3700 men between 70 and 89 years old found that men with the lowest testosterone levels had the highest death rates after adjustments for age, according to the *Journal of Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism*. So, how can men know whether their levels are too low? And, what should they do about it?

Testing Testosterone Levels: Fatigue, erectile dysfunction and other signs of Low T can be caused by any number of health problems, so it's important to see your doctor about these symptoms to get properly diagnosed. If your doctors suspect Low T, blood tests will be ordered to check testosterone levels. These tests are typically done more than once because hormone levels fluctuate, either naturally or from taking certain medications.

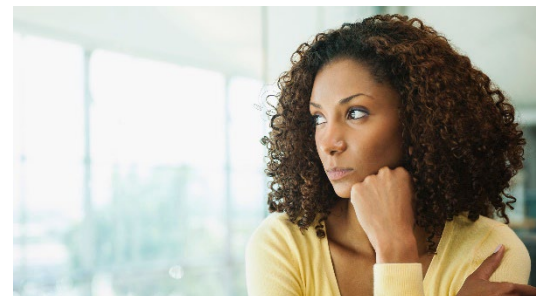
Balancing the Big T: If low testosterone is identified, lifestyle tweaks can ward off further decreases or even boost hormone levels. For example, losing excess weight, lifting weights regularly, cutting back on alcohol use, getting more sleep and reducing stress have all been shown to improve T levels in men. When lifestyle changes don't work, hormone therapy may be prescribed to improve sex drive, muscle mass, bone strength, mood and energy. Treatment is fairly simple-the hormone can be delivered with injections, implants, patches, creams or gels.

What about Women and Testosterone?

Women also produce testosterone, but in much smaller amounts than men. If levels of this hormone are below normal, women may struggle with a loss of libido, fatigue and depression.

Currently, the FDA has not approved any testosterone treatments for women. However, off-label use of testosterone therapy for post-menopausal women is relatively common, particularly in women suffering from a low sex drive.

Like men, women should discuss the risks and benefits of hormone therapy with a physician and be sure they understand the potential outcomes of treatment.





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Men Hormone Packet

Testosterone Pellet Insertion Acknowledgement for Men

General: Bio-identical hormone pellets are comprised of naturally derived concentrated hormones. These hormones are designed to be biologically identical to the hormones made by our own bodies. Bio-identical hormones have the same effects on the body as one's own hormones.

Benefits and Risks: Advantages of testosterone for men include: a) behavioral changes including decreasing depression, anxiety and irritability, increasing energy and motivation, stabilizing moods, allowing one to cope better, improving self-image and self-worth and enhancing stamina; b) improvement in cognitive function, short term memory and focus; c) decreasing total body fat, increasing muscle mass and increasing bone mass; d) sexual benefits such as increasing libido, early morning erections, firmness, and duration of erections.

The risks are similar to those of any testosterone replacement, but the risks may be lower with pellets than alternative or synthetic forms. The risk of NOT receiving adequate hormone therapy can outweigh the risks of replacing testosterone with pellets in men with low testosterone. These risks include but are not limited to:

Arteriosclerosis, elevation of cholesterol, obesity, loss of stamina and strength, osteoporosis, depression, mood disorders, arthritis, decreased sexual desire and performance, erectile dysfunction, loss of skin tone, diabetes, dementia, Alzheimer's disease and an increased overall inflammatory process.

The above benefits do come with some risks. Very high doses of synthetic testosterone (generally given by injection) or testosterone taken orally, have been associated with serious risks, complications and side effects including liver disease, heart disease and elevated cholesterol. However, appropriately dosed, non-oral, natural testosterone used in pellet therapy has not been associated with these problems.

There is some risk, even with natural testosterone therapy, of enhancing the growth of an existing prostate or breast cancer. For this reason, a Prostate Specific Antigen or PSA will be ordered before starting testosterone. If there is any question about possible prostate cancer, a referral to a Urologist will be advised. While urinary symptoms typically improve with testosterone, rarely they may worsen before they improve. Testosterone therapy may increase estradiol levels, and/or hemoglobin hematocrit (thicken the blood). This condition can be reversed by periodically donating blood. A complete blood count (CBC) will be performed before pellet placement. If the blood becomes too thick, thrombosis (formation of a blood clot) may occur and increase the risk of heart attack, stroke or deep vein thrombosis.

Prostate cancer is triggered by the activation of the enzyme aromatase which converts testosterone into estradiol. High levels of estradiol can promote inappropriate cell division (prostate/breast cancer). Anastrozole (aromatase inhibitor) blocks the conversion of testosterone to estradiol. Anastrozole is available in oral and pellet form. (from B1)

Excessive aromatization of testosterone to estradiol may initiate/exacerbate prostate/breast cancer. Aromatase inhibitor pellet placement combined with testosterone pellets reduces aromatization. Some patients may require an oral aromatase inhibitor if excessive aromatization occurs despite administration of anastrozole in pellet form.

The majority of studies show that testosterone is cardioprotective, if given to men with testosterone deficiency in appropriate doses. Men using testosterone therapy also have a decreased incidence of prostate cancer. Lastly, testosterone may help prevent and treat early Alzheimer's disease.

Testosterone Pellet Insertion Acknowledgement for Men

An additional concern, especially in young men, is the suppression of spermatogenesis while on testosterone therapy. However, to date, this appears to be a reversible process in the majority of men. Once testosterone is discontinued, the sperm count is restored, usually in 3-12 months. In rare cases, permanent sterility may result. Younger men, desiring to bear children in the future, are encouraged to have their sperm frozen before initiating testosterone therapy. Men interested in preserving sperm should see a reproductive endocrinologist. Men who are concerned about their future fertility should have a semen analysis prior to initiating testosterone therapy. Testosterone administration is not to be used as a form of male contraception and, should be used cautiously if planning future pregnancies.

Consent For Treatment: I consent to the insertion of testosterone pellets in my hip. I have been informed that I may experience any of the complications as described here. **Surgical risks are the same as for any minor medical procedure and are included in the list of overall risks below:**

Bleeding, bruising, swelling, infection, pain, and **extrusion of pellets**. Lack of effect (typically from lack of absorption), thinning hair and male pattern baldness. Increased growth of prostate and prostate tumors and overactive libido.

Instructions on the post-pellet recommendation sheet should be followed to avoid such risk.

Charges: \$720 per insertion. I understand payment is due in full at the time of service.

Patient's Consent: I have read and fully understand this consent. I have been encouraged and have had the opportunity to ask questions regarding pellet therapy. All of my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I further acknowledge that the risks and benefits of this treatment have been explained to me and I have been informed that I may experience complications, including one or more of those listed above. I accept these risk and benefits and I consent to the insertion of hormone pellets under my skin.

I, _____ authorize Dr. Stefanie A. Schultis or a designated medical professional to perform the following procedure: **Sterile Placement of Hormone Pellets Under the Skin.**

I have had a digital rectal exam, PSA and CBC within the last year and agree to do this every 6 months to a year as advised.

_____ Date _____
Patient Name (printed)

_____ Date _____
Patient Signature

_____ Date _____
Physician/Nurse Practitioner Signature

_____ Date _____
Witness



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What Might Occur After Pellet Insertion In Men

A significant hormonal transition will occur in the first four weeks after the insertion of hormone pellets. Therefore, certain changes might develop that can be bothersome.

- ❖ **Pain/Inflammation at Pellet site is expected:** Extrusion of pellets may occur; overt infection is uncommon but can occur.
- ❖ **Fluid Retention:** Testosterone stimulates the muscle to grow and retain water which may result in a weight change of two to five pounds. This happens frequently with the first insertion, and especially during hot, humid weather. Swelling of the hands and feet may occur. It may be treated by drinking lots of water, reducing your salt intake, taking cider vinegar capsules daily (found at most health food stores), or by taking a mild diuretic, which the office can prescribe.
- ❖ **Breast Tenderness and Nipple Sensitivity:** These may develop with the first pellet insertion of estrogen. The increase in estrogen sends more blood to the breast tissue. Increased blood supply is a good thing, as it nourishes the tissue. To combat the tenderness, an excellent treatment is a capsule of Oil of Evening Primrose 2-3 times a day. You may need to take them for 2-3 weeks.
- ❖ **Mood Swings and Irritability:** These occur if you were quite deficient in hormones. They may resolve when enough hormones are in your system.
- ❖ **Facial Breakout:** Acne may develop if the body is very deficient in testosterone. This usually lasts only a short period of time and can often be handled with a good face cleansing routine, astringents and toner. If these solutions do not help, please call our office.
- ❖ **Hair Loss:** This is rare and usually only occurs in patients who convert testosterone to DHT. Dosage adjustment generally reduces or eliminates the problem. Medibles™ Hair Repair Formula may help with the loss of hair (available online) or a supplement called "Hair, Skin and Nails".
- ❖ **Hair Growth:** Testosterone may stimulate some growth of hair on your chin, chest, nipples, and/or lower abdomen. This tends to be hereditary. You may also have to shave your legs and arms more often. Dosage adjustments generally reduce or eliminate this problem. DHT may also contribute to this, so Medibles™ Hair Repair may help.
- ❖ **New Medical Conditions:** New medical conditions may be diagnosed while undergoing Pellet Therapy (i.e., cancers, blood clots). If diagnosed with conditions that may be affected (possibly worsened) by hormone therapy while undergoing hormone therapy (breast or uterine cancer, deep venous thrombosis, cardiac or other diseases) **it is not possible to remove the hormone pellets**, but they will wear off in 3-4 months (most of the time) from the last insertion.

I have read and understand the above.

_____ Date _____
Patient Name (print)

_____ Date _____
Patient Signature

_____ Date _____
Physician/Nurse Practitioner Signature

_____ Date _____
Witness



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Hormone Packet Men | Women

Hormone Pellet Post Insertion Instructions

1. The insertion site has been covered.
 - The outer layer is the pressure bandage of folded gauze and wide tape. Please remove this anytime after 12 hours. If your procedure was done late in the day, you may sleep with it on and remove it the following morning.
 - The layer next to your skin is a steri strip. These must remain in place for 3 days after the insertion. If steri-strip falls off, apply a band-aid. Apply over the counter antibiotic ointment to site approximately 2x a day until healed.
2. Other important notes:
 - If not allergic take an over the counter Zyrtec or Claritin daily for 3 days starting day of insertion.
 - If you have been given an antibiotic prescription, take as directed.
 - Keep the area clean and dry.
 - Avoid scrubbing the site until the incision is well healed (approximately 7 days).
 - The insertion site may be uncomfortable and you may experience bruising, swelling and/or redness at the site for up to 3 weeks.
 - You may notice pink or bloody discoloration of the outer bandage. This is normal.
 - If you experience bleeding from the incision, apply firm pressure for about 5 minutes. If heavy bleeding persists, call the office.
3. **Restrictions – Men 7 Days, Women 5 Days**
 - No tub baths, soaking water, hot tubs, swimming. Avoid vigorous activity. No Power Walking.
 - Stair stepper, elliptical cross trainer, cycling, jogging, or any activity that uses the gluteal muscles should be avoided. We want to keep the hip as still as possible during this time.
4. Things you **CAN** do:
 - Shower, golf and enjoy life!
5. Infection is very rare. However, if the redness and swelling increase after 48 hours, you may have a minor skin inflammation, infection or bruising.
 - Apply a warm heating pad or warm compress twice daily for 10-15 minutes, or as needed.
 - If symptoms worsen, call the office to be seen or given an antibiotic.
6. Call the office for any questions or concerns: 985-898-1940
8:30am-4:30pm Mon thru Thursday, 8:30am-11:30am Friday



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Hormone Replacement Pellet Therapy Fee Acknowledgement

Insurance does not cover Hormone Replacement Pellet Therapy. It is considered an elective procedure. You will be responsible for payment at the time pellets are inserted.

Female Hormone Pellet Insertion Fee **\$365**

*Additional Fee: \$10 for women that require a urine pregnancy test prior to insertion

Male Hormone Pellet Insertion Fee **\$720**

We accept the following forms of payment:

Mastercard
Visa
Discover
American Express
Debit card
HSA
Cash
Check

Credit and debit cards will have an additional 3.5% service fee. There is no fee on HSA Cards.

Patient Signature

Date