



What You Need to Know About Testosterone

Women make estrogen, progesterone, and testosterone in the ovaries and from our endocrine glands. Testosterone levels decline with age and are up to 50% lower in menopausal women compared to younger adult women.

Testosterone can improve libido. It can help with building muscle mass and work out recovery. It can help keep bones healthy and strong, along with estrogen. Testosterone can help with brain fog, depressed mood, and cognition impairment. It is beneficial to heart health and is anti-inflammatory. It can help with vulvar/vaginal health when applied topically. Most people notice an improvement in their symptoms after starting testosterone within 3 months.

Currently, there is no FDA approved Testosterone product for women. However, we have plenty of research on the benefits and safety of testosterone for women.

Since it is not FDA approved, insurance companies do not cover it. There are several options.

Types:

Compounded Cream: You can use a compound pharmacy and get testosterone cream. What patients like about this option is that is dosed for women. You apply a small amount to the inner thigh in the morning. Wash your hands afterwards. Allow the cream to dry before putting on clothes. No one can touch that area for 2 hours. No skin-to-skin contact in the first 2 hours after application. The cream can be transferred to someone else if there is skin to skin contact in that time frame. Rotate application sites to alternating thigh the next day. Typically, hair growth in the area you apply the cream is the most common side effect. The cost is around 40-60/month based on what the compounding pharmacy charges.

Hormone Pellets: They contain estrogen and/or testosterone. They are inserted in the office by a healthcare provider. They are inserted underneath the skin, typically in the outer hip. They last about 3 months. Many people like the convenience of the pellets since other hormone options require daily application or they do not want to perform injections.

Injections: This is the male testosterone product. You inject 0.1 ml (20 mg) of testosterone into the thigh or stomach once a month. This is a low dose. You draw up the medication out of the vial into the syringe and inject yourself. The vial you are given can last you several months since you are injecting once a month. The cost is around 15-30/vial with a Good RX coupon.

Gel: It comes in small, individual tubes. You would apply 1/10 of the tube every day. Since it is difficult to apply 1/10 of a tube, you are given a syringe as well. You can put the gel in a tube



and determine what 1/10th of the dose is to apply from the syringe. Typically, it is a pea sized amount of gel. Please apply it on the inner thigh once in the morning. Wash your hands afterwards. Allow the gel to dry before putting on clothes. No one can touch that area for 2 hours. No skin-to-skin contact in the first 2 hours after application. Rotate application sites to alternating thigh the next day. Typically, hair growth in the area you apply the gel is the most common side effect. You get a box of 30 tubes, and it will last you 300 days. With a Good RX coupon, it costs around 120, but over 300 days.

Follow up:

Periodically, lab will be performed to check your hormone levels. This is to ensure that your hormone levels are in the appropriate range and not elevated. Symptoms of elevated testosterone levels are acne, facial hair, hair loss, anger, irritability, voice changes, or enlargement of the clitoris. You should notify the office if you notice the above symptoms.

***This handout is to be used as a guide for education on your treatment options. The office of Dr. Jay Williamson does not receive any financial compensation for the products recommended. These products are recommended by menopause specialists, gynecologists, urologists, and many patients.