

## **MEN'S HEALTH FACTSHEET**

### **MALE MENOPAUSE**

#### **Foreward**

Women may not be the only ones who suffer the effects of changing hormones. Some Doctors are noticing their male patients are reporting some of the same symptoms that women experience in menopause.

The medical community is currently debating whether or not men really do go through a well defined menopause. Doctors have reported that male patients receiving hormone replacement therapy (testosterone) have relieved some of the symptoms associated with the so called male menopause.

#### **What Is Male Menopause?**

Since men do not go through a well-defined period referred to as a menopause, some physicians refer to this problem as androgen (testosterone) decline in the ageing male. Men do experience a decline in the production of the male hormone, testosterone with ageing, but this also occurs with some disease states such as diabetes. Along with the decline in testosterone, some men experience symptoms such as fatigue, weakness and depression and sexual problems. The relationship of these symptoms to the decreased testosterone levels is still controversial.

Unlike menopause in women which represents a well-defined period in which hormone production stops completely, male hormone (testosterone) decline is a slower process. The tests, unlike the ovary, does not run out of the substance it needs to make testosterone. A healthy male may be able to make sperm well into the eighties or longer.

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#### **How Male Menopause Is Diagnosed?**

To make the diagnosis, the doctor will perform a physical exam and ask about symptoms. He or she may carry out other diagnostic tests to rule out any medical problems that may be contributing to the condition. The doctor will then order a series of blood tests which may include several hormonal levels, including a blood testosterone level.

#### **Can Male Menopause Be Treated?**

If testosterone levels are low, testosterone replacement therapy may help relieve such symptoms as loss of interest in sex (decreased libido), depression and fatigue. But as with hormone replacement therapy in women, testosterone replacement therapy does have some potential risks and side effects. Replacing testosterone may worsen prostate cancer for example.

If you or a loved one is considering androgen replacement therapy, talk to a doctor to learn more. Your doctor may also recommend certain lifestyle changes, such as a new diet or exercise program, or other medications such as antidepressants to help some of the symptoms of male menopause.

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