Talk to your doctor about low testosterone

Maybe he needs to lose some weight?
Maybe he’s just tired?
Maybe he’s lost his spark?
Maybe he doesn’t find me attractive any more?

MAYBE I’M JUST GETTING OLDER?

Sound familiar?
Maybe you should read this
Maybe you’ve got low testosterone levels

As you get older, your body will go through some changes that you might expect. Perhaps you won’t be as lively as you once were or you might put on some weight. You may even notice a gradual loss of sex drive. But what if this isn’t just down to aging?

Low testosterone (also called hypogonadism) is a hormonal change that affects one in five men between the ages of 50 and 70. It’s defined as having some of the typical symptoms detailed below, combined with a low level of the male hormone, testosterone.

What to look for

The symptoms of low testosterone are wide-ranging, so it’s no wonder the problem often remains undetected for a long time or is put down to ‘just getting older’. In general, men with low testosterone may experience one or more common symptoms.

- Loss of enthusiasm
- Weight gain around the middle
- Depressed mood
- Lack of energy
- Low sex drive

In addition to these, there are a number of other symptoms that may indicate low testosterone. To find out if you should talk to your doctor and get your testosterone levels checked, fill in the simple questionnaire at the end of this leaflet.
An essential hormone
Testosterone is important for a number of reasons. It enables a man to achieve an erection and experience sexual desire. It’s also important for your muscles, bones, mood and energy level.

If you have a low testosterone level, you could be at risk of developing erectile dysfunction (ED) and type 2 diabetes. Raising the level of testosterone in the body and maintaining it has been shown to effectively reduce these risks.

The cause of low testosterone
Men can develop low testosterone for a number of reasons, although sometimes the specific cause is unknown. Depending on the cause, symptoms may occur quickly or gradually, sometimes taking years to become noticeable.
Men with erectile dysfunction

Over one third of men who have erectile dysfunction (ED) may also have low testosterone. If you have ED, it could be worth getting your testosterone levels checked. This is particularly important if your ED treatment doesn’t appear to be working very well.

Men with type 2 diabetes

Over the last few years, studies have demonstrated a link between type 2 diabetes and low testosterone so, if you have type 2 diabetes and notice one or more of the other symptoms mentioned in this leaflet, you could also have low testosterone. And diabetes can also be associated with ED – more than two thirds of diabetic men are affected by it.

Men with cardiovascular problems

It is not yet clear if low testosterone causes or is a result of cardiovascular problems. However, it is highly likely that if you have, for example, coronary heart disease, atherosclerosis or high blood pressure, you could be at risk of developing low testosterone.
Maybe you should do something about it
If you think you may be experiencing symptoms of low testosterone, or are in any of the risk groups explained on page 4, complete the symptom questionnaire* at the end of this leaflet and talk to your doctor. With a simple blood test, it is possible to determine your testosterone level and establish whether or not you have low testosterone.

There are ways to treat it
Along with lifestyle changes, such as healthy eating and taking more exercise, there are a wide range of treatments available for low testosterone and the symptoms typically associated with it, but these need to be discussed with your doctor in order to determine whether they are suitable for you.
If testosterone therapy is right for you, your doctor will suggest suitable treatment methods, ranging from short- and long-acting injections, to topical treatments such as gels and patches.
By restoring your testosterone level, your sex drive, energy levels and general health may improve. If you have ED, you may find that this improves too, even if you’re already taking tablets to treat it.

*The ADAM questionnaire.
Think you’ve got low testosterone?

If you answered YES to question 1 or 7, or at least three of the other questions, you may have low testosterone and should speak to your doctor or nurse about checking your testosterone level.

Useful notes

Maybe you should take the ADAM questionnaire

Take this 1-minute test to see if you have any of the features of low testosterone:

1. Do you have a decrease in libido (sex drive)?
2. Do you have a lack of energy?
3. Do you have a decrease in strength and endurance?
4. Have you lost height?
5. Have you noticed a decreased 'enjoyment of life'?
6. Are you sad and/or grumpy?
7. Are your erections less strong?
8. Have you noticed a recent deterioration in your ability to play sports?
9. Are you falling asleep after dinner?
10. Has there been a recent deterioration in your work performance?