

The truth about testosterone

Wednesday, July 01, 2009

The truth about testosterone! Learn why it's good for men and your relationship. Dr. Paul Turek of the Turek Clinic explains.

What is the male hormone testosterone and why is it important?

Testosterone is the major sex steroid hormone in men. In women, estrogen is the major sex steroid hormone. Just as plants need water to grow and bloom, normal testosterone balance is critical in boys for puberty and in men for normal growth and reproductive and sexual function. Although most known for its role as a sex steroid, testosterone also has effects on many body functions. In the brain, it influences mood, memory and intellect in addition to sex drive. Testosterone maintains muscle strength and growth and helps maintain normal blood counts and bone strength. It may also be important for normal cholesterol balance. Testosterone maintains erections, fertility and prostate function. In summary, testosterone is an essential hormone for a healthy male body.

What are the major myths surrounding testosterone?

1. Testosterone is an illegal drug. False. Testosterone is a "controlled" substance that is regulated by the US Drug Enforcement Act (DEA) since 1991 (see). This means that it can only be obtained legally with a doctor's prescription. Anabolic steroids are synthetically produced variants of naturally testosterone. Some common street or slang names for anabolic steroids include arnolds, gym candy, pumpers, roids, stackers, weight trainers, and juice. Currently, there are more than 100 different types of anabolic steroids that have been developed, and each requires a prescription to be used legally in the United States. What is illegal is the possession or sale of any anabolic steroids without a valid prescription.

2. Testosterone is a steroid, and steroids are dangerous. True and False. Testosterone is a steroid hormone as described above, but that doesn't make it dangerous. It is essential for a healthy male body. However, testosterone supplements taken above and beyond that needed for normal body function can have dramatic side effects, including sterility. However, they are not dangerous like, say, hallucinogenic drugs.

3. Testosterone causes uncontrollable violent behavior. False. Testosterone can affect mood and low testosterone levels may underlie many cases of depression. When taken in excess, testosterone can cause anxiety and insomnia. However, men with natural testosterone levels higher than others are not either more aggressive or docile than men with lower levels.

4. Testosterone causes prostate cancer. False. Although a Nobel prize was given to urologists in the 1940's for showing that prostate cancer is hormonally sensitive to testosterone, this hormone does not cause prostate cancer. Men with higher levels of testosterone are at no greater risk of developing prostate cancer than men with low testosterone. In fact, evidence is emerging that, if anything, men with lower testosterone levels may be at higher risk of prostate cancer.

5. High testosterone levels cause baldness. False. On average, men with male pattern baldness have the same testosterone levels as men with a full head of hair. The driving factor for baldness is likely genetically determined. Male pattern baldness (that is, balding in the center of the crown but not all over) is inherited through the mother's side, so to guess whether a man will have this, he should look at his mother's father. All-over (not crown centered), early onset baldness, however, is usually through the father's side, passed through the Y chromosome.

About Paul Turek

Dr. Paul Turek, who is a leading surgeon and former endowed chair professor at UCSF, is leading the charge to make men aware of the importance of paying attention to their reproductive health. Research has shown (some of which is Dr. Turek's research at UCSF) that reproductive dysfunctions in men are early indicators of severe life threatening health issues like cancer and cardiovascular disease. Dr. Turek wants to make sure men are checked by a men's health specialist when they are having symptoms.

The Turek Clinic is a next-generation men's healthcare medical practice specializing in issues facing reproductive age men, including male infertility, vasectomies, vasectomy reversal, varicocele repair, and other minimally invasive procedures. The practice was founded by Dr. Paul Turek, a leading surgeon and former endowed chair professor at the University of California San Francisco in May, 2008. Dr. Turek's work combines innovative and cutting edge techniques with the wisdom of

old-world medicine to treat and solve the problems of men ages 21 to 55 years of age.

For more information, visit [/www.TheTurekClinic.com](http://www.TheTurekClinic.com).

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