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## **TESTOSTERONE**

**(Males)**

**Testosterone is the male sex hormone secreted by the testis. It is responsible for the development of male sex organs, muscle growth, sex drive, and energy levels in the male. It is also responsible for the secondary sex characteristics of males such as the typical masculine hair growth pattern, increasing the ratio of lean body mass and the deeper voice. As men age, their Testosterone levels can decrease over time. This results in many different symptoms such as decreased energy levels (fatigue), difficulty obtaining, or maintaining an erection (erectile dysfunction), decreased sexual desire, and decreased muscle mass in relationship to fat and even depression.**

**Low testosterone levels are detected by a blood test. At Cedar Hills Family Practice, it is typically treated with natural bioidentical (same as in the body) testosterone. Insurance normally does not pay for it. The testosterone can be given by daily creams, weekly shots, or implantable pellets every 3-6 months.**

**Benefits include increased strength and energy levels, increased sexual desire and ability to maintain an erection, and improved quality of life ("I just *feel* better"). Side effects are the same as those for the testosterone you have in your body and the reversal of the previously mentioned symptoms. Much of the research into side effects of Testosterone was done on synthetic Testosterone. With the use of Bioidentical natural Testosterone, the side effects are much less than with synthetic Testosterone. Even so, males can get prostate cancer toward the end of their lives and treatment with testosterone could possibly speed up this process. It also can possibly increase the risk of liver disorders, cancer and infections. In addition, the human body is very complicated and does not always respond in the usual manner and unexpected other side effects might occur.**

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