

Georgia Hormones P.C.

Robert P. Goldman, MD

3400-A Old Milton Pkwy, Suite 360, Alpharetta GA 30005 770-475-0077

www.GeorgiaHormones.com

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Why Should Men Take Supplemental Hormones? The Benefits of Androgen Therapy

It is no surprise that our bodies change as we age. The hormones that stimulate the development and maintenance of “maleness” are called androgens. Androgen levels peak when men are in their late teens and twenties. After that, levels gradually decline. For most men, hormonal decline happens slowly, often spread over decades. In any given age group, the men who have the highest levels of testosterone and other androgens, frequently look, feel and perform at the top of their class. There are other men with androgen levels at the bottom of the pack. They may be fatigued, perform poorly sexually and may even be depressed. It is frequently not recognized that low androgens can be at the heart of many common male medical problems.

Which hormones are we talking about? The most important androgen is **testosterone**. Androstenedione and DHEA are two other, weaker, less potent, androgens. DHEA, although only a weak androgen, circulates in the blood in much larger quantities than testosterone and contributes to health and well being.

What problems are we talking about? There can be muscle loss and weakness, reduced sexual desire and erectile dysfunction. Weight gain, especially around the middle, is a common problem. Increased abdominal fat can lead to high blood pressure, insulin resistance and can increase the risks of heart attack and stroke. Prostate enlargement can cause difficult or frequent urination, especially during the night. Prostate cancer rates tend to be higher in men with low testosterone levels. A man may experience thinking problems and difficulty with learning new things. Elderly men may have thinning bones. Depression is more common in men with low androgens.

Do I have to be “old” to need androgen supplements? No! Although androgen levels tend to gradually decline with age, some men have nearly youthful levels even into their seventies. Other men may have relatively low levels even in their thirties and forties. There is a great deal of individual variation.

How can we assess your hormone status? At your first visit, we will ask you questions about your health, signs of problems and review your medical history. We will then do blood testing. Tests can include testosterone, estrogen, cholesterol, and prostate specific antigen (**PSA**), blood

counts, DHEA and other tests as needed. We will also measure your height, weight, body mass index (BMI), and your waist to hip ratio.

Are there different kinds of hormone supplements? Dr. Goldman and staff exclusively use **Natural Bioidentical Hormones**. These medications are exact copies of the natural hormones made by the body. Most “testosterone shots” are actually synthetically created man-made chemicals that have never existed in the human body. They are not chemically identical to natural human testosterone. In the 1950s, pharmaceutical chemists invented synthetic, very powerful, non-bioidentical androgens. These chemicals, known as anabolic steroids, do not exist in nature. They build muscle much more effectively than real testosterone but unfortunately, many of them are toxic to the liver and kidneys and some can even cause liver cancer. **Anabolic steroids gave male hormone therapy a bad name.** These synthetic hormones can have powerful effects. Before the advent of artificial anabolic steroids, the 1950 Mr. Universe contestant, Sean Connery, exemplified the image of a “perfect male body.” Twenty-five years later, after anabolic steroids, the new “ideal body” belonged to the “pumped-up” Arnold Schwarzenegger. The real bioidentical hormones cannot turn you into the 1975 Arnold Schwarzenegger, but neither will they increase your risk of liver cancer or disease. **At Georgia Hormones, our goal is to restore your vitality and health.**

How are the Bioidentical Hormones usually given? Testosterone is usually administered as a daily gel or cream applied to the skin. DHEA is usually dispensed as a daily tablet or capsule. Other forms are available to meet individual needs.

What are we trying to accomplish with Bioidentical Androgen Supplements? We are simply trying to help bring the men with low androgen levels up to the age appropriate androgen levels of their healthier and happier colleagues. Overdosing a man to excessively high levels of the real hormones has no medical benefits, and there may be dangers. We will monitor levels of your hormones, PSA, blood counts and other health factors as therapy continues. We want our patients to have hormone levels that are sufficient and age appropriate, but not excessive.

What are the benefits?

- Improvement of mood, well-being, thinking and learning.
- Enhanced libido and sexual performance.
- Maintain Prostate Gland health and healthy urinary function
- Increasing muscle mass and tone while reducing abdominal body fat
- Reducing cholesterol, triglycerides and blood sugar to help protect the heart.
- Protection of bone strength and bone density.

Will just taking Androgens solve all my problems? No!! Georgia Hormones is a Holistic Medical Practice. Hormone supplements are only one part of a program for a healthier life. **Proper diet** is needed, usually with reduced carbohydrates and calories. **Exercise** is needed, to include strength-training, aerobics, stretching and deep breathing. Vitamins and other **dietary supplements** are needed, along with adequate sleep and moderation of alcohol consumption.

Are There Dangers? There are some potential risks. Pre-existing prostate cancer or male breast cancer, benign Prostatic hypertrophy (BPH), sleep apnea, high red blood counts and significant heart disease could be reasons to avoid androgen supplementation therapy.