

# Can You Boost Low Testosterone Naturally?

WebMD Feature

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If you're looking for ways to boost your testosterone level, start by looking at your daily habits. "I never prescribe testosterone alone without talking to men about their lifestyle," says Martin Miner, MD, co-director of the Men's Health Center at the Miriam Hospital in Providence, R.I.

Some changes that are good for your overall health could also provide benefits in helping to maintain a healthy level of this important male hormone.

## 1. Get Enough Sleep.

George Yu, MD, a urology professor at the George Washington University Medical Center in Washington, D.C., says that, for many men with low testosterone, poor sleep is the most important factor. A lack of sleep affects a variety of hormones and chemicals in your body. This, in turn, can have a harmful impact on your testosterone.

Make sleep a priority, aiming for 7 to 8 hours per night, even if it means rearranging your schedule or dropping your habit of late-night TV. Prize your sleep, just like you'd prize a healthy diet and active lifestyle. It's that important.

If you're having problems getting good sleep on a regular basis, talk to your doctor.

## 2. Keep a Healthy Weight.

Men who are overweight or obese often have low testosterone levels, says Alvin M. Matsumoto, MD, of the University of Washington School of Medicine in Seattle.

For those men, *losing the extra weight can help bring testosterone back up*, he says. Likewise, for men who are underweight, getting your weight up to a healthy level can also have a positive effect on the hormone.

## 3. Stay Active.

Testosterone adapts to your body's needs, Yu says. If you spend most of your time lying on the couch, your brain gets the message that you don't need as much to bolster your muscles and bones.

But, he says, when you're physically active, your brain sends out the signal for more of the hormone.

### **If you're getting little exercise now, Miner suggests starting by:**

Walking briskly at least 10 to 20 minutes a day.

Building strength with several sessions of weights or elastic bands each week. Work with a trainer to learn proper form so you don't injure yourself.

Don't go overboard. Extreme amounts of endurance exercise -- working out at the level of elite athletes -- can lower your testosterone.

#### **4. Take Control of Your Stress.**

If you're under constant stress, your body will churn out a steady stream of the stress hormone cortisol. When it does, it will be less able to create testosterone. So, controlling your stress is important for keeping up your testosterone, Miner says.

#### **Miner's advice to the over-stressed men he sees in his office is to:**

Cut back on long work hours. If you're logging lots of overtime, try to whittle your workday down to 10 hours or less.

Spend 2 hours a day on activities you like that aren't work- or exercise-related, such as reading or playing music.

#### **5. Review Your Medications.**

Some medicines can cause a drop in your testosterone level, Matsumoto says. These include:

Opioid drugs such as fentanyl, MS Contin, and OxyContin

Glucocorticoid drugs such as prednisone

Anabolic steroids used for building muscles and improving athletic performance

You shouldn't stop taking any of your medications. If you're concerned about your testosterone level, discuss your medications with your doctor to make sure they're not the problem, and to make adjustments to your treatment if needed.

#### **6. Forget the Supplements.**

Finally, although you're likely to encounter online ads for testosterone-boosting supplements, you aren't likely to find any that will do much good.

Your body naturally makes a hormone called DHEA that it can convert to testosterone. DHEA is also available in supplement form. But neither Miner nor Matsumoto advise using DHEA supplements since, they say, they will do little to raise your testosterone.

#### **View Article Source**

##### **SOURCES:**

George S. Yu, MD, Aegis Medical & Research Associates, Annapolis, Md.

Martin Miner, MD, Chief of Family and Community Medicine, Miriam Hospital, Providence, R.I.

Alvin Matsumoto, MD, professor of medicine, University of Washington; associate director, Geriatric Research, Education and Clinical Center, V.A. Puget Sound Health Care System, Seattle.

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