

Newson Clinic Knowledge Factsheet

What are the benefits of testosterone for women who take HRT?

Testosterone can be taken alongside oestrogen and/or progesterone to treat perimenopausal and menopausal symptoms

Like the hormones oestradiol (oestrogen) and progesterone, testosterone plays numerous important roles throughout your body. Levels of testosterone naturally decline in women after the age of 20 and drop again during menopause. You have oestradiol, progesterone and testosterone receptors all over your body so the decline in levels can affect your bone, brain, circulation, urinary, genital and nervous systems.

Can testosterone help my sex drive?

In women, testosterone is best known for its impact on libido. The 2024 NICE menopause guidelines say that testosterone can be considered for menopausal women with low sexual desire – if HRT alone has not been effective [1].

Testosterone doesn't just improve the frequency of desire for sex, it also helps to improve sexual response, increasing sexual arousal levels. In trials, it has been found to be an effective treatment for hypoactive sexual desire disorder (HSDD), a sexual dysfunction that's occurrence peaks in women aged 45–64 [2]. HSDD is deemed as a total lack of interest in sex, lasting more than six months, that has consequences on your relationship and/or self-esteem.

If you want to find out if testosterone is right for you, book an appointment to speak to a Newson Clinic healthcare professional.

Can testosterone help other menopausal symptoms?

Women who take HRT to treat their perimenopausal and menopausal symptoms often report further improvements when they take testosterone too. Benefits of testosterone for women in menopause that may be experienced include improved: energy and stamina; muscle mass and strength; concentration, clarity of thought and memory; and sleep.

A study by Newson Health looked at 510 women with persistent low libido, cognitive and negative mood symptoms, and who had already been using HRT (transdermal oestrogen with or without a progestogen) [3]. The women were then treated with transdermal body-identical testosterone gel or cream for four months.

The frequency and severity of 10 symptoms was self-reported – all 10 symptoms significantly improved. While 52% of women reported an improvement in libido, nine other symptoms – all cognitive and mood symptoms – also improved.

The symptoms most likely to improve were 'loss of interest in most things' (56% of women reported an improvement) and 'crying spells' (55%). This suggests that testosterone may have benefits beyond the treatment of HSDD in postmenopausal women.

Are there other benefits of testosterone for women?

While most research on the effects of testosterone on women has primarily focused on libido, one review of research concludes there are promising insights into the benefits of low-dose testosterone therapy, typically combined with oestrogen, on cardiovascular risk [4]. It cites possible improvements in body composition, insulin sensitivity, inflammatory markers, and cholesterol.

It's known that testosterone plays an important role in female health but more research is needed to address benefits of testosterone supplementation, alongside HRT, during perimenopause and menopause.



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