Provider Lab Checklist

FREE BONUS 4 · LOSE FAT, NOT MUSCLE BY NELSON VERGEL

The labs Chapter 19 says to request, the questions to ask early, and the signs your care is falling short. Bring this to your appointment.

Labs for men

☐ Lab	Why it matters	When
☐ Total and free testosterone (morning, fasting; ideally confirmed twice)	The core hormone for muscle; guides therapy	Baseline, then per therapy
☐ LH and FSH	Separates functional from primary low testosterone	Baseline
☐ Estradiol (sensitive assay)	Shifts as fat is lost	Baseline, recheck as weight changes
☐ SHBG	How much testosterone is free	Baseline
☐ CBC (hematocrit)	Testosterone can raise it	Baseline, every 3 months on TRT
☐ Lipid panel	Anabolic agents lower HDL	Baseline, every 3 months if relevant
☐ PSA (age 40+)	Prostate safety on testosterone	Baseline, periodically
☐ HbA1c, fasting insulin and glucose	The metabolic picture	Baseline, periodically

Labs for women

☐ Lab	Why it matters	When
☐ Total and free testosterone (consider an LC-MS/MS assay)	The forgotten muscle hormone; standard assays measure it poorly in women	Baseline, then per therapy
☐ SHBG	High SHBG can leave free testosterone low	Baseline
☐ DHEA-S	Adrenal androgen precursor	Baseline
☐ Estradiol and FSH	Confirms menopausal status; guides HRT	Baseline
☐ Thyroid panel including free T3	A commonly missed cause of stalled loss and fatigue	Baseline, periodically
☐ Fasting insulin and glucose	Insulin resistance; central in PCOS	Baseline, periodically
☐ Ferritin, B12, vitamin D	Under-eating deficiencies drive fatigue and hair loss	Baseline, periodically

Reference ranges vary by laboratory. Interpret every result with your provider, against your own lab's range and your symptoms (Appendix D).

Educational only, not medical advice. Decisions about treatment belong with you and your clinician.
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Questions to ask early

- ☐ How will we make sure the weight I lose is fat and not muscle, and how will we measure that?
- ☐ What is my protein target, and how do I hit it with a suppressed appetite?
- ☐ Should we check my hormones as part of my weight-loss plan?
- ☐ Can we order a baseline body composition scan and repeat it?
- ☐ How will we titrate my dose to protect muscle, not just to reach the maximum?
- ☐ What is the plan for maintenance and for reducing the dose without regaining?

Red flags in your current care

Never orders labs: ask for the panels above, and if refused, find another provider.
Watches only the scale: ask for body composition tracking.
No protein or training plan: bring your own plan from the book and find a provider who supports it.
Dismisses hormones: seek a provider who understands them.

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