Side Effect Decoder

FREE BONUS 2 · BEYOND TESTOSTERONE BY NELSON VERGEL

Common TRT side effects, their usual causes and what the book suggests discussing with your doctor. Most are dose-dependent and manageable with monitoring rather than stopping treatment.

Side effect	Usual cause	Steps the book covers	Ask your doctor
High hematocrit (thick blood)	Dose-dependent; highest with injections. Sleep apnea and smoking add to it	Donate in the 51-52% range, no more often than every 2.5 months; drink water before the draw; treat sleep apnea; stop smoking; check thyroid	Should I lower the dose, change route, or order a therapeutic phlebotomy? Can we check ferritin?
Acne, oily skin	DHT increasing oil production	Wash twice a day, especially after workouts; Nizoral (ketoconazole) shampoo in the shower	Is my dose too high? Would a retinoid or antibiotic help?
Hair loss	DHT on hair follicles, in men with a genetic tendency	Nizoral shampoo; Rogaine (minoxidil). Biotin taken for hair can skew hormone tests	What are the risks of finasteride for me? Are compounded topicals an option?
Water retention, higher blood pressure	Sodium retention, often temporary	More water, less salt and sugar, cardio 3 times a week for 30 minutes; magnesium and vitamin B6	Do I need a blood pressure medication? Are ACE inhibitors or ARBs better for sexual function?
Breast tenderness or growth	Rare on TRT. Needs high estradiol plus low testosterone	Test estradiol with the sensitive test first; make sure testosterone is not low	Is an aromatase inhibitor justified? Never let estradiol fall under 20 pg/mL
Shrinking testicles, fertility	TRT shuts down LH	hCG keeps testicular size and sperm production	Should I add hCG? What dose, and how often?
Poor sleep, snoring	Sleep apnea can worsen; dose too high	Sleep study if you snore or wake tired after 7 hours; avoid late workouts and caffeine after 3 pm	Do I need a sleep study? Is my dose too high?
Irritability, short temper	Testosterone above the physiologic range	Enough sleep; less caffeine and pre-workout; breathing and mindfulness	Should we lower my dose?
Erections did not improve	Vascular causes independent of hormones; DHT or prolactin	DHT and prolactin tests; ED medications by prescription	Which ED treatment fits me? Should I see a urologist?
Low HDL cholesterol	Higher TRT doses	Exercise; review the dose	Is my dose higher than I need?

Change one variable at a time

Nelson's Commandment: if you change the dose, the frequency and a supplement all at once, you lose track of what works and what does not.

Educational only, not medical advice. Decisions about treatment belong with you and your clinician.
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My side effect log

Date	What I noticed	Dose at the time	Labs that day	What we changed

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