



THE HIDDEN HORMONE

Most Women Never Hear About

How Low Testosterone May Be Contributing to:

- Fatigue
- Brain Fog
- Weight Gain
- Loss of Motivation
- Low Libido
- Anxiety
- Loss of Muscle



A Functional Medicine Guide to Understanding Testosterone in Women

By Narges Feiz, FNP-C
Functional Medicine Practitioner
Founder, Root Cause Wellness Center
Helping Women Optimize Their Hormones, Thyroid, and Metabolism
www.RootCauseWellnessCenter.com
[@HealWithNarges](https://www.instagram.com/HealWithNarges)

My Story

For more than 16 years, I practiced conventional medicine.

As a nurse practitioner, I cared for thousands of patients and worked in some of the most respected areas of healthcare, including family medicine, cardiovascular medicine, and preventive care.

I believed I understood health.

Then, in my early 40s, something changed.

At first, it was subtle.

I wasn't sleeping well anymore. I would wake up every hour or two throughout the night and struggle to get back to sleep.

Then came the anxiety.

Not because anything was wrong.

Not because of a major life stressor.

I simply didn't feel like myself.

Soon after, I noticed other changes:

- Fatigue that didn't improve with rest
- Brain fog and difficulty concentrating
- Weight gain despite maintaining healthy habits
- Loss of motivation and drive
- Lower stress tolerance
- Reduced exercise recovery
- A general feeling that something was "off"



As a healthcare provider, I did what most people would do.

I went looking for answers.

I was told it was stress.

I was told I was probably overwhelmed.

I was offered medications for anxiety and depression.

And every time my labs were checked, I was reassured that everything was "normal."

But deep down, I knew something wasn't right.

I knew my body.

I knew this wasn't simply stress.

So I started digging deeper.

What I discovered changed the course of my life and career.

I learned that many women begin experiencing hormonal changes years before menopause. In fact, symptoms can begin even when menstrual cycles are still completely regular.

That realization led me into the world of functional medicine. For the first time, I began looking beyond normal lab ranges and asking a different question:

Why is this happening?

Instead of focusing only on symptoms, I started investigating the root causes behind them.

I learned how hormones, thyroid function, insulin resistance, inflammation, nutrition, gut health, sleep, and stress physiology all interact to influence how we feel.

Most importantly, I learned that many women are told their symptoms are "normal" simply because their lab values fall within a broad reference range.

But normal and optimal are not the same thing.

That journey ultimately led me to create Root Cause Wellness Center. Today, my mission is to help women understand what is happening in their bodies, identify the root causes of their symptoms, and regain the energy, clarity, confidence, and vitality they deserve.

Because feeling exhausted, foggy, disconnected, and unlike yourself may be common, but it is not something you should have to accept.

What Is Testosterone?

When most people hear the word testosterone, they think of men. But here's what many women don't realize:

Testosterone is an essential hormone for women too.

In fact, women produce testosterone throughout their entire lives, and it plays a critical role in how they feel, function, and age.

While women naturally produce lower levels than men, testosterone is still one of the most important hormones for maintaining energy, strength, motivation, mental clarity, and sexual health.

Where Does Testosterone Come From?

In women, testosterone is produced primarily by:

- The ovaries
- The adrenal glands
- The body's conversion of other hormones

As women move through perimenopause and menopause, testosterone production naturally declines.

Women who have had their ovaries removed may experience an even more significant drop.

The challenge is that this decline often happens gradually, making it easy to dismiss symptoms as stress, aging, or simply "getting older."

Testosterone Is About More Than Libido

One of the biggest myths about testosterone is that its only purpose is supporting sex drive.

While testosterone does play an important role in sexual health, its effects go far beyond the bedroom.

Healthy testosterone levels help support:

- ✓ Energy and stamina
- ✓ Motivation and drive
- ✓ Mental clarity and focus
- ✓ Mood and emotional resilience
- ✓ Muscle strength and maintenance
- ✓ Bone health
- ✓ Exercise recovery
- ✓ Healthy body composition
- ✓ Sexual desire and satisfaction

Many women describe optimal testosterone levels as helping them feel more like themselves again.

Think of Testosterone as Your Vitality Hormone

Estrogen helps women feel nourished and protected.

Progesterone helps women feel calm and sleep well.

Testosterone helps women feel strong, motivated, confident, and engaged with life.

When levels begin to decline, women often notice subtle changes at first:

"I don't have the same energy."

"My workouts aren't working anymore."

"I've lost my motivation."

"I don't feel like myself."

These symptoms are often blamed on aging, but hormones may be playing a much bigger role than most women realize.

Understanding testosterone is the first step toward understanding why you may be feeling the way you do.

Signs You May Be Low in Testosterone

Low testosterone doesn't usually show up overnight.

For most women, the changes happen gradually over months or even years.

Many women assume they're simply getting older, under too much stress, or not trying hard enough.

But in some cases, declining testosterone may be contributing to the way they feel.

If you've ever thought:

"I don't feel like myself anymore."

You're not alone.

Fatigue That Doesn't Improve With Rest

This isn't the kind of tiredness that gets better after a good night's sleep.

Many women describe feeling exhausted before the day even begins.

Tasks that once felt easy may suddenly feel overwhelming.

You may find yourself relying on caffeine just to get through the day.

Brain Fog and Difficulty Concentrating

Do you walk into a room and forget why you're there?

Struggle to find words during conversations?

Feel less sharp than you used to?

Many women notice changes in focus, memory, concentration, and mental clarity as hormone levels decline.

Reduced Motivation and Drive

One of the most overlooked symptoms of low testosterone is a loss of motivation.

You may still care about your work, family, and goals, but you no longer feel the same drive to pursue them.

Women often describe this as:

"I've lost my spark."

"I don't feel excited about things anymore."

"I just don't have the same drive I used to."

Loss of Muscle and Strength

After age 30, women naturally begin losing muscle mass.

Hormonal changes can accelerate this process.

You may notice:

- Decreased strength
- Longer recovery after workouts
- More aches and pains
- Difficulty maintaining muscle despite exercise

Many women find themselves working harder in the gym while seeing fewer results.

Weight Gain, Around the Midsection

If your eating habits haven't changed but the scale keeps creeping upward, hormones may be part of the story.

Testosterone helps support lean muscle mass, metabolic health, and healthy body composition.

As levels decline, many women notice:

- Increased belly fat
- Loss of muscle tone
- Slower metabolism
- Greater difficulty losing weight

Low Libido and Reduced Sexual Desire

While libido is influenced by many factors, testosterone plays an important role in sexual desire, arousal, and satisfaction.

Women often tell me:

"I love my partner, but I just never think about sex anymore."

For many women, this symptom can be frustrating, confusing, and difficult to discuss.

Anxiety and Reduced Stress Resilience

Many women notice increased anxiety during perimenopause and menopause.

While estrogen and progesterone also influence mood, testosterone plays a role in confidence, emotional resilience, and overall sense of well-being.

You may feel:

- More easily overwhelmed
- Less resilient to stress
- More anxious than usual
- Less confident than before

Could Testosterone Be Part of the Picture?

These symptoms do not automatically mean you have low testosterone.

Thyroid dysfunction, iron deficiency, insulin resistance, poor sleep, chronic stress, nutritional deficiencies, and other hormone imbalances can create similar symptoms.

That's why proper evaluation is important.

However, if several of these symptoms sound familiar, testosterone may be one piece of the puzzle worth exploring.

Quick Self-Assessment

How many of these apply to you?

- Fatigue or low energy
- Brain fog or poor concentration
- Reduced motivation
- Loss of muscle or strength
- Weight gain despite healthy habits
- Low libido
- Anxiety or reduced stress tolerance
- Feeling unlike yourself

If you checked three or more boxes, it may be time to take a closer look at your hormones.

Why Testosterone Declines

Many women are surprised to learn that testosterone levels can begin declining years before menopause.

This decline is often gradual, which is why symptoms may develop slowly over time.

Here are some of the most common reasons testosterone levels decrease:

Perimenopause

Perimenopause is the transition leading up to menopause and can begin as early as a woman's late 30s or 40s.

During this time, ovarian hormone production becomes less predictable, and testosterone levels often begin to decline.

Menopause

After menopause, the ovaries produce significantly less estrogen, progesterone, and testosterone.

Many women notice changes in energy, muscle mass, motivation, libido, and body composition during this stage of life.

Chronic Stress

The adrenal glands help produce testosterone.

When the body is under chronic stress, adrenal resources are prioritized toward stress hormones, which may contribute to lower testosterone production over time.

Hormonal Birth Control

Certain birth control pills can increase a protein called SHBG (Sex Hormone-Binding Globulin), which binds to testosterone and reduces the amount available for the body to use.

For some women, the effects may persist even after stopping birth control.

Oophorectomy (Removal of the Ovaries)

The ovaries are a major source of testosterone production in women. Women who have had one or both ovaries removed often experience a more sudden decline in testosterone levels.

Aging

Like many hormones, testosterone naturally decreases with age.

By midlife, many women produce significantly less testosterone than they did in their 20s and 30s.

The Bottom Line

Declining testosterone is a normal part of aging.

Feeling exhausted, foggy, unmotivated, or unlike yourself is not.

Understanding why testosterone declines is the first step toward determining whether it may be contributing to your symptoms.

The Science Behind Testosterone

Testosterone is often thought of as a sex hormone, but its effects reach nearly every system in the body.

From the brain to the muscles, bones, and metabolism, testosterone helps support how women think, feel, and function throughout life.

Brain

Testosterone helps support memory, focus, mental clarity, and cognitive performance.

When levels decline, many women report brain fog, difficulty concentrating, and feeling less mentally sharp than they once did.

Muscle

Testosterone plays an important role in maintaining lean muscle mass and physical strength.

Healthy muscle is essential not only for movement, but also for metabolism, balance, and healthy aging.

Bone

Strong bones depend on more than just calcium.

Testosterone contributes to bone strength and helps support healthy bone density as women age.

Metabolism

Testosterone helps support muscle mass, insulin sensitivity, and healthy body composition.

Lower levels may contribute to loss of muscle, increased body fat, and greater difficulty maintaining a healthy weight.

Mood

Testosterone influences motivation, confidence, resilience, and overall sense of well-being.

Many women describe feeling more engaged, energized, and like themselves when their hormones are properly balanced.

The Bottom Line

Testosterone isn't just about libido.

It's a hormone that helps support a woman's energy, strength, metabolism, mood, and quality of life.

When levels decline, the effects can be felt far beyond the bedroom.

What Can Happen When Testosterone Is Optimized?

Many women are surprised to learn that testosterone isn't just about libido.

When testosterone levels are optimized as part of a comprehensive hormone and wellness plan, women often report improvements in multiple areas of life.

More Energy

Many women notice improved stamina and less afternoon fatigue. Instead of merely getting through the day, they feel capable of fully participating in it.

Better Motivation

One of the most common things I hear from patients is:
"I feel like myself again."

Tasks that once felt overwhelming become easier, and women often regain the drive and enthusiasm they thought they had lost.

Improved Libido

Testosterone plays an important role in sexual desire, arousal, and satisfaction. For many women, optimizing testosterone helps restore a part of themselves they thought was gone forever.

Increased Strength

Healthy testosterone levels support muscle maintenance, recovery, and physical performance. Combined with strength training, this can help women age with greater strength and independence.

Sharper Thinking

Many women report improvements in focus, memory, concentration, and mental clarity.

A Word of Caution

Testosterone is not a magic solution.

The best results occur when hormones are addressed alongside nutrition, sleep, stress management, exercise, thyroid health, and metabolic health.

The goal isn't to become someone new.

The goal is to feel like yourself again.

Common Myths About Testosterone

There is a lot of misinformation surrounding testosterone therapy for women. Let's clear up a few common misconceptions.

Myth #1: "Testosterone Will Make Me Masculine"

When prescribed appropriately and monitored carefully, testosterone therapy is designed to help women achieve physiologic female levels, not male levels.

The goal is optimization, not excess.

Myth #2: "Only Men Need Testosterone"

Women naturally produce testosterone throughout their lives.

In fact, testosterone plays important roles in energy, mood, muscle health, metabolism, cognition, and sexual wellness.

Myth #3: "Testosterone Causes Cancer"

Current research has not shown that physiologic testosterone replacement in women causes breast cancer.

Like all therapies, hormone treatment should be individualized and monitored by a knowledgeable healthcare provider.

Myth #4: "Testosterone Is Just a Steroid"

The word "steroid" often creates confusion.

Testosterone is a naturally occurring hormone that the female body produces every day.

Medical hormone replacement is very different from the supraphysiologic doses used in performance-enhancing drug abuse.
The Truth

Testosterone is not about becoming someone different.
It's about restoring what your body may no longer be producing adequately.

Hormone Testing: Looking Beyond Testosterone

- Total Testosterone
 - Measures overall testosterone production.
- Free Testosterone
 - The testosterone available for your body to use.
- SHBG (Sex Hormone Binding Globulin)
 - Determines how much testosterone is "locked away."
- Estradiol
 - Testosterone never works in isolation. Estrogen status matters.
- Progesterone
 - Important for sleep, mood, and overall hormone balance.
- Thyroid Function
 - TSH, Free T4, Free T3, thyroid antibodies.
- Insulin & Metabolic Health
 - Fasting insulin, glucose, HbA1c.
- Iron Status
 - Ferritin, iron saturation.

Treating a lab value is easy. Understanding why the lab value is abnormal is where true healing begins.

Sometimes It Isn't Testosterone

Many women assume low testosterone is the cause of their symptoms when another root cause is actually driving the problem.

Thyroid Dysfunction

- Low thyroid function can cause:
- Fatigue
- Weight gain
- Brain fog
- Hair loss
- Low mood

Iron Deficiency

- Low ferritin can contribute to:
- Exhaustion
- Poor exercise tolerance
- Hair loss
- Brain fog

Insulin Resistance

- Often causes:
- Belly fat
- Fatigue
- Sugar cravings
- Difficulty losing weight

Cortisol Imbalance

- Chronic stress may contribute to:
- Anxiety
- Sleep disruption
- Fatigue
- Reduced resilience

Poor Sleep

- Sleep is one of the biggest regulators of hormone health.

Bottom Line

The goal is not simply replacing hormones.

The goal is understanding why you don't feel well in the first place.

A Comprehensive Approach to Hormone Health

At Root Cause Wellness Center, we believe hormones are only one piece of the puzzle.

Lifestyle

- Sleep optimization
- Stress management
- Daily movement
- Sunlight exposure

Nutrition

- Prioritize protein
- Stabilize blood sugar
- Reduce processed foods
- Support muscle health

Strength Training

Muscle is one of the most important predictors of healthy aging. I encourage most women to perform resistance training at least 2–3 times per week.

Bioidentical Hormone Replacement Therapy (BHRT)

When appropriate, BHRT may help restore hormones to more optimal levels.

Treatment should always be individualized based on symptoms, labs, goals, and medical history.

The Goal

Support the body while addressing the root causes contributing to hormone imbalance.

Testosterone Creams vs. Pellets

Testosterone Creams

Advantages

- ✓ Easy dose adjustments
- ✓ Can start low and increase gradually
- ✓ Less invasive
- ✓ Often lower upfront cost

Considerations

- Requires daily use
- Must remember to apply consistently
- Absorption can vary

Testosterone Pellets

Advantages

- ✓ Long-lasting
- ✓ Consistent hormone delivery
- ✓ No daily application

Considerations

- Minor in-office procedure
- Dose cannot be adjusted once inserted
- Requires replacement every few months

Which Is Better?

There is no one-size-fits-all answer.

The best option depends on your symptoms, preferences, goals, and lifestyle.

Could Testosterone Therapy Be Right for You?

You may be a candidate for further evaluation if you experience:

- ✓ Fatigue
- ✓ Brain fog
- ✓ Low libido

- ✓ Reduced motivation
- ✓ Loss of muscle
- ✓ Increased body fat
- ✓ Poor exercise recovery
- ✓ Declining confidence or drive

Additional Evaluation May Be Needed If You Have:

- Active cancer
- Unexplained abnormal bleeding
- Significant liver disease
- Untreated sleep apnea
- Severe metabolic dysfunction

Important Note

Not every woman with these symptoms needs testosterone. The goal is determining whether testosterone is part of the picture.

Frequently Asked Questions

Will I grow facial hair?

Not when properly dosed and monitored, although mild hair growth can occasionally occur.

Will I gain weight?

Most women do not gain weight from properly managed testosterone therapy.

How long does it take to work?

Many women notice changes within several weeks, though individual results vary.

Do I still need estrogen and progesterone?

Possibly. Testosterone is only one part of the hormone picture.

Can I take testosterone after menopause?

Yes. Many postmenopausal women may benefit from evaluation.

Is testosterone safe?

When prescribed appropriately and monitored regularly, testosterone therapy has been used safely in many women.

You Don't Have to Guess Anymore

If you've been told:

"It's just stress."

"Your labs are normal."

"That's just part of getting older."

You are not alone.

The good news is that there may be answers.

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At Root Cause Wellness Center, we take a comprehensive approach to hormone health by evaluating:

- ✓ Testosterone
- ✓ Estrogen
- ✓ Progesterone
- ✓ Thyroid function
- ✓ Insulin resistance
- ✓ Inflammation
- ✓ Nutrient deficiencies
- ✓ Lifestyle factors

Ready to Learn More?

Schedule your initial consultation [HERE](#) to start a detailed hormone assessment

www.RootCauseWellnessCenter.com

Because feeling like yourself again starts with understanding what's really going on.

This structure gives you a polished, patient-friendly guide that feels educational, credible, and personal, without becoming too technical for a website lead magnet.

Narges Feizabadi, FNP-C

Functional Medicine Practitioner

Root Cause Wellness Center

Hormones • Thyroid • Insulin

[@HealWithNarges](#)