



## HELPFUL CLINICAL TIPS SUGGESTIONS

Give your patient realistic expectations. Inform your patient that the beneficial effects of testosterone therapy can take up to 6 months to become evident. Sometimes it can take longer especially in regard to erectile dysfunction.

It is important to achieve a therapeutic normalised level of serum testosterone to be able to achieve clinical benefit.

The pharmacokinetic profile of various testosterone formulations does vary. There are also variations between similar forms of administration. If however, the blood sample is taken between 2 and 4 hours after the gel has been applied this will capture the peak serum level.

To determine if your patient is on an adequate testosterone replacement dose -

Gels – Adjust dose according to the peak level of testosterone achieved.

Depot Injections – Adjust frequency and/or dose according to the Trough Testosterone level i.e. the level just before (immediately before or if not possible one or two days before) an injection is administered.

After commencing a testosterone gel therapy, the serum testosterone can be checked after 3 weeks when steady state has been achieved. Remember if the testosterone is measured too early it will consist of the unsuppressed endogenous and the exogenous testosterone.

After initiation of testosterone therapy guidelines state that patients should be reviewed at 3, 6 and 12 months and then yearly thereafter. If, however there are any clinical concerns patients can be reviewed as per clinical need.

There is a tendency for obese men to require higher doses of testosterone gel than those with lower weight.

If a Testosterone is high thirds does need an assessment and probably a repeat estimation before a decision on dose adjustment is made. Two possibilities to consider are: -

- (a) Contamination of testosterone gel over the venepuncture site which could lead to gel in the blood syringe. A serum Estradiol may be helpful to detect this phenomenon. If the testosterone is high and the Estradiol low or normal or even slightly elevated means that the testosterone has not been absorbed into the circulation as if it had it would have been metabolised to Estradiol in high amounts.

(b) If the testosterone is high and the Estradiol is high this confirms the patient is on too high a dose of testosterone gel. The dose can then be reduced.

### **Rule of Three – for when testosterone should be measured.**

**I use the rule of three with patients and this helps them remember when they need to have their testosterone measured.**

**Three weeks starting testosterone gel therapy, blood should be taken three hours after gel has been applied.**

**Then a second blood is taken at 3 months after therapy commenced again 3 hours after the gel has been applied.**

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