

# Forms of Testosterone

## 1 INJECTABLE

Injectable testosterone is the least expensive and provides quicker effects. You can give yourself the injections or have someone else give them to you.

## 2 TRANSDERMAL

Transdermal (through the skin) forms of testosterone, like skin patches or gels, are more expensive but provide a steady daily amount of medication. They can also cause skin irritations on the part of your skin where you use them. If you are using transdermal testosterone, keep in mind that it can rub off on clothes and bedding and be transferred to other people.

## Risks and Side Effects of Testosterone

Changes in cholesterol, high blood pressure, weight gain, infertility, androgenic ("male"-pattern) hair loss, acne, heart disease, stroke, diabetes, liver disease and polycythemia (increase in red blood cells).

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### Questions or Concerns?

Call WE Health Clinic with any questions or concerns, our staff is happy to help!

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# TESTOSTERONE-BASED HORMONES



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# Testosterone-Based Hormones FAQ

Hormone therapy (HT) can help transgender and non-binary people feel more comfortable in their bodies. This guide will help you understand the basics about testosterone-based hormone therapy (TBHT) and the possible risks and benefits.

## 1 What are hormones? What are sex hormones?

Hormones are chemicals which regulate the body's functions. Sex hormones control the development of sex characteristics.

## 2 What is testosterone-based hormone therapy (TBHT)?

TBHT is taking medications to adjust your levels of sex hormones - causing physical changes in your body. These changes can help you live your life as your authentic self.

## 3 What medications will I take?

There is one main type of TBHT - testosterone. Testosterone is available in several forms and your provider will talk to you about which form is best for you.

## 4 How can I decrease the risks of TBHT?

Healthy lifestyle habits can reduce TBHT risks and can include regular physical activity, reducing or removing tobacco use, eating a healthy diet, limiting alcohol use, and getting emotional and social support when you need it. Attending your monitoring visits during TBHT help our team stay up-to-date on your health and address any concerns you may have.

## 5 What about sex and fertility?

Testosterone generally increases libido, especially when you first start taking it. Some people experience vaginal dryness, which can impact sexual pleasure and functioning. Taking testosterone decreases your fertility, which can be permanent even if you discontinue testosterone. However, testosterone is not a reliable method of birth control. Speak with your doctor about effective birth control methods and about your future fertility plans before beginning HT.

# What changes can I expect to see?

Everyone's body is different, so the changes seen from TBHT vary. Factors which can affect TBHT include genetics, the age at which you begin taking hormones and your overall health. Many people notice changes within a few months of starting TBHT, and can expect to see the maximum effect within 2-3 years. Some changes are permanent and some may be reversible if TBHT is stopped.

Higher doses of TBHT will not necessarily make things move more quickly. Sometimes, this may actually make your body convert the excess hormones into hormones we are trying to lower, slowing or reversing the effects.

## Hair Growth

This is a permanent change and usually begins within a few months of starting TBHT. Hair growth often begins on your legs and back, then chest and stomach, followed by hair on your face. Facial hair can take up to 4 years or more to grow in fully. Some people may also experience androgenic ("male"-pattern) balding.

## Body Shape, Fat & Muscle Changes

You may notice muscles increase and fat collecting more around the belly and less on the hips and thighs. Many also experience an increase in appetite and metabolism

## Emotional Fluctuations

Your overall emotional state may change. Transitioning can almost feel like a second puberty roller coaster of emotions. Talking with a counselor, therapist, and your doctor can help you explore new thoughts and feelings as you transition.

## Voice Changes

This is a permanent change and you will notice your voice begin to deepen within 3-6 months of beginning TBHT. Many people's voices change fully within one year.

## Skin Changes

Some people become more prone to acne while on TBHT, but it often improves after one year. Your skin may also become coarser and oilier than before TBHT.

## Menstruation, Ovulation, and Clitoral Changes.

Periods often stop within 6 months of being on TBHT, though you may have some irregular bleeding. Most people also stop ovulating, though TBHT is not an effective method of birth control! Clitoral enlargement can be a permanent change which begins within 3-6 months of beginning HT, some people have soreness or discomfort as the clitoris enlarges.