

Men & Testosterone Deficiency

This is a basic version of my article entitled "*Are You Getting It Up?*"

When I first started researching and learning about hormones, I frequently came across articles by doctors and medical experts who seemed to purport that testosterone deficiency is an affliction that only affects men when they are 40+. This puzzled me because I actually had symptoms of testosterone deficiency that were confirmed by laboratory testing, when I was only 31. Having successfully sorted myself out and having subsequently worked with many younger men who have had similar problems, I can safely say that it's a problem with a much wider age range.

But why is this? Well, it's because of stress. Stress is a major cause testosterone deficiency.

Symptoms of Testosterone Deficiency

- Decreased sex drive
- Loss of or softer erections (incl. 'morning glory')
- Depressed
- Irritable
- Fatigue / low energy
- Sleep disturbances
- Joint or muscle pain
- Inability to concentrate
- Memory loss
- Decreased muscle mass
- Osteoporosis

These are serious symptoms. They will dent a man's pride, may affect relationships and develop genuine health problems. But the next thing I want to do is list the symptoms that are associated with imbalances in cortisol levels. Compare these symptoms to the testosterone deficiency symptoms and note similarities:

Symptoms of Cortisol Imbalance

- Decreased sex drive
- Depressed
- Irritable

Tired, low energy
Foggy thinking
Insomnia
Joint & muscle pain (especially neck & shoulders)
Decreased muscle mass
Osteoporosis

You see, the symptoms are pretty much the same! When you learn how testosterone is made, you'll see exactly why this is, because it's nearly impossible to have a testosterone deficiency without having imbalances in your cortisol levels.

Each of your two adrenal glands sits like a tiny pyramid on top of a kidney ("adrenal" means "over" the "kidneys"). They are only about as big as a walnut, but don't let their size fool you; these glands manufacture and secrete steroid hormones such as cortisol, estrogen and testosterone that are essential to your health and vitality. They significantly affect the functioning of every tissue, organ and gland in your body and also have important effects on the way you think and feel.

The main purpose of your adrenals is to enable your body to deal with stress from every possible source, ranging from injury and disease to work and relationship problems. They largely determine the energy of your body's responses. Whether they signal attack, retreat or surrender, every cell responds accordingly, and you feel the results. It is through the actions of the adrenal hormones that your body is able to mobilize its resources to escape or fight off danger (stress) and survive.

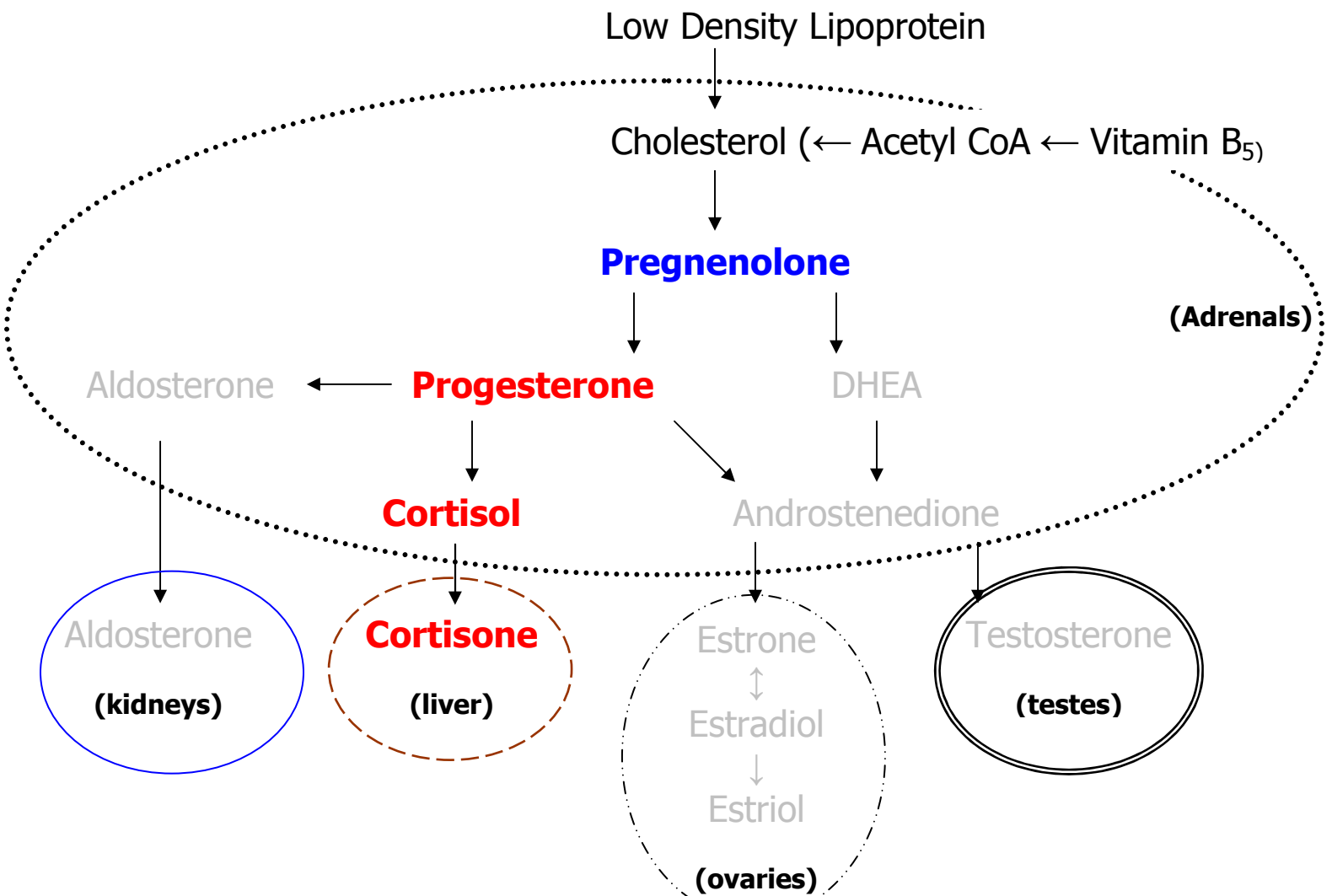
As cavemen, that would have meant being able to run away quickly, fight or pursue an enemy or kill / run away from an animal, endure long periods of physical challenge and deprivation (starvation), and store up physical reserves.

This is where my stress argument comes in. In modern society, these same responses are triggered by such circumstances as a difficult boss, air pollution, family quarrels, financial problems, too little sleep, illness, low calorie diets, alcohol and overindulgence in or sensitivities to food, drugs & other addictive substances.

If your adrenal function is low, as it is in adrenal fatigue, your body cannot respond and adapt properly to these stresses. This can lead to a variety of physical and psychological health problems that are themselves a further source of stress.

Hormones such as cortisol closely affect the utilisation of carbohydrates and fats, the conversion of fats and proteins into energy, the distribution of stored fat (especially around your waist and at the sides of your face), normal blood sugar regulation, and proper cardiovascular and gastrointestinal function. After mid-life (menopause in women, andropause in men), the adrenal glands gradually become the major source of the sex hormones circulating throughout the body in both men and women.

When the body is under stress, it will always prefer to make cortisol at the expense of testosterone. This can be shown in the diagram below:



It's easy to understand this if you just follow the **red line**. When your body is under stress, the priority is for the body to produce cortisol, the hormone that helps the body deal with the stress. This is at the expense of the sex hormones oestrogen and testosterone.

Initially, there will be high levels of cortisol as the body tries to fight whatever is causing the stress and all the pregnenolone will be pushed into progesterone and cortisol along the red line. As time goes by, if the stress doesn't subside the adrenal glands will get tired and will be unable to produce enough cortisol, but it will still be trying very hard to do so and will still shunt as much pregnenolone as possible into cortisol at the expense of the testosterone pathway.

So there you have it. This is why younger and younger men are getting testosterone deficiency. You can't really have a testosterone deficiency without having other hormone imbalances first.

Think about it. From the moment we are born there is more stress than there ever has been: bright lights, noise, machines...and growing up there may be relationship troubles with the parents, bereavements, exams, illnesses, medical drugs, needles and vaccinations. We are the first generation to be exposed to this much stress from such a young age.

It doesn't stop there. Pressure in jobs, to have enough money, in relationships, bad diets, too much coffee & alcohol, addictions to drugs as well as prescription and over the counter medications, pollution and electromagnetic stress means that many men's bodies don't get much of a rest.

And this is why testosterone deficiency is afflicting men at younger and younger ages.

Resolving Testosterone Deficiency

The good news is that it can all be reversed. By testing the stress and sex hormones we can design a protocol that will help restore natural balance.

If you'd like to learn more, please explore my website, sign up to my newsletter or schedule a free 15 minute consultation so that I can explain this issue to you in more detail.