



## What is the 'male menopause'?

The correct medical term for the 'male menopause' is Andropause.

Although we commonly refer to andropause as the 'male menopause', this can be misleading because it suggests the symptoms are the result of a sudden drop in testosterone in middle age, similar to what occurs in the [female menopause](#). This is not true.

Although testosterone levels fall as men age, it is a steady decline at about 1% a year from around the age of 30 to 40.

In fact, as many as [30% of men](#) can expect some sort of physical change to their bodies when they reach this age. But because so little information is shared about the effects of the andropause, this shift in mental attitude and physical ability can catch some men off guard.



## What are the symptoms?

Some of the symptoms can be:

- Mood swings and irritability
- Loss of muscle mass and reduced ability to exercise
- Fat redistribution, such as developing a large belly or chest beginning to expand ([gynaecomastia](#))
- A general lack of enthusiasm or energy
- Difficulty sleeping ([insomnia](#)) or increased tiredness
- Poor concentration and short-term memory

These symptoms can interfere with everyday life or your happiness and wellbeing, so it's important to understand the underlying cause to be able to support yourself through the change.

## Testosterone and men's health

The hormone testosterone plays a huge part in keeping men healthy, which is why reduced testosterone can affect the following bodily functions:

### Heart

Testosterone increases your cardiac output, while also helping to keep the coronary and peripheral blood flow smooth and continuous.

### Brain

Cognition, memory and senses are all affected by testosterone in the brain.

### Kidneys

Red blood cell production decreases when there's less testosterone in your system. This happens because erythropoietin production is halted or reduced.

### Muscles

The mass and strength of your muscles are directly impacted by the amount of testosterone in your body.

## Managing symptoms

### Healthy Diet

Much like with everything in life, a well-balanced diet is key to supporting the effects of male menopause. A healthy diet can reduce body fat levels which reduces the amount of testosterone converted into oestrogen.

[Vitamin D and Zinc](#) are widely considered to be the most important nutrients for triggering the production of testosterone. As such, consuming foods which are high in them is the best way to increase your levels if you have a deficiency.

### Cardio

This type of workout keeps your heart healthy, whilst also encouraging the growth of some muscle groups. This is particularly helpful if additional weight gain has become a factor. Common forms of cardio include running, walking, cycling and swimming.

## **Strength training**

Owing to the risk of lowered bone density due to reduction in testosterone, strength training is also highly recommended. Simple workouts with dumbbells are helpful.

## **Yoga**

Yoga not only helps with staying loose and free, but also helps to calm the mind.

## **Talk about it!**

Openly talking about your symptoms with loved ones or medical professionals can also help take it off your mind. If in any doubt about your health, always seek medical advice.

Further information can be found at:

[Understanding the male menopause and mental health \(optimale.co.uk\)](http://optimale.co.uk)

[The 'male menopause' - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](http://www.nhs.uk)