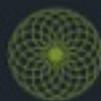




Andropause

Andropause typically occurs in men in the UK between the ages of 40 and 60, although it has been known to be experienced by some males as early as 30 years old. Behaviour and lifestyle changes made during this period can equate to what some may term a ‘mid-life crisis’.

Definitions Andropause – (also known as the male menopause) is a condition that is associated with the decrease in the male hormone testosterone. Testosterone - is the hormone responsible for deep voices, muscle mass, and facial and body hair patterns found in males.



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Causes Of Andropause

The decrease in testosterone is an important factor in men suspected of having andropause. Through ageing, a male starts to create less testosterone at a rate of less than 2% per year.

Symptoms

Symptoms that are experienced by men can vary from person to person, however some of the common symptoms experienced are

- Loss of libido
- Lack of energy
- Depression
- Irritability
- Mood swings
- Loss of strength or muscle mass
- Reduced ability to exercise
- Increased body fat
- Hot flashes (Hot flashes are sudden feelings of warmth, which are usually most intense over the face, neck and chest. Your skin might redden, as if you're blushing. Hot flashes can also cause sweating, and if you lose too much body heat, you might feel chilled afterward.)
- Fat redistribution.
- General lack of enthusiasm
- Difficulty with sleeping (insomnia) and or increased tiredness
- Poor concentration and short-term memory.

This list is not exhaustive

Complications

Some of the severe complications associated with the andropause include an increased risk of cardiovascular problems and potentially osteoporosis better known as brittle bone. If it is suspected that a male is encountering the andropause, he must seek advice from his GP who will then undertake a blood test to ascertain the levels of testosterone in the blood. The test will also rule out other factors that are also associated with low testosterone before giving the definitive outcome of possible andropause.

Managing This Transition

To manage the andropause minor lifestyle changes can be undertaken such as

- Increased exercise
- Stress reduction techniques
- Good healthy nutritional diet

Other things are also available to help with testosterone such as:

- Skin patches, testosterone gel, testosterone capsules and injections provided by a GP or nurse practitioner (side effects of these can include mood swings which are due to the change in levels of testosterone).

Managing Attendance In The Workplace

When managing attendance, consideration needs to be given to any issues related to andropause including the signs, symptoms and side effects of the treatment being received.

Line Managers will need to ensure that the male member of staff is not put at a detriment either by capability discussions or applying attendance sanctions outside of the reasonable adjustments agreed in the workplace.

Support In The Workplace Through This Transition

Line managers need to be supportive and maintain awareness so that men are not embarrassed to approach him/her to discuss how the andropause is affecting their health and role at work. The symptoms can interfere with everyday life and happiness, so it's important that support is put in place so that the male is confident to look for medical advice to find the underlying cause and work out what can be done to resolve the issue.

The male should not be placed in a position of embarrassment where they are expected to suffer in silence but to have the support offered to be able to identify the issue is real.

Regular, informal conversations between manager and employee may enable discussion of changes in health, including issues relating to the andropause. It may be valuable simply to acknowledge this is a normal stage of life and that adjustments can easily be made.

Reasonable Adjustments Or Specific Needs (Not Exhaustive)

Reasonable adjustments should be considered for all males that disclose that they are experiencing the andropause. Reasonable adjustments should be made on a case by case basis as no two cases will be identical.

Advice from occupational health can also be used to assist implementing any changes or potential reasonable adjustment.

Provision Of Additional Uniform

Ensure that natural fibres are preferable to synthetic material if an employee is experiencing hot flushes/flashes and sweating.

Flexible Working

May be considered for staff experiencing debilitating symptoms. Shift patterns and start/finish times may be adjusted temporarily to enable staff to work productively. Flexibility should be given for staff needing to attend medical appointments associated with andropause symptoms and also for men seeking advice relating to the andropause. Phased returns may be supported for staff suffering with severe impairment. This will be particularly beneficial for those who are taking medication for

Comfortable Working Environment

This may include a temperature-controlled environment, washing facilities and access to drinking water. Positioning near a window or a door may help or ensuring portable fans or heaters are available, enabling the individual to personally control the temperature surrounding them.

Further Information

For further information and a thorough assessment, contact the Torus wellbeing book an appointment email: info@toruswellbeingclinic.co.uk



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