

Testosterone, Total and Free

Testosterone is an important hormone for sexual and reproductive development, and plays a role in building muscles and keeping the muscles and bones strong. Testosterone travels through the blood in two ways; attached to proteins and not attached (free) to proteins. This test measures the level of total and free testosterone in your blood. This test can be used as a follow-up test for an abnormal testosterone test in adult males, is helpful in assessing testicular function in prepubescent hypogonadal (diminished functional activity) males, and in managing hirsutism (excessive body hair) or virilization (masculine physical traits) in females. It is recommended to have this test early in the morning when your testosterone levels are the highest.

Do males, females and children all produce testosterone?

Males, females and children all produce testosterone, however women produce smaller amounts.

In males, testosterone plays a key role during puberty in the development of muscles, deepening the voice, growth of body and facial hair, and penis growth. A male with low testosterone, or hypogonadism, is a clinical syndrome that results from the failure of the testes to produce the needed levels of the hormone. This can happen in both adolescent and adult males. Low levels, however, don't always lead to symptoms.

What are the symptoms of low testosterone in adult men?

A male with low testosterone may exhibit one or more of the following symptoms:

- Reduced sexual desire
- Depression and fatigue
- Diabetes
- Erectile dysfunction
- Increased body fat
- Low bone density
- Change in sleep patterns
- Reduced muscle mass
- Hypertension

What are the symptoms of low testosterone levels in pubescent males?

An adolescent male with low testosterone may exhibit a delay in one or more of the following symptoms:

- Muscle mass development
- Growth of the penis and testicles
- Voice deepening
- Growth of body and facial hair

It can also cause excessive growth of the arms and legs in relation to the trunk of the body, and development of breast tissue.

What are the symptoms of abnormal testosterone levels in females?

A female with low testosterone may exhibit one or more of the following symptoms:

- Fertility problems
- Skipped or no periods
- Low sex drive
- Weakened bones
- Vaginal dryness

A female with high testosterone may exhibit one or more of the following symptoms:

- Acne and oily skin
- Excess hair on the face or body
- Deep voice
- Enlarged clitoris
- Darkened areas of the skin
- Skipped or no periods

What should I do if the results are abnormal?

It is always recommended you meet with a healthcare provider to determine what your laboratory test results mean to you. Your healthcare provider will review all of your test results and, combined with your health history, will be able to provide an accurate course of action.

What other resources are available to learn more about my health and laboratory tests?

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: cdc.gov
- Lab Tests Online: labtestsonline.org
- WebMD: webmd.com

DLO Direct offers direct access to laboratory testing for informational purposes. A DLO Direct lab test result is not a medical diagnosis and is not intended as medical advice. Only a healthcare provider can interpret lab results and diagnose a medical condition or disease.

Because tests have not been ordered by a healthcare provider, third party entities, including Medicare and Medicaid, will not reimburse for these tests.



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