



Testosterone Replacement Therapy Estrogen Balance

Why you may notice changes early in TRT

Before starting testosterone replacement therapy, your estrogen was likely low right alongside your testosterone. As your testosterone rises into a healthy range, your estrogen rises too. Your body needs time to recalibrate to levels it has not seen in years.

During this adjustment period, some men notice:

- Mild breast or nipple tenderness
- Some water retention or puffiness
- Mood shifts or feeling more emotional than usual

These symptoms are common, expected, and almost always temporary. They typically resolve over a few weeks to a few months.

Estrogen is not the enemy

Men need estrogen. Your body converts a small amount of testosterone into estradiol — a form of estrogen — and this is normal and necessary. Estradiol protects your bones, supports libido and erectile function, helps regulate mood and joint comfort, and contributes to heart and brain health. Men with very low estrogen often feel worse, not better.

Why we generally do not use estrogen blockers

Estrogen blockers (aromatase inhibitors such as anastrozole) are sometimes added to testosterone therapy to suppress estrogen. We avoid this in most cases. Pushing estrogen too low commonly causes joint aches, low libido, erectile difficulty, low mood, and fatigue, symptoms easily mistaken for needing more testosterone. Over time, even without symptoms, low estrogen also weakens bone. Major medical guidelines do not recommend routine use of these medications with testosterone therapy, and they are not FDA-approved for this purpose.

What we do instead

When estrogen-related symptoms are bothersome, the answer is usually adjusting how your testosterone is delivered rather than adding another drug. Smaller, more frequent doses keep your levels steadier and reduce the surges that drive symptoms. Weight loss and reducing alcohol also lower estrogen naturally.

If you are transferring to us already taking an estrogen blocker

We will most likely plan to taper and stop it. As your estrogen returns to a normal male range, you may temporarily notice the same adjustment symptoms described above. This is expected and self-limited. Do not stop or change any medication on your own, we will map out the plan together.

When to call us

Contact the office if you notice a firm lump under one nipple, breast changes that are worsening rather than improving, or symptoms that have not settled after about three months. These are worth evaluating in person.

This handout is general education and does not replace the plan your clinician builds for you.