

MEN'S HEALTH



Why Testosterone Declines With Age: The Biology, Explained

Some of it is normal aging. But if you feel the difference in your energy, drive, and strength, that part is not something you simply have to accept.

Swipe

THE OLD BELIEF

Is This Just Getting Older?

You've noticed the energy isn't what it was, the drive has dimmed, the strength takes more work to hold onto. The honest answer: some decline is normal biology, not a personal failing. But a drop you can actually feel is not something you just have to live with.

THE NUMBERS

0.4% a Year, Then Faster

Total testosterone declines roughly 0.4% per year from around age 35 to 70. Free testosterone, the form your body actually uses, falls faster, roughly 1.3% per year, in men 40 to 70.

THE MECHANISM

The Factory Gets Less Efficient

Leydig cells in the testes rely on a transport crew of proteins, StAR, TSPO, and VDAC1, to carry cholesterol into their engine room and turn it into testosterone. Aging slows that delivery crew, so less raw material reaches the production line.

THE EVIDENCE

A Quick Spike vs. a Real Rise

In 7 older men, a single moderate workout briefly lifted total testosterone 39% and free testosterone 23%, but it was back to baseline within 4 hours. In a larger study of 202 men followed for about 15 weeks, regular exercise produced a more lasting rise.

THE LEVER YOU CONTROL

Body Fat Is Quietly Converting Your Testosterone

Excess body fat acts like a converter, turning testosterone into estrogen. The more excess fat you carry, the more you leak. Losing it through diet and activity is the primary, evidence-based move.

WHY IT MATTERS

This Isn't Just About Energy

Low testosterone in aging men has been associated with increased risk of diabetes, dementia, cardiovascular disease, and mortality.

THE BOTTOM LINE



Not Something You Simply Have to Accept

Age-related decline is measurable and well understood, not a life sentence. Exercise and weight management are the proven first steps; medication is a specialist-guided, case-by-case decision, never a first-line fix. Get properly evaluated to know where you actually stand.