

Exploring hormonal shifts in men!

Men are increasingly reporting symptoms akin to those experienced by women during perimenopause and menopause, sparking debate within the medical community regarding male menopause.

While the concept remains controversial, physicians note that men undergoing testosterone hormone therapy often find relief from associated symptoms. Termed as androgen decline in ageing males or low testosterone, this phenomenon involves a natural reduction in testosterone production with age, alongside occurrences such as diabetes.

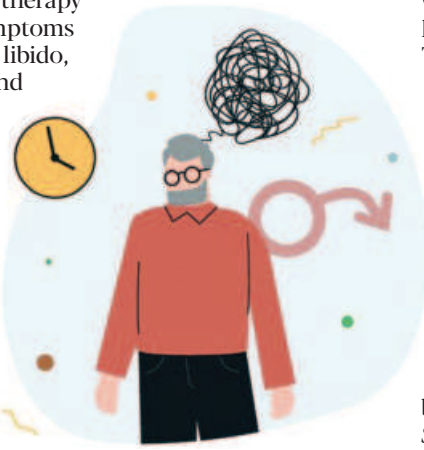
Symptoms may encompass fatigue, weakness, depression, and sexual dysfunction, though the correlation with decreased testosterone levels remains disputed. Unlike menopause in women, where hormone production ceases entirely, testosterone decline in men is gradual.

Testicular function does not exhaust its testosterone-producing capacity, enabling sperm production well into older age, albeit subject to disease-related alterations, typically manifesting around ages 45 to 50 and more significantly after 70.

Diagnosing male "menopause" entails a comprehensive approach, including physical examination, symptom assessment, and laboratory tests to exclude underlying medical conditions and measure testosterone levels. Treatment options, if warranted by low testosterone levels, may involve testosterone replacement therapy to mitigate symptoms like decreased libido, depression, and fatigue.

However, akin to hormone therapy in women, testosterone replacement carries potential risks such as exacerbating prostate cancer and heightening cardiovascular risk. Prior to pursuing androgen replacement therapy, consultation with a healthcare professional is advised.

Lifestyle modifications such as dietary adjustments, regular exercise, and medication like antidepressants may also be recommended to alleviate symptoms associated with male menopause.



Environmental monitoring offers low-cost tool for typhoid fever surveillance

STAR HEALTH REPORT

A recent study conducted by Senjuti Saha and her team at the Child Health Research Foundation in Bangladesh has revealed a promising new method for tracking the prevalence of Typhoid fever in communities, which has been published in the open access journal PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases.

The team tested 303 water samples from two locations in Bangladesh: the urban capital city, Dhaka, and a rural district, Mirzapur. They found that bacteriophages specific for *Salmonella Typhi* were present in 31% of environmental samples in Dhaka, compared to just 3% of samples from Mirzapur. This corresponds to results from more than 8,400 blood cultures, in which 5% of cultures from Dhaka and 0.05% from Mirzapur tested positive.

Typhoid fever is a significant health issue, causing millions of infections and thousands of deaths worldwide each year, particularly in low- and middle-income countries. Traditionally, health experts have relied on blood samples to identify areas where Typhoid fever is most common.

However, this approach can be costly and time-consuming. In their study, Saha and her colleagues explored a more affordable and efficient alternative: monitoring environmental water samples for specific viruses called bacteriophages, which target the bacteria responsible for typhoid fever, *Salmonella typhi*.

By testing water samples from both urban and rural areas in Bangladesh, the researchers discovered that bacteriophages specific to *Salmonella Typhi* were present in a significant proportion of samples from the capital city, Dhaka, compared to those from a rural district, Mirzapur. This finding correlated with the results of



Water sampling was conducted in two districts in urban Dhaka and rural Mirzapur, Bangladesh.

traditional blood cultures, where a higher percentage of positive cases were detected in Dhaka compared to Mirzapur.

These results suggest that monitoring bacteriophages in wastewater could provide a rapid and cost-effective way to identify areas where typhoid fever is prevalent. Instead of relying solely on expensive and time-consuming blood tests, policymakers could use this method to pinpoint "hotspots" of typhoid fever in communities more efficiently.

The researchers propose that environmental surveillance of bacteriophages could be a simple, scalable tool to assist decision-makers in implementing effective strategies

for typhoid control. By identifying areas with high levels of *Salmonella Typhi* bacteriophages in wastewater, authorities can target interventions such as vaccination campaigns more precisely, ultimately helping to reduce the burden of Typhoid fever on communities.

In summary, this study highlights the potential of using bacteriophages in environmental samples as a practical and cost-effective method for tracking the prevalence of typhoid fever. By harnessing this innovative approach, healthcare professionals and policymakers can make more informed decisions to combat this widespread infectious disease, particularly in resource-limited settings.

HAVE A NICE DAY SELFITIS

DR RUBAUL MURSHED



Selfitis, coined to encapsulate the phenomenon of excessive self-photography for social media, reveals a growing societal trend. Photoholics, or camera enthusiasts, flood platforms like social media with myriad self-portraits, driven by a desire to showcase personal perspectives and cultivate a favourable image. However, beyond mere self-obsession, selfies serve as tools for identity expression and interpersonal connection.

When considered in the larger context of identity expression and communication, the effects of selfies transcend simple self-obsession. Selfies provide a platform for people to express themselves, stay in touch with others, and either build closeness or simply maintain relationships.

Research highlights a darker aspect of 'selfitis', a psychological complex linked to excessive self-taking with detrimental effects on mental well-being. Originally conceived as satire, selfitis is now recognised as a genuine concern, prompting the development of diagnostic tools like the Selfitis Behaviour Scale.

Selfie addiction, according to some social scientists, stems from a need to compensate for low self-esteem and fill an intimacy void, leading to adverse mental health outcomes. Social media addiction, particularly prevalent among students, contributes to anxiety, depression, isolation, decreased physical activity, and academic underperformance.

Evidence suggests a correlation between social media use, negative mental health outcomes, and diminished self-esteem. While these platforms offer connectivity, overindulgence can foster unhappiness and isolation. In essence, the attraction of selfies extends beyond narcissism; they serve as a means of self-expression and social connection. Yet, excessive indulgence poses significant risks to mental well-being, emphasising the need for moderation and awareness in navigating the digital landscape.

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Women health risk factors after thirty

NUSRAT JAHAN ARBI

A working woman or a housemaker, after thirty, is affluent with tones of duties. Those could be taking care of all the members of her family or stockpiling work deadlines at the office. A little time she gets for herself. Even that very 'me time' is snapped by other weekend household chores or refreshing outings. Conversely, some health issues at this stage in humans, especially in women, arise or become more prominent if not addressed cautiously.

Anaemia: A high prevalence of anaemia with a lack of iron deficiency is seen among the women of Bangladesh. In their thirties, due to improper diets and stress, it may cause weakness, lack of a workforce, fatigue, etc.

Hormonal issues: There are more than 50 hormones in women's bodies that play different functions. One of such hormones is thyroid. Hyper or hypothyroid hormone causes dysfunction in metabolism. Which consequently causes several other problems, including menstruation problems, constipation, sensitivity to colds, partial memory loss, obesity, etc. Due to hormonal imbalance at this age, some women suffer mood swings, depression, PCOS, pregnancy intricacies, and so on.

Improper sleep: Sound sleep maintains brain performance, mood, and health. To attain the "Super Woman" tag, sometimes our women ignore this basic need of our body. Impetuous chasing after dreams hampers their quality of sleep. The Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) suggest that adults get at least seven hours of sleep

each night. Not getting enough quality sleep is associated with a poor immune system, reduced hormone production, and even cardiovascular conditions.

Obesity: In the early twenties or before thirty, the metabolism rate is high in women. After thirty, that metabolism rate declines. Some other factors, for instance, lack of a healthy diet, sedentary lifestyle, stress, lack of exercise, hormonal issues, etc., play significant roles in why a great number of women in this country tend to become obese at this age. Obesity can cause heart disease, diabetes, and breast cancer.

Osteoporosis: Osteoporosis is a disease that weakens the bones. In our society, little attention is given to the diet of a woman. Getting proper nutrition is seen as a luxury for women. Most women do not know or don't get foods like eggs and dairy products to keep their bones healthy. As a result, after 30, they complain about pain in different parts of their body, and menopause is linked to deteriorating bone health.

The list can go on and on. Against this backdrop, our women need to prioritise their mental and physical health. A healthy diet and proper sleep should be given utmost importance. It is imperative to do a simple checkup regularly, at least once a year. Going for some tests like mammograms, pap smears, lipid profiles, thyroid, fertility, etc. regularly can make one feel more confident about one's health.

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Mastering weight loss: the power of small habits for lasting change

Embarking on a weight-loss journey often feels like navigating a roller coaster of ups and downs. However, finding stability amidst this fluctuation is achievable by committing to small, manageable habits that gradually transform into larger, lasting behavioural changes.

The efficacy of small habit changes lies in their ability to swiftly breed success. Each instance of adherence to a small habit bolsters confidence and reinforces a sense of control over one's actions. Moreover, the specificity of these habits diminishes anxiety surrounding their execution, allowing for easier recognition of accomplishments.

For instance, the simple act of incorporating a vegetable into lunch every day can be celebrated as a triumph. The key to success is keeping these habits simple and within reach.

As these habits become second nature, they can be elevated to the next level, amplifying their impact. For example, progressing from eating one vegetable at lunch to two vegetables at dinner represents an incremental yet significant advancement. Tying these habits to personal motivations enhances commitment. Whether driven by health improvement or immediate rewards like financial savings from foregoing soda, aligning habits with tangible incentives solidifies dedication.

Establishing triggers serves as a reminder to uphold chosen habits. These cues can be as straightforward as setting alarms or integrating habits with existing routines, ensuring consistent adherence. In moments of waning motivation, seeking support from trusted individuals or leveraging social networks can reignite enthusiasm.

Positive self-talk also serves as a potent tool for maintaining focus and adherence to established habits. While weight loss requires patience and persistence, adopting a small-habit approach fosters gradual progress without overwhelming lifestyle upheavals. Each small habit serves as a stepping stone towards sustainable, healthy habits, ultimately facilitating weight management in the long term.







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