

MEN'S HEALTH

Unfortunately, on average, men are less healthy and have a shorter life expectancy than women. Men are more likely to engage in unhealthy, risky behaviors, less likely to adopt preventative health measures, and often put off seeing a physician. Having a yearly check-up and addressing concerns with a physician is a good way to reduce one's risk for health problems in the future!

PSA SCREENING

The PSA (prostate specific antigen) screening is used to detect prostate cancer or other prostate issues.

PSA is a protein produced by both cancerous (malignant) and non-cancerous (benign) prostate tissue. Cancerous prostate tissue produces **more** PSA than do benign cells, causing elevated levels to appear in a man's blood work.

Most professionals recommend a PSA screening on a yearly basis for males between the ages of 40 and 75. Those with a family history may want to consult with their physician.

In addition to a PSA screening, most males also have a **DRE (Digital Rectal Exam)** during their yearly check-up starting at the age of 40.

MANOPAUSE????

During mid-life, men are just as susceptible to hormonal changes as their female counterparts. This midlife retreat of androgens (male hormones) is often referred to as male menopause or **andropause**.

WHAT HAPPENS

In the "prime years", 95% of a man's testosterone is produced by the testes in response to signals from the brain.

As men age, the signals to make testosterone weaken and hormone levels start to decrease.

Excessive stress, weight gain and lack of exercise can also contribute to lower stamina, lack of enthusiasm, and reduce the desire for competition.

COMPLICATING FACTORS

Hormonal imbalances can also contribute to the overall extent of andropause.

EXCESS ESTROGEN – Estrogen is not just a female hormone. Men need small amounts of estrogen to regulate brain and sexual functions. However, during andropause, high levels of estrogen cause:

- increased "binding proteins" that lock up testosterone.
- an enzyme to convert testosterone to MORE estrogen.

EXCESS CORTISOL - High cortisol (stress hormone) can also suppress testosterone levels, leading to:

- loss of muscle mass and muscle cells
- reduced thyroid function
- zapped energy