What is Testosterone Replacement Therapy?

Testosterone pellets are a method of delivering testosterone when one has symptoms of low testosterone (hypogonadism). Testosterone pellets are small pellets that are implanted into the subcutaneous fat in the upper buttock area and testosterone is released slowly over a period of time. The number of pellets used is dependent upon each patient and their response to testosterone. Testosterone pellets are a longer acting form of testosterone and requires office visits typically every 3-5 months for repeat implants. Testosterone lab work is checked periodically in between visits. The pellets are temporary therefore it is not a permanent form of delivering testosterone.

What is the Testosterone Replacement Therapy procedure and what should I expect?

Pellets are an elective in office procedure. The area is sterilized. Under local anesthesia, a small puncture of the skin in the gluteal area will be made and the pellets will be inserted underneath the skin into the subcutaneous fat. The number of pellets used will be determined by your lab work. The opening of the skin from the puncture is then closed with a Steri-strip, or wound closure strip. Immediately following the procedure, your testosterone levels will begin to steadily increase and level out. If you notice any flushing of the face or limbs, this is likely due to the quick rise in testosterone levels and will subside quickly once your body adjusts. As it gets closer to your next implant, you may notice some of the low testosterone symptoms will return. You will rarely be able to feel the pellets once healed from the procedure. The bandage will come off in approximately one week or you can remove it in the shower within a week.

What do I need to do to prepare for the procedure?

- Provide any recent testosterone results
- A recent prostate exam and PSA test is required
- If you are on any blood thinners (including aspirin) you will need to discuss discontinuing them with your provider and possibly obtain permission from the prescribing physician.
- Purchase an ice pack and have it available at your home or office to apply after the procedure.

What do I need to do immediately after the procedure?

- Ice the area immediately after the procedure and as much as possible that day.
- There is no “recovery” needed, but it is recommended that you avoid strenuous activity until any discomfort subsides.
- You may use over the counter Motrin, Advil or Ibuprofen over the next few days to help with any tenderness. Follow the directions on the bottle and take with food.
- No immediate follow-up is necessary.

What to expect after the procedure?

- Soreness or tenderness at the insertion site.
- Bruising.
- Seroma. A seroma is a pocket of clear serous fluid that sometimes develops in the body after the procedure. When small blood vessels are ruptured, blood plasma can seep out. This is due to inflammation caused by dying injured cells and contributes to the fluid.
- Decrease in low testosterone symptoms.

What is the follow-up after the procedure?

No follow-up is needed after the procedure, but labs will be drawn at certain times prior to your next pellet implant if you choose to continue with therapy. Typically, most men return for implants every 3-5 months depending on their testosterone levels. If labs testosterone levels are too high, we will reschedule the procedure when it is appropriate to move forward with further pellet procedures.

What are the risks involved in the procedure?

The risks of pellets are the same with any testosterone replacement therapy, and should be discussed with your provider. Ricks of pellet insertion specifically include bleeding, reaction to lidocaine or betadine, infection and discomfort due to the implantation. Rarely, the pellets are rejected by the body.

When to call office?

- Fever over 101
- Excessive bleeding
- Excessive pain
- Signs of infection
- Extreme agitation, aggression, high pulse or flushing

Important Contact Information
Midtown Urology
911 W. 38th Street, Suite 200
(512) 451-7935 phone
(512) 451-7965 fax

If you need to reach the doctor after hours for an urgent matter, please call our office at 512-451-7935 and follow the prompts to be connected with the on-call provider.

You may also go to Seton Main Emergency Room on 38th and N. Lamar. Please only go to this hospital as our physicians have privileges there.

Hospital for Emergencies
Seton Main Medical Center
1201 W 38th St, Austin, TX 78705