

How to Manage

Hormonal Symptoms



This guide is for men who have had treatment for prostate cancer. The information here is not meant to replace medical advice. For medical advice, speak to your healthcare team.

Hormonal therapy to treat prostate cancer can cause changes in your testosterone levels.

Testosterone is a hormone that is made in your testicles.

Testosterone affects:

Your sex drive

The way your body stores fat

Your mood

Changes in your testosterone levels can cause:

Hot flashes and trouble sleeping

Tenderness or soreness in your breasts (chest)

Swelling of your breasts

Changes in mood and feeling more emotional than you usually do

A lack of energy

You may have many of these symptoms or none at all. Your symptoms might also change at different times in your treatment. These symptoms can be uncomfortable. Talk to your healthcare team for support.

There are things you can do to cope with your symptoms.



Hot flashes:

A hot flash feels like a sudden warmth in your upper body and face. It can happen quickly and with no warning. To manage hot flashes, try to:

- Drink at least 6 to 8 glasses of water every day.
- Avoid alcohol or drinks with caffeine.
- Do not eat spicy foods.
- Consider relaxation breathing, yoga, and acupuncture
- Keep your room cool or use a fan.
- Lay a towel on top of your bed sheet before you sleep so you can change it easily if you sweat at night.
- Wear cotton clothes to keep cool.
- Take lukewarm showers or baths instead of hot ones.
- Do activities to reduce your stress levels.

Ways to cope with your symptoms, continued



Sore or swollen breasts:

You may have soreness or swelling in one or both breasts.

Wear gym clothing that is elastic in nature that can help camouflage swollen breasts.



Lack of energy:

Your loss of energy may be from your treatment, but it can also be from:

- The cancer itself
- Anemia (low iron)
- A poor diet
- Lack of exercise

To help your energy levels:

- Get plenty of rest and take breaks during the day.
- Plan activities so they are not rushed.



Mood:

It is normal to feel like you are losing control or to have trouble coping when you are dealing with cancer.

You may feel:

- Shock
- Fear
- Anger
- Anxiety
- Confusion
- Sadness

These things may help your mood:

Eat well. A healthy diet gives you energy to help your mood.

- Eat lots of vegetables.
- Drink lots of water.
- Avoid saturated fats (found in cream, cakes).
- Choose foods low in salt and sugar.
- Avoid alcohol.
- Do not smoke.

Exercise often. It can help your fatigue, improve your mood and help you sleep.

Face your feelings. Talk to your healthcare team and someone you trust about how you feel. Ask for a referral to someone who can help you manage your feelings.

Find ways to relax and take a break from thinking about cancer.

For more information visit the sites below:

Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia

Website: www.prostate.org.au

Search term: "Hormonal problems"

Prostate Cancer Canada

Website: www.prostatecancer.ca

Search term: "Side effects of treatment"