1. Androgens in the Aging Male

True Hypogonadism – Treat; PADAM – Caution

2. Topical Corticosteroids on the Face (Pg 3)

3. Adverse Reaction Reporting (Pg 4)

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The RxFiles

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Testosterone therapy in aging males has gained interest especially with advertising in the lay press and the resulting "pressure to prescribe". Advertising often focuses on "body image" rather than clinical issues. The term "andropause" is misleading as men, unlike women, do not have a total reduction in hormone levels; however, levels of testosterone do generally decline with age. A more suitable term may be "partial androgen deficiency in the aging male" or **PADAM**. Symptoms overlap with age associated changes and other medical conditions (e.g. depression and hypothyroidism).

Table 1: Symptoms of Androgen Deficiency ²

- ↓ sexual desire and erectile quality
- changes in mood (depression, fatigue)
- ↓ lean body mass, muscle & strength
- ↑ visceral fat
- alterations in skin and body hair
- ◆ ↓ bone mineral density

<u>CAUTION</u> required in distinguishing true hypogonadism from symptoms naturally occurring with age (often multifactorial).

As opposed to **true hypogonadism**, the decision to initiate androgen therapy in **PADAM** is subjective and controversial. Considerations include <u>early morning</u> testosterone levels (before ~9:30am) or preferably a '<u>free androgen index</u>', severity of <u>symptoms</u> and a <u>risk/benefit</u> assessment. Testosterone levels have limitations given difficulties in interpretation and poor correlation between mildly low levels and symptoms.^{3,4} Symptom screening tools alone may result in a false positive diagnosis (up to 40% with the Morley Questionnaire) ^{5,6}. A trial of at least 3-6 months is required to differentiate true benefits from placebo effects.² Long-term use depends on ongoing evaluation of clinical response, risk and assessment of testosterone levels.

Efficacy And Safety of Androgen Therapy in Aging Males Small, short term trials and anecdotal reports have found androgens to have a variety of positive effects on mood, libido, strength and bone density. Benefits are well accepted in symptomatic patients with hypogonadism however there is debate as to their role in elderly men with partial, age related decreases in testosterone. Potential benefits must be weighed against the risks (See Tables 4 & 5). {Prevalence of age-related low testosterone in males: age 40-50yr = 7%; age 60-80yr = 20%; age >80yr ≥35%} ⁶

In true hypogonadism, adverse effects of androgen therapy are very rare.⁷ The risk of most concern is that of an adverse effect on the prostate. Androgens are involved in growth of prostate nodules, hyperplasia and carcinoma; however, observational studies have not demonstrated a consistent role for testosterone in the development of prostate cancer.² **Ruling out prostate cancer** (1 in 8 men will develop in their lifetime, mostly after age 70 ⁸) is a prerequisite of therapy.

To date trials are limited in that they have involved small numbers, been relatively short term (up to 3 years), and included healthy men with few or no signs of prostate disease (see Table 2). No trials are of significant size to provide reliable information on long-term cardiovascular or prostate outcomes. Large-scale trials are being considered. Given the limited evidence, androgen therapy of PADAM should be cautiously approached. Benefits may outweigh risks in patients with more severe symptoms of androgen deficiency. The recent Women's Health Initiative (WHI 11) showed that predictions based on theoretical and observational data may not hold up in a well designed large-scale randomized clinical trial. Androgens Chart – Table 3

Table 2: Controlled trials of testosterone (T) therapy in adult males with low-normal T levels (minimum 3months duration; at least 40 subjects)

Study	Size; Age ave	Duration	Therapy Studied	Effect	Adverse Effects		
Janowsky 1994 ¹²	$n=56$; 67yr $T_{mean} = ?_{nmol/1}$	3 month	T-scrotal patch 15mg/day vs Placebo	\uparrow LBM & \downarrow in fat mass ^{13,17}	◆ ↑ PSA: usually small but		
Snyder 1999 ^{13,14} ,01 ¹⁵	n=108; 73yr T _{mean} =12.7 _{nmol/l}	36 month	(TESTODERM)	BMD: ↑ ¹⁷ or no change ¹⁴ ; subanalysis found ↑BMD in ♂ with T ≤6.9nmol/L ¹⁴ Strength: no change ^{13,17} ; improvement in	consistent; generally no change IPSS or prostate weight (↑ PSA ^{2÷2.6ug/L}) ¹⁷		
English 2000 ¹⁶	n=46 ; 62yr T _{mean} =13.5 _{nmol/l}	month S		perception but not actual physical function ¹³ • Sexual function: no change ¹² or slight	 ↑Hct >52% in 6-11% of pts ^{13,22}& Hgb ◆ HDL no change ¹⁵ or slight ↓ ¹⁸; 		
Kenny 2001 ¹⁷ ,02 ^{18,19}	n=67 ⇒44; 76yr T _{mean} =13.5 _{nmol/l}	12 month	T-transdermal patch 5mg/day vs Placebo (also Ca ⁺⁺ 500mg +Vit. D 400 IU/d)	improvement ²⁰ ◆ CV: ↓ exercise induced angina & pain ¹⁶	• CV events: unknown (16 vs 9% for T vs Pl; p=0.25 NS) ¹⁵		
Kunelius 2002 ²⁰	n=120 ; 58yr T _{mean} =16 _{nmol/l}	6 month	DHT gel 125-250mg/d vs Placebo • all 6 dropouts on DHT!	• Mood/energy/wellbeing: <u>no</u> effect ^{12,19} ; ↑ ¹⁶ • Cognition: improved – spatial only ¹²	 skin irritation: 77% Patch vs 40% Pl ¹⁷ 		
Wang 2000 ^{21,22} ,01 ²³	n=227; 51yr (<52% age ≥50yr) T _{mean} =8.2 _{nmol/l}	3 & 6 month unblind & dose adjust @3mo	ANDROGEL 50mg/day vs ANDROGEL 100mg/day blinded vs ANDRODERM 5mg/day open label	↑ BMD HD gel, ↓ fat mass Gel groups; ↔ lipids. Over baseline (all groups but not placebo controlled): improved sexual function, mood, strength, & ↑ LBM.	 High Dose Gel²³: ↑Hct; ↓HDL Gel tolerated better vs patch ²⁴ (skin irritation on patch 21%) 		
McNicholas 2003 ²⁴	n=208; 58yr T _{mean} =7.9 _{nmol/l}	month E		T gel: ↑LBM, ↑ positive mood, ↑ libido & sexual function; All arms had ↑LBM. ↔BMD	• gynecomastia (1.8%) ²¹		

■ Exception Drug Status **X** = non-formulary in Sask **d** = male; = dose in women; {caution - data lacking! ²⁸ Dose must be individualized}. Conversion Factor: Testosterone ng/dL x 0.0347 = nmol/L Major Contraindications: polycythemia, prostate cancer, prostate hypertrophy with severe urinary retention, testicular or breast cancer

Precautions: mild prostate hypertrophy, sleep apnea Goal of Androgen Therapy: primarily to improve symptoms of hypogonadism and to bring T levels into the normal range Therapeutic Trial Duration: ≥ 3-6 months

Testosterone Effect: 1.29 DRUGS: alcohol, cimetidine, flutamide, glucocorticoids, ketoconazole, opioids, phenytoin, spironolactone; LIFESTYLE: smoking, stress, obesity 30; chronic medical conditions MEDICAL CONDITIONS: hypothyroidism, hyperprolactinemia (drug induced or prolactinoma), Klinefelter's syndrome, pituitary adenomas or tumors affecting pituitary (e.g. meningiomas, chromaphobe adenomas) Related Conditions & Therapies: DEPRESSION ⇒ antidepressants, mood stabilizers; ERECTILE DYSFUNCTION ⇒ VIAGRA, MUSE, other; OSTEOPOROSIS ⇒ bisphosphonates, Ca⁺⁺ &

Vitamin D; HYPOTHYROIDISM

⇒ levothyroxine; LIBIDO

⇒ multifactorial; LIFESTYLE

⇒ exercise, diet, sleep, avoid excess alcohol & caffeine, positive social support/relationships

Table 4: **Potential BENEFITS of Androgen Therapy** ^{1,31}

- \display body fat; \tau lean body mass (LBM) 36
- ↑ bone density*; lack data on fracture outcomes
- ↑ hand-grip strength* (less effect on lower body)
- improvement in mood; mixed effects on cognition 1
- antidepressant effect in depressed refractory ²⁴ weeks men with low testosterone levels (preliminary data) 37
- 1 libido; possible improvement in sexual function but often not useful in erectile dysfunction ²⁹ *; {impotence multifactorial and testosterone often not beneficial; one study found placebo (8 wks) as effective as testosterone undecanoate in treating impotence ³⁸}
- HIV-AIDS patients: improved quality of life, \(\backslash LBM\) 39,40

(improvements specifically seen in men with the very low/lowest of testosterone levels)

Table 5: Potential RISKS of Androgen Therapy 10,32,33,34

- Cardiovascular \(\forall HDL \); long-term effects unknown
- Fluid retention; exacerbation of heart failure
- **Polycythemia** (↑**Hgb;** ↑**Hct**) ↑stroke risk; less with oral/ transdermal forms which provide stable levels
- **Gynecomastia** (especially if **hepatic/renal** disease)
- **Prostate:** ↑ prostate size; ↑ PSA but usually within normal range; possible acceleration of prostate cancer; **Difficulty with urination** - 2° to benign prostatic hypertrophy (one study found retardation in BPH ⁴¹)
- **Sleep apnea?** may exacerbate pre-existing sleep apnea ∴ caution in obese, smokers, COPD
- Other: acne; exacerbation of aggression, hostility, inappropriate sexual behavior or psychotic illness 42 {Hepatotoxicity only with anabolic 17-α-alkylated forms ^{e.g. stanozolol}}

Table 6: **MONITORING** of Androgen Patients ^{2,29,35}

- Clinical evaluation of symptom response and side effects (from patient and/or spouse or family member)
- **Prostate assessment**: baseline & annually: some references suggest more frequent in first year ^{2,35}
- questionnaire regarding urinary/prostate symptoms
- digital rectal exam (DRE) & **PSA** (range: 0-4 ng/l)
- Lab Tests: Hct, Hgb, Liver Function Tests
- CV assessment: lipid profile, edema, weight gain
- **Testosterone** level (normal = 6-29nmol/L _{SK Prov Lab}) Free Androgen Index ⇒provides better measure of **bioavailable testosterone** (normal $\delta = 14.8-94.8$); (accounts for effect of sex hormone binding globulin SHBG)
- Sleep disturbance: excessive snoring; sleep apnea
- Mood changes

Recent Drug Therapy Issues

2. Topical Corticosteroids on the Face – the Cure Becomes the Problem!

Topical corticosteroids on the face often produce local side effects, including atrophy, steroid acne, perioral dermatitis, hypertrichosis, hypopigmentation, rosacea, glaucoma, striae, telangiectasia and superinfections. A3,44,45,46,47 Steroid-induced rosacea with facial use of mid-high potency steroids has been reported, thus we are strengthening our cautionary statement in the corticosteroid chart. Even the lowest potency topical steroids induced rosacea in a study of 106 children. This study and a recent review recommended abrupt withdrawal of topical steroids and treatment of the rosacea. A severe rebound flare-up would be expected, usually in 4-10 days and lasting up to 3 weeks. Treatment depends on the stage: antibiotics (oral: tetracycline/doxycycline adults or erythromycin children; topical: metronidazole or clindamycin preferred in pregnancy), retinoids, atenolol, clonidine, tacrolimus, surgery or laser therapy. A9,50,51,52 Treatment of unresponsive steroid-induced rosacea with ≤ 10days of tacrolimus (PROTOPIC 0.03-0.1% ointment BID Sask) or possibly pimecrolimus (ELIDEL 1% cream BID Sask) or possibly pimecrolimus (ELIDEL 1% cream BID Sask) appears promising. These new agents may cause less skin atrophy, less rebound flare-up, but may cause some skin burning, itching, and an increased risk of infection. See previous review - RxFiles - May98. BOTTOM LINE: In general, only low potency topical corticosteroids should be used on the face and only for a limited time.

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Topical Corticosteroid Creams: Comp	arison Chart Prepared by Lo	oren Regi	ier, Brent Jen	isen w	ww.RxFile	s.ca I	May 03
DRUG/STRENGTH C	BRAND NAME		POTEN			SIZ	-
(grouped by formulation & potency)	*	Ultra-	-High 2 3 4	Mid l 5	Low 6 7	COMM	TENTS
CREAMS -> cause less occlus	ion, are suitable for non-acute, wet les	ions &	tend to I	be cos	smetically	more ac	ceptable
Betamethasone dipropionate glycol 0.05%		\$26	<u>Hi</u>	gh Pote	ncy agents:		PG, ●
Clobetasol propionate 0.05%	Dermovate, Others	\$22		serve fo nditions	r resistant	15,50g	PG
Desoximetasone 0.25%	Topicort PB, WA, Desoxi	\$2			due to	20,60g	•
Fluocinonide 0.05%	Lidex, Lyderm Lidemol (Emollient Base•)		2.7 sys	stemic s	for local & side effects.	15,60g	PG •
Halcinonide 0.1%	Halog	\$2			nt agents: g/week;	15,30,60g	PG
Halobetasol propionate 0.05%	Ultravate S Exception Drug Status in Sask.	\$.	33 • li	i <mark>mit du</mark> i	ration	15,50g	
Betamethasone dipropionate 0.05%	Diprosone, Taro-Sone PG		\$15 ° a	pply O	D-BID	15,50,450g	•
Amcinonide 0.1%	Cyclocort (lanolin,paraben,PG,tartrazine,urea free •)		\$2	25		15,30,60g	ОН, •
Beclomethasone dipropionate 0.025%	Propaderm		\$2	28		15,45g	OH
Clobetasone butyrate 0.05%	Eumovate		\$22				
Desoximetasone 0.05%	Topicort Mild PB, WA, Desoxi		\$1	7		20,60g	•
Diflucortolone valerate 0.1%	Nerisone Cr PB, Nerisone Oily Cr (NP)		\$2			30g	•
Mometasone furoate 0.1%	Elocom (Once daily recommended)		\$3			15,50,100g	PG
Triamcinolone acetonide 0.1%	Kenalog, Triaderm, Aristocort-R R=reg		\$1	3		15,30,500g	PG
Betamethasone valerate 0.1% 0.05%	Betaderm ^{PG} , Celestoderm-V, Ectosone PB Betaderm ^{PG} , Celestoderm-V/2, Ectosone Mild PB			\$8		15,~450g	low cost
Fluocinolone acetonide 0.025% 0.01%	Fluoderm regular Fluoderm mild			\$19 \$10		15,500g	PG, PB
Hydrocortisone valerate 0.2%	Westcort , Hydroval PB			\$14		15,45,60g	PG, ●
Triamcinolone acetonide 0.025%	Triaderm			\$9		15,30,500g	PG
Desonide 0.05%	Desocort, Tridesilon		<u>tency:</u> prefe	rred	\$17	15,60g	PG
Hydrocortisone/Urea 1%/10%	Uremol-HC	skin aı	when necessary on thin skin areas, in elderly,			50,225g	PG ;8-15°C
Hydrocortisone 2.5%	Emo-Cort	or if us	children or sed long-ter	m.	\$15	45,225g	OD-QID
1% 0.5% (OTC)	Cortate, Hyderm, Emo-Cort Cortate, Hyderm, Unicort, others	-	Caution if on face or thin skin areas!			15,~450g	low cost

Cost = cost for 30g (incl. markup/dispensing fee) in Sask. Lowest price alternative used where available EDS= Exceptional Drug Status Note: Ointments more potent than creams!

• = brand specific info in brand section; OH = benzyl or isopropyl alcohol; NP = no preservatives; PB = parabens; PG = propylene glycol; WA = wool alcohol

Potency * Classification - Ultra high potency steroids are up to 1000 times more potent than hydrocortisone 44							
Group 1 = <u>Ultra</u> High Potency	•reserve for resistant conditions ; high potential for serious side effects (local & systemic) •suitable for short term intermittent use in severe eczematous dermatoses and psoriasis •often required for palms, soles, & scalp where thickened skin may require prolonged Tx						
Group 2,3 = High Potency	•generally limit to OD-BID, & length of Tx. to ≤2-4 weeks followed by less potent agent •avoid use on large areas, thin skin areas, skin folds, in young children/infants, face						
Group 4,5 = Mid Potency	 •suitable for intermittent long term use, chronic use in thick skin areas (hand eczema) • avoid on thin skin areas; extreme caution if used on face, intertriginous areas (severe adverse effects) 						
Group 6,7 = Low Potency	•safest for use in children, infants, & elderly or when covering large or higher risk areas (face, eyelids, skin flexures, scrotum); CAUTION still required! •suitable for maintenance of most chronic conditions after initial control obtained •often applied BID-QID; apply less frequent (OD-BID) if ongoing use						

3. SaskAR - Saskatchewan Regional Adverse Reaction Reporting Centre

Did vou know???

- 51% of newly approved drugs have serious adverse effects that are undetected at the time of marketing.⁵⁴
- 3-7% of hospital admissions are due to adverse reactions^{55,56,57,58,59,60,61} and 1.5-35% of patients experience a 2nd reaction during hospital stay.^{55-58,62,63,64}
- Adverse reactions are reported in:
 - **6%** of patients taking **1-3 medications** and in **52%** of patients taking **8 or more medications.** 65
- ❖ The reported incidence of adverse reactions in ambulatory patients varies from 3-68%. ^{66,67}
- A study done by Canadian investigators at the University of Toronto showed serious ARs result in 76,000-137,000 deaths annually in the United States, making ARs the 4th to 6th leading U.S. cause of death.

Why is it important to document adverse reactions?

- Knowledge of drug risk evolves over the lifetime of the drug and therefore risk assessment must continue beyond the pre-market evaluation phase.
- Populations used in clinical trials are not representative of the population as a whole. "Clinical trials evaluate drugs rather than patients or diseases." 69
- Spontaneous, voluntary reporting programs (e.g. SaskAR) serve as "early warning systems" for rare and unexpected reactions. These programs have been credited with initial detection of thromboembolic complications with oral contraceptives, withdrawal reactions to paroxetine, hepatotoxicity with nefazodone, and drug interactions with grapefruit juice.
- Case reports are reviewed and entered onto national and international databases that are constantly monitored for signals. Serious, unlabelled effects, <u>if</u> <u>reported</u>, become known very quickly allowing for timely notification of health care professionals.

What is an Adverse Reaction (AR)?

Health Canada defines an AR as "a noxious and unintended response to a drug which occurs with use or testing for the diagnosis, treatment, or prophylaxis of a disease or modification of an organic function. This includes **any** undesirable patient effect suspected to be associated with drug use. ARs resulting from any prescription, non-prescription, biological (including blood products), complementary medicines (including herbals), and radiopharmaceutical drug products are monitored." ⁷⁰

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AR reports are, for the most part, only **SUSPECTED** associations! Reporting an AR does <u>not</u> imply a causal link.

What kind of adverse reactions should I report?

A temporal or possible association is sufficient for a report to be submitted.

The following suspected reactions should be reported:

Reactions to <u>Recently Marketed</u> <u>Drugs</u> includes drugs that have been marketed within the last 5 years. All reactions, regardless of nature or severity, should be reported as these drugs have limited postmarketing experience.

Serious Reactions

includes reactions that result in hospitalization or prolong existing hospitalization, results in congenital malformation, results in persistent or significant disability or incapacity, is life-threatening or results in death.

report serious reactions **when they occur** even if all details are not known. Follow-up information can be submitted when it becomes available.

Unexpected Reactions

includes reactions (regardless of severity) which are not consistent with product labeling. These reactions are often NOT explainable pharmacologically.

REPORTING AN ADVERSE REACTION

Reports can be submitted in writing (i.e. by mail or fax) or verbally by telephone (Hours: Monday-Friday, 0830-1630).

FAX - Saskatoon 306-966-2286 FAX - Toll-free Canada 1-866-678-6789 Telephone - Saskatoon 306-966-6329 Telephone - Toll-free Canada 1-866-234-2345



Report forms are available in:

- •Compendium of Pharmaceuticals & Specialties (CPS)
- ◆Saskatchewan Prescription Drug Plan Formulary Appendix
- ◆Health Canada website

http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hpb-dgps/therapeut/htmleng/adr.html Click on "Report (form) of suspected adverse reaction due to drug products marketed in Canada". Form can be downloaded, printed, completed and sent.

If you have any comments or questions, or if you would like to report an adverse reaction, please contact us.

SaskAR Regional Centre, Saskatchewan Drug Information Service (SDIS), College of Pharmacy & Nutrition, 110 Science Place, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon SK S7N 5C9 Telephone: Saskatoon 306-966-6329; Toll-free 1-866-234-2345

Physician, reporter & patient confidentiality is ensured.

Regular advisories by Health Canada can be obtained from http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hpb-dgps/therapeut/htmleng/adviss_tpd_bgtd_e.html
Email service provides link to free advisories upon posting.



Health Canada

 La version française de ce document est disponible sur demande. Voir au verso pour connaître le centre à contacter.

· See reverse for return address.

Santé Canada

Canadian Adverse Drug Reaction Monitoring Program

Report of suspected adverse reaction due to drug products marketed in Canada (Vaccines excluded)



PROTECTED

A. Patient Information							C. Suspected drug product(s)							
1. Patient identifier 2. Age at time of reaction 3. Sex 4. Height 5. Weight						(See "How to report" section on reverse)								
		react	or or	☐ Male	feet	lbs	1. Name (give labelled strength & manufacturer, if known).							
Chart Number			of birth		or	or	#1	#1						
	DD	MM	YYYY	Female	cm	kgs	#2			**				
B. Adverse	Re	action	1			l i								
1. Outcome attri				check all th	et annivi		2. Dose, fr	requency & n	oute used	3. Therapy	dates (if unk	nown, give du	ration)	
Death							#1					yy) - To (dd / r		
Life-threate	ning				ital malforma		#2			#2				
☐ Hospitalizat			Require	ed intervention / permanent	to prevent impairment									
☐ Hospitalization - prolonged ☐ Other:								4. Indication for use of suspected drug 5. Reaction abated after use stopped or dose reduced						
2. Date and time of reaction DD MM YYYY DD MM YYYY							#1 #1 Doesn't a							
4. Describe react	tion (or proble	em				#2				#2 Yes	□N₀ □D	oesn't apply	
							6. Lot # (if	known)	7. Exp. date	e (if known)		reappeared a	fter	
							#1		#1 (dd / mm		reintrodu			
							L				#1 Yes	□ No □ D	oesn't apply	
							#2		#2		#2 🔲 Yes	□ No □ Do	oesn't apply	
							(dd / mn	nitant drugs n / yyyy) (exclu	de treatmer	nt of reaction)				
5. Relevant tests	/ lab	oratory	data (including	g dates (dd / i	mm / yyyy)		D. Rep	orter						
							(See	"Confid			n on rev	erse)		
6. Other relevant (e.g. allergies, p						rsfunction)	1. Name, a	ddress & pho	one numbe	.				
							2. Health p	rofessional?	3.Occupat	ion		o reported to nufacturer?)	
							Yes	□No				Yes	□No	
Submission of a personnel or the							For TPP u	se only	•		L			

TOPICAL

AR REPORTING...

CORTICOSTEROIDS.

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