

Is hormone therapy for 'low-T' safe?

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Dr. Wayne Hellstrom is a clinician, author and lecturer who has published numerous peer-reviewed articles in professional publications and has contributed numerous chapters in textbooks. He also is the editor of "Male Infertility and Sexual Dysfunction" and "The Handbook of Sexual Dysfunction." (Photo by Scott Thompson)

Tulane University urologist Dr. Wayne Hellstrom is part of a panel of leading men's health experts who published new guidance in [Mayo Clinic Proceedings](#) today for doctors worried that prescribing testosterone therapy for "low-T" may increase risks for stroke or heart attack.

The treatment likely carries more benefits than risks if men are properly diagnosed and monitored, according to the experts who reviewed major studies of the therapy for patients with adult onset hypogonadism (AOH), a condition where the body

doesn't produce enough testosterone naturally.

"Testosterone replacement therapy in patients who have documented hypogonadism is safe and beneficial, provided they are treated and followed appropriately by a physician," says Hellstrom, professor of urology and chief of andrology at [Tulane University School of Medicine](#).

Hellstrom says that many patients and prescribers are confused as a result of conflicting studies over the safety of the therapy. Last year the FDA required drug makers to include warnings that it may be linked to increased risk of stroke or heart attack. The agency also warned that the treatment is only approved for low-testosterone caused by injury or disease.

After reviewing the evidence, the panel concluded that older men with low testosterone often have additional conditions that put them at greater risk for cardiovascular events, such as diabetes or metabolic syndrome. The panel detailed a rigorous diagnostic process to ensure that men with AOH are accurately identified. It also recommended that men who are treated with testosterone must be followed regularly to monitor benefits or adverse events.

Read the full study [here](#).