

TAKE CONTROL

# diabetes

FREE  
PLEASE TAKE ONE



SPECIAL ISSUE

## Men & Women

WHAT YOU

# NEED

TO KNOW...

ORAL CARE  
BATTLE OF THE SEXES



 **FEMALE**  
Sexual Dysfunction

Diabetes-Related  
Problems in **MEN**



Recipe

Broccoli Cheese  
Frittata



# PLUS...

Helpful Tips, Useful Resources & More — Look Inside »

## Quiz: Could You Have Low T?

Take this quiz to help you find out if you should talk to your doctor about low testosterone.

1. Do you have a decrease in libido (sex drive)?  
a. Yes      b. No
2. Do you have a lack of energy?  
a. Yes      b. No
3. Do you have a decrease in strength or endurance?  
a. Yes      b. No
4. Have you noticed a decrease in your enjoyment of life?  
a. Yes      b. No
5. Do you have osteoporosis?  
a. Yes      b. No
6. Are you frequently sad and/or grumpy?  
a. Yes      b. No
7. Are your erections less strong?  
a. Yes      b. No
8. Are you falling asleep after dinner?  
a. Yes      b. No

Answer key inside on page 2 »



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# Oral Care Battle of the Sexes

It's no secret that there's a connection between diabetes and oral health. Studies have shown that poorly controlled diabetes can increase your chances of developing periodontal diseases. But recent studies are closing in on an even finer detail – the role sex hormones and age play in the development of dental problems.

## Estrogen

Women's oral health is different from men's because of fluctuating hormone levels that they experience during puberty, menstrual cycles, menopause, and pregnancy, explains Maria Emanuel Ryan, D.D.S., Ph.D., Professor of Oral Biology and Pathology at Stony Brook University School of Dental Medicine at Stony Brook, NY. Studies suggest a link between these hormonal fluctuations and periodontal diseases. Estrogen plays a huge role in how bones grow and change over the years, particularly during menopause for women. Along with progesterone, estrogen also plays a key role during pregnancy. Add diabetes to the mix (that is not well controlled) and it increases the risk for bone loss and inflammation around your teeth. Keeping your blood glucose under control, visiting your dentist regularly, and practicing good oral care at home by daily brushing and flossing can also help reduce the risks of developing periodontal diseases.



## The Male Factor

More men than women develop periodontal disease, but men do not appear to be at higher risk for the more rapid gingival and bone destruction caused by the disease, compared to women. Recent scientific studies are trying to figure out if sex hormones or some other biological reason puts men at a greater risk for developing chronic periodontitis. Studies on estrogen's role in creating gender differences in other diseases prompted two researchers at the University of Maryland Dental School in Baltimore to conduct a study review. The reason could be environmental — men don't see their dentist as often or have worse oral hygiene, or it could have a biological basis, says Harlan Shiau, DDS, DMedSc, assistant professor at the dental school and co-author of the review. Sex hormones have been linked to a variety of other diseases, such as systemic lupus erythematosus and rheumatoid arthritis, that seem to favor women more than men (and vice versa). But more research is needed before determining a clear cut answer regarding their role in periodontal disease.



## Low T Quiz: Answer Key (from front cover)

If you answered **YES** to any of these questions, you may have low T. You should talk to your healthcare provider about having your testosterone blood levels checked.

Low testosterone, or Low T, is a common condition estimated to affect millions of men in the United States. Low T often goes undiagnosed because the symptoms are similar to those of other conditions. If you have type 2 diabetes, you are *twice as likely* than men without diabetes to experience Low T. Testosterone levels decrease as body-mass-index (BMI) increases. It is important to know the signs and symptoms of Low T, but the only real way to be diagnosed and treated is to talk to your doctor. He or she will give you a medical exam to assess your symptoms and can confirm suspicions by performing blood tests.

Walk into a doctor's office prepared with as much information as possible. This will help you and your doctor figure out the best treatment plan possible.

- Make a list of any medications (prescription and/or over-the-counter) and supplements you are taking.
- Make a list of any symptoms you are experiencing. *(Refer to the quiz you just took on front cover.)*
- Write down any questions you have for your doctor. Here are a few to start with:
  - Are the symptoms I'm experiencing related to low testosterone levels?
  - Do you think I should be tested for Low T?
  - If I do have Low T, what treatment options do I have, and what are the differences between the different treatment plans?
  - Can my lifestyle, diet, or exercise impact my testosterone levels?

## TAKE CONTROL TIP

**Your RX for Better Sex.** The best way to avoid diabetes-related sexual dysfunction is to manage your disease well and keep blood glucose levels in control, which will lessen your risk for neuropathy, circulatory problems, and chronic infections.

People with good diabetes management habits also have higher energy levels and less anxiety, which also contribute to more enjoyable love making. If your blood glucose levels aren't where they should be, adjustments to your diet, medication, and losing weight is beneficial for both diabetes control and self-esteem.



# Female Sexual Dysfunction



## How Diabetes Affects Sexual Health

Both uncontrolled blood glucose levels and diabetes-related complications can play havoc with a woman's sexual desire and performance. Here are some common ways diabetes can affect sexual health:

- Infections and irritation.** Chronic high blood sugars promote yeast infections and vaginal irritation.
- Low blood flow.** Vascular damage caused by poorly controlled diabetes restricts the blood flow to the vagina, which causes vaginal dryness and interferes with arousal.
- Medication.** Certain drugs, such as antidepressants, birth control pills, tranquilizers, and high blood pressure medication can cause decreased libido as a side-effect.
- Menopause.** "The change" and its effects on the body may cause a serious change in your sex life.
- Nerve damage.** Women who have neuropathy to the genital area, the reproductive organs, or the vagina may have difficulty achieving orgasm.
- Neurogenic bladder.** Women with nerve damage to the bladder may have incontinence problems that make sex difficult and/or embarrassing. It can also make urinary tract infections (UTIs) more common, which may make sex uncomfortable.
- Vaginismus.** Some women experience vaginismus, a tightening of the vaginal walls which can make penetration painful or impossible.

Many women find that their blood glucose levels are affected by their menstrual cycle. Tracking glucose levels in tandem with your cycle can help you understand if hormones are having an impact on your diabetes control. Discuss the results with your doctor. Adjustments in medication, insulin, exercise, and diet may be necessary to bring your glucose levels back to normal during this time.

## TAKE CONTROL TIP

**For the ladies.** Prevent yeast infections. Don't use douches, perfumed vaginal sprays, or other scented products that irritate the vagina. Wear cotton underpants and pantyhose with a cotton crotch to help keep the genital area ventilated. To control recurring yeast infections, begin with controlling your blood glucose levels by managing your diabetes effectively. Ask your health care provider about ways to improve your diabetes management and other ways to prevent yeast infections.

From the dLife Kitchen

## Broccoli Cheese Frittata

Makes 4 Servings



### INGREDIENTS

- 8 eggs
- 2 tbsp grated Parmesan cheese
- ¼ cup fresh mushrooms, chopped
- 1 tsp crushed garlic
- ¼ tsp ground thyme
- 10 oz frozen broccoli, thawed, drained, and chopped
- 1 cup shredded mozzarella cheese
- Cooking spray

### DIRECTIONS

- Combine eggs and Parmesan cheese in medium bowl. Stir well and set aside.
- Lightly coat 10" oven-proof skillet with cooking spray. Add mushrooms, garlic, and thyme. Cook over medium heat, covered, for about 2 minutes, stirring often until mushrooms are tender.
- Mix in broccoli and spread mixture evenly over bottom of skillet.
- Reduce heat to low and pour egg mixture over vegetables. Cover and cook for about 10 minutes until eggs are nearly set.
- Preheat oven broiler.
- Remove lid and place skillet under broiler 6 inches from heat source for 3 minutes.
- Sprinkle mozzarella over top and broil 1 minute, until cheese has melted.
- Slice frittata into wedges and serve immediately.

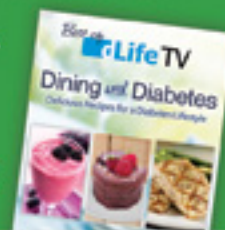
### NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION

Per Serving: Calories 271.6, Total Carbs 5.8g, Dietary Fiber 1.9g, Saturated Fat 7.4g, Protein 23.5g, Sodium 391.4mg

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## Diabetes-Related Problems in Men

Men with diabetes suffer more from some diabetes-related health problems than women. The American Diabetes Association reports that:

- ♂ In people who develop diabetes before the age of 30, men develop retinopathy (a vision disorder that can lead to blindness) more quickly than women.
- ♂ Having the main symptoms of peripheral vascular disease — pain in the thigh, calf, or buttocks during exercise; cramps; change in temperature; sores that don't heal; swelling — is linked to a two- to three-fold increased risk of coronary heart disease, stroke, or cardiac failure in men with diabetes.
- ♂ Amputation rates from diabetes-related problems are 1.4 to 2.7 times higher in men than women with diabetes.

Keep these issues at bay by proactively managing your diabetes — attend all medical appointments, eat well, exercise, and test your blood sugar regularly.



### TAKE CONTROL TIP

*Veggie smoothies sneak nutrients in. This may not be a typical way to eat your veggies, but you might be surprised at the great taste. Get creative and blend fruits and vegetables such as spinach, kale, frozen berries, or melon, with a little Greek yogurt to add protein. It's delicious, refreshing, and a healthy way to start the day. These smoothies are great for men, women, and children — especially those picky eaters. Just remember to count the carbs and make sure to select low carb fruits and vegetables to toss into the blender.*

## the FITNESSCORNER

### TIMING YOUR INSULIN.

Make sure you discuss when to take your insulin with your doctor. It's usually best not to take insulin right before you exercise. Muscles in action will metabolize insulin injections faster and enhance the glucose lowering effect of exercise, posing a very real risk for hypoglycemia. Make sure you test your blood sugar often while exercising and be sure to keep fast-acting glucose at the ready in case your levels start to drop. However, if your blood sugar is above 240 mg/dl (13.33 mmol/l) and you are planning to exercise, test for ketones first. If ketones are present, drink plenty of water and make sure you contact your doctor. And always talk with your doctor before starting any new exercise regimen.

*Take Control: Diabetes is published semi-monthly by Health Mart Pharmacy. Content and recipes are provided by dLife – It's Your Diabetes Life! This magazine is designed to be educational and cannot be used to diagnose your health. You should consult your health care professional if you are making significant health-related changes. Models are used for illustrative purposes only. Copyright © 2013. All editorial rights reserved.*



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**Talk with your Health Mart Pharmacist to make sure you know how exercise can affect your diabetes medication.**