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PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

# Testosterone

This information from Lexicomp® explains what you need to know about this medication, including what it's used for, how to take it, its side effects, and when to call your healthcare provider.

## Brand Names: US

Androderm; AndroGel; AndroGel Pump; Aveed; Axiron [DSC]; Depo-Testosterone; Fortesta; Natesto; Striant; Testim; Testopel; Vogelxo; Vogelxo Pump; Xyosted

## Brand Names: Canada

Andriol; Androderm; AndroGel; Axiron; Delatestryl; Natesto; Testim

## What is this drug used for?

### Testosterone cypionate and testosterone enanthate injection:

- It is used to treat low testosterone levels.
- It is used in certain children when puberty is delayed.
- It may be given to your child for other reasons. Talk with the doctor.

### All other products:

- This drug is not approved for use in children. Talk with the doctor.
- If your child has been given this form of this drug, talk with the doctor for information about the benefits and risks. Talk with the doctor if you have questions or concerns about giving this drug to your child.

## What do I need to tell the doctor BEFORE my child takes this drug?

- If your child has an allergy to this drug or any part of this drug.

- If your child is allergic to any drugs like this one or any other drugs, foods, or other substances. Tell the doctor about the allergy and what signs your child had, like rash; hives; itching; shortness of breath; wheezing; cough; swelling of face, lips, tongue, or throat; or any other signs.
- If your child is male and has breast or prostate cancer.
- If your child has heart problems.
- If your child has any of these health problems: Kidney disease or liver disease.

**If your child is pregnant or breast-feeding a baby:**

- If your child is a female. Not all products are approved for use in females. Talk with your child’s doctor to see if this product may be used in females. If your child is a female using this drug, talk with your child’s doctor if she is pregnant, plans on getting pregnant, or is breast-feeding.

This is not a list of all drugs or health problems that interact with this drug.

Tell the doctor and pharmacist about all of your child’s drugs (prescription or OTC, natural products, vitamins) and health problems. You must check to make sure that it is safe for your child to take this drug with all of his/her drugs and health problems. Do not start, stop, or change the dose of any drug your child takes without checking with the doctor.

**What are some things I need to know or do while my child takes this drug?**

- Tell all of your child’s health care providers that your child is taking this drug. This includes your child’s doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and dentists.
- If your child has high blood sugar (diabetes), you will need to watch his/her blood sugar closely.
- There may be a higher chance of prostate cancer. Talk with the doctor.
- If your child has an enlarged prostate, his signs can get worse while using this drug. Call the doctor if this happens to your child.
- High blood pressure has happened with this drug. Have your blood pressure checked as you have been told by your doctor.

- High blood pressure can raise the chance of heart attack, stroke, or death from heart disease. If your child has high blood pressure or heart disease, talk with your child's doctor.
- If your child has sleep apnea, talk with your child's doctor. Sometimes, sleep apnea has gotten worse in people using testosterone.
- Treatment with this drug may lead to higher cholesterol and triglycerides. The effect of these changes on heart health is not known. Talk with the doctor.
- Have blood work checked as you have been told by the doctor. Talk with the doctor.
- Do not switch between different forms of this drug without first talking with the doctor.
- Blood clots have happened with this drug. Tell the doctor if your child has ever had a blood clot.
- This drug may affect certain lab tests. Tell all of your child's health care providers and lab workers that your child takes this drug.
- If your child is taking warfarin, talk with the doctor. Your child may need to have blood work checked more closely while taking it with this drug.
- This drug is an anabolic steroid. Anabolic steroid drugs have been abused and misused before. Anabolic steroid abuse can lead to dependence and very bad health problems. These health problems include heart or blood vessel problems, stroke, liver problems, and mental or mood problems. Talk with the doctor.
- This drug may affect sperm in males. This may affect being able to father a child later in life. Talk with the doctor.
- Some products have benzyl alcohol. Do not give a product that has benzyl alcohol in it to a newborn or infant. Talk with the doctor to see if this product has benzyl alcohol in it.
- Not all injection products are approved for use in children. Talk with the doctor to see if this product may be used in children.
- Use with care in children. Talk with the doctor.
- This drug may affect growth in children and teens in some cases. They may

need regular growth checks. Talk with the doctor.

## What are some side effects that I need to call my child's doctor about right away?

**WARNING/CAUTION:** Even though it may be rare, some people may have very bad and sometimes deadly side effects when taking a drug. Tell your child's doctor or get medical help right away if your child has any of the following signs or symptoms that may be related to a very bad side effect:

- Signs of an allergic reaction, like rash; hives; itching; red, swollen, blistered, or peeling skin with or without fever; wheezing; tightness in the chest or throat; trouble breathing, swallowing, or talking; unusual hoarseness; or swelling of the mouth, face, lips, tongue, or throat.
- Signs of high blood pressure like very bad headache or dizziness, passing out, or change in eyesight.
- Shortness of breath, a big weight gain, or swelling in the arms or legs.
- Passing urine more often.
- Trouble passing urine.
- Passing urine in a weak stream or drips.
- Not able to control passing urine.
- New or worse behavior or mood changes like depression or thoughts of killing yourself.
- Enlarged breasts.
- Breast pain.
- Upset stomach or throwing up.
- Trouble breathing when sleeping.
- Feeling sleepy during the day.
- Weakness on 1 side of the body, trouble speaking or thinking, change in balance, drooping on one side of the face, or blurred eyesight.
- Change in color of skin.
- Change in size or shape of testicles.

- For females, a deep voice, facial hair, pimples, or period changes.
- For males, erections (hard penis) that happen often or that last a long time.
- Call the doctor right away if your child has signs of a blood clot like chest pain or pressure; coughing up blood; shortness of breath; swelling, warmth, numbness, change of color, or pain in a leg or arm; or trouble speaking or swallowing.
- Liver problems have happened with drugs like this one. Sometimes, this has been deadly. Call the doctor right away if your child has signs of liver problems like dark urine, feeling tired, not hungry, upset stomach or stomach pain, light-colored stools, throwing up, or yellow skin or eyes.
- High calcium levels have happened with drugs like this one in some people with cancer. Call your child's doctor right away if your child has signs of high calcium levels like weakness, confusion, feeling tired, headache, upset stomach or throwing up, constipation, or bone pain.

## **What are some other side effects of this drug?**

All drugs may cause side effects. However, many people have no side effects or only have minor side effects. Call your child's doctor or get medical help if any of these side effects or any other side effects bother your child or do not go away:

- Headache.
- Pimples (acne).
- Diarrhea.
- Emotional ups and downs.
- Feeling tired or weak.
- Trouble sleeping.
- Irritation where the shot is given.

These are not all of the side effects that may occur. If you have questions about side effects, call your child's doctor. Call your child's doctor for medical advice about side effects.

You may report side effects to your national health agency.

## How is this drug best given?

Give this drug as ordered by your child's doctor. Read all information given to you. Follow all instructions closely.

- It is given as a shot into a muscle.
- If you will be giving your child the shot, your child's doctor or nurse will teach you how to give the shot.
- Follow how to give this drug as you have been told by your child's doctor or read the package insert.
- Wash your hands before use.
- Be sure you know where to give the shot. If you are not sure where to give the shot, talk with the doctor.
- Do not give into skin that is irritated, tender, bruised, red, scaly, hard, scarred, or has stretch marks.
- Do not use if the solution is cloudy, leaking, or has particles.
- This drug is colorless to a faint yellow. Do not use if the solution changes color.
- Throw away needles in a needle/sharp disposal box. Do not reuse needles or other items. When the box is full, follow all local rules for getting rid of it. Talk with a doctor or pharmacist if you have any questions.

## What do I do if my child misses a dose?

- Give a missed dose as soon as you think about it.
- If it is close to the time for your child's next dose, skip the missed dose and go back to your child's normal time.
- Do not give 2 doses at the same time or extra doses.

## How do I store and/or throw out this drug?

- Store at room temperature. Do not freeze.
- Store in the carton to protect from light.
- Store in a dry place. Do not store in a bathroom.

- Keep all drugs in a safe place. Keep all drugs out of the reach of children and pets.
- Throw away unused or expired drugs. Do not flush down a toilet or pour down a drain unless you are told to do so. Check with your pharmacist if you have questions about the best way to throw out drugs. There may be drug take-back programs in your area.

## General drug facts

- If your child's symptoms or health problems do not get better or if they become worse, call your child's doctor.
- Do not share your child's drug with others and do not give anyone else's drug to your child.
- Keep a list of all your child's drugs (prescription, natural products, vitamins, OTC) with you. Give this list to your child's doctor.
- Talk with your child's doctor before giving your child any new drug, including prescription or OTC, natural products, or vitamins.
- Some drugs may have another patient information leaflet. If you have any questions about this drug, please talk with your child's doctor, nurse, pharmacist, or other health care provider.
- If you think there has been an overdose, call your poison control center or get medical care right away. Be ready to tell or show what was taken, how much, and when it happened.

## Consumer Information Use and Disclaimer

This information should not be used to decide whether or not to take this medicine or any other medicine. Only the healthcare provider has the knowledge and training to decide which medicines are right for a specific patient. This information does not endorse any medicine as safe, effective, or approved for treating any patient or health condition. This is only a brief summary of general information about this medicine. It does NOT include all information about the possible uses, directions, warnings, precautions, interactions, adverse effects, or risks that may apply to this medicine. This information is not specific medical advice and does not replace information you receive from the healthcare provider. You must talk with the healthcare

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If you have any questions, contact a member of your healthcare team directly. If you're a patient at MSK and you need to reach a provider after 5:00 PM, during the weekend, or on a holiday, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit [www.mskcc.org/pe](http://www.mskcc.org/pe) to search our virtual library.

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