



You are here: [Home](#) / [Departments](#) / [Media Centre](#) / [News releases 2010](#)

Media Centre home

News releases

Find an expert

The University in the media

Media toolkit (for staff and students)

Fast facts

Meet the team

22 February 2010

Testosterone deficiency affects male cancer survivors' quality of life

Researchers at the University of Sheffield have found that many male cancer survivors who develop testosterone deficiency after receiving chemotherapy or radiation therapy have an impaired quality of life and reduced energy levels.

Published online in *Cancer*, a peer-reviewed journal of the American Cancer Society, the study suggests that young male cancer survivors with testosterone deficiency may benefit from testosterone replacement therapy.

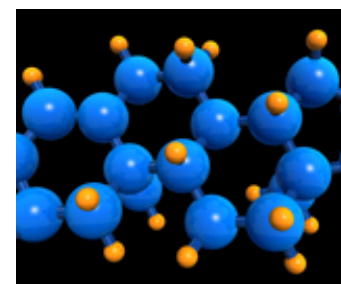
Testosterone deficiency is a late side effect of radiation therapy and chemotherapy that occurs in approximately 15 percent of male cancer survivors. Investigators led by Professor Richard Ross at the University of Sheffield, examined the relationship between testosterone levels, quality of life, self-esteem, fatigue and sexual function in 176 young male cancer survivors compared with 213 young men without cancer.

Young male cancer survivors said they experienced a marked impairment in quality of life, as well as reduced energy levels and quality of sexual function. These experiences were exacerbated in survivors with testosterone deficiency. The young male cancer survivors appeared less strong, vital, physically fit, and energetic and had suboptimal sexual function compared with those without cancer.

However the researchers also found psychological distress in male cancer survivors was not elevated, self-esteem was normal, and sexual relationships were not impaired.

Professor Ross, from the Department of Human Metabolism, commented: "This is an important study demonstrating that low testosterone levels are common in male cancer survivors and associated with an impaired quality of life. However, the relationship between testosterone levels and quality of life is complex and appears to depend on a threshold level rather than on a direct correlation. We now need interventional trials with testosterone to determine which young male cancer survivors will benefit from replacement therapy."

This work was funded by the Weston Park Hospital Cancer Charity.



3D model of testosterone molecule

Notes for Editors: The paper, "Quality of life, self-esteem, fatigue and sexual function in young men after cancer: a controlled cross-sectional study," will be published online in the journal Cancer.

For a copy of the full paper or for further information please contact: Lindsey Bird, Media Relations Manager, on 0114 2225338 or email l.bird@sheffield.ac.uk

[« Return to news releases](#)