Testosterone and Dementia Risk

Low testosterone and dementia might put men and women at higher risk for dementia, according to studies conducted over the last few years.

Researchers from the United States and Hong Kong studied a group of 47 elderly Chinese men who had mild cognitive impairment. The men had some memory problems, but not enough to hinder their daily lives.

When the study began, the scientists measured the men’s testosterone levels. One year later, the men’s cognitive skills were tested. Ten of them were diagnosed with Alzheimer’s disease, a form of dementia. These men had also had low testosterone readings.

In a French study, researchers found that dementia risk was higher for men with low testosterone who 1) were over 80 years old or 2) had attained higher levels of education.

Postmenopausal women may also be affected. Australian scientists tested the memories of 90 women who were past menopause. The women were then divided into two groups. One group applied a testosterone gel to the upper arm once each day. The other group used a gel that contained no testosterone.

Twenty-six weeks later, the women took another memory test. Those who had used the testosterone gel had significant improvements in verbal learning and memory.

Some scientists believe that testosterone can protect certain parts of the brain. But it’s still too early to know whether testosterone therapy is a viable treatment for dementia. More research is needed.

If you are concerned about memory problems or dementia, be sure to see your doctor.

Resources

Alzheimer’s & Dementia

Carcaillon, Laure, et al.

“Low testosterone and the risk of dementia in elderly men: Impact of age and education”
The Online Resource for Sexual Health Patient Education
SexHealthMatters.org is brought to you by the Sexual Medicine Society of North America, Inc.

(Full-text. Article in press. Published online: September 12, 2013)

http://www.alzheimersanddementia.com/article/S1552-5260(13)02493-X/abstract

Alzheimer's Association

“Mild Cognitive Impairment”


The Endocrine Society

Davis, Susan Ruth, et al.

“Transdermal Testosterone Improves Verbal Learning and Memory in Postmenopausal Women Not On Estrogen Therapy: A Randomized Placebo-Controlled Trial Over 26 Weeks”


https://endo.confex.com/endo/2013endo/webprogram/Paper5247.html

“Testosterone Improves Verbal Learning and Memory in Postmenopausal Women”

(News release. June 2013)


Journal of Alzheimer’s Disease

Chu, Leung-Wing, et al.

“Bioavailable Testosterone Predicts a Lower Risk of Alzheimer’s Disease in Older Men”

(Abstract. Published online: August 6, 2010)

http://iospress.metapress.com/content/c722343232763v26/?genre=article&issn=1387-2877&volume=21&issue=4&spage=1335
Medscape Medical News
Brauser, Deborah
“Low Testosterone Levels Linked to Alzheimer’s Disease in Older Men”
(October 14, 2010)

Monash University
“Testosterone could combat dementia in women”
(News release. June 18, 2013)
http://monash.edu/news/show/testosterone-could-combat-dementia-in-women

Renal and Urology News
Charnow, Jody A.
“Low Testosterone Associated with Increased Dementia Risk”
(October 7, 2013)

St. Louis University
Solomon, Nancy
“Low Testosterone Linked to Alzheimer’s Disease”
(September 10, 2010)
http://www.slu.edu/x38970.xml

WebMD Health News
Boyles, Salynn
“Low Testosterone Linked to Alzheimer’s Risk”

(October 8, 2010)