

Testosterone therapy associated with lower risk of aggressive prostate cancer

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The results of a recent analysis of 231,408 medical records has failed to find an association between testosterone replacement therapy and an increased risk of prostate cancer, and furthermore determined that the therapy appears to be associated with a lower risk of aggressive disease. The findings, presented on May 9, 2016 at the American Urological Association's annual meeting, were uncovered by a study led by

researchers at New York University (NYU) Langone Medical Center and the Laura and Isaac Perlmutter Cancer Center.

Stacy Loeb, MD, MSc, and colleagues utilized records from the National Prostate Cancer Register and the Prescribed Drug Register in Sweden. Of 38,570 men who developed prostate cancer between 2009 and 2012, 284 had been prescribed testosterone prior to diagnosis, compared with 1,378 men out of 192,838 who did not develop the disease, indicating a similar risk. Men treated with testosterone for more than a year were found to have experienced a 50% reduction in their risk of aggressive disease compared to nonusers.

"Based on our findings, physicians should still be watching for prostate cancer risk factors -- such as being over the age of 40, having African-American ancestry, or having a family history of the disease -- in men taking testosterone therapy, but should not hesitate to prescribe it to appropriate patients for fear of increasing prostate cancer risk," Dr Loeb stated.

"When used appropriately by men with age-related low testosterone who are otherwise healthy, testosterone replacement has been shown to improve sexual function and mood," she noted. "Overall, our study suggests that what is best for men's health is to keep testosterone levels balanced and within a normal range."

The team plans to conduct further research to investigate how maintaining normal testosterone levels may protect against aggressive prostate cancer.