

UTAH MEN'S HEALTH | Ahead of the Curve

Human Chorionic Gonadotropin (hCG) Hormone Therapy Patient Handout

Human Chorionic Gonadotropin (hCG) is a hormonal treatment that can be used to increase testosterone levels in men. It is a treatment option for men who are suffering from symptoms of low testosterone, or hypogonadism. hCG stimulates the body's own production of testosterone which is in contrast to direct testosterone replacement like testosterone injections and testosterone creams. Preserving the body's production of testosterone is particularly important for testicular function and fertility, as intratesticular testosterone is required to maintain testis size and sperm production. Research has found hCG to increase energy, libido (sex drive), strength, and mood in hypogonadic men.¹ This has been found in men who are hypogonadic for unknown causes as well as in men who have reduced testosterone production due to long-term exogenous testosterone supplementation. hCG can also be helpful in the infertile man. By increasing intratesticular testosterone, hCG has been found to increase the likelihood of sperm retrieval in men with non-obstructive azospermia, or lack of sperm in the ejaculate.² Goals for hCG therapy are highly individualized. Your treatment goals and dosing regimen were discussed during your office visit. Please contact your provider if you have additional questions or concerns about your new medication.

As with any medication, you may experience side effects with hCG therapy. Some of these are a result of increased testosterone levels while other symptoms may indicate more serious side effects.

Side effects may include:

- Pain at the injection site
- Changes in libido (sex drive)
- Changes in mood
- Changes in energy level
- Weight gain
- Increased hematocrit (red blood cell concentration) and risk for blood clot
- Prostatic enlargement

Please contact our offices at (801) 587-1454 if you are experiencing significant side effects. We may be able to alter the dose of this and/or other medications to limit these side effects. Additionally, please refer to your instructions for laboratory and office follow-up. Adherence to this follow-up schedule will help to identify and limit significant side effects. With further questions or concerns, you may contact your provider through the above number or through the MyChart communication system.

1. Kim E, Crosnoe L, Bar-Charma N, Khera M, Lipshultz L. The treatment of hypogonadism in men of reproductive age. *Fertility and Sterility*. 2013 Mar;99(3):718-24.
2. Shinjo E, Shiraishi K, Matsuyama H. The effect of human chorionic gonadotropin-based hormonal therapy on intratesticular testosterone levels and spermatogonial DNA synthesis in men with non-obstructive azospermia. *Andrology*. 2013 Aug;1(6):929-35.