



# Youth boosters

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*Naturopath Teresa Mitchell-Paterson has the best holistic health solutions.*  
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**L**IN 1964, just eight percent of the Australian population was aged 65 and over; projections to 2064 put that figure at 23 percent. So, you can expect to live much longer, and if you're 30, now is the time to get started. Why 30? Because this is the time when all the rejuvenating hormones decrease, a decline that continues to age 70, by which time those hormones are about 20 percent of what they were. Poor lifestyle and diet, stress, and hormonal imbalances accelerate this decline.

## 1. Increase testosterone

Women need this, too and it declines by up to three percent per year post age 30, meaning it's possible to hit low levels in your early 50s which causes metabolism, energy and sex drive to all drop. Most women aren't tested for testosterone, but I find that when we do test, levels are woefully low. Low testosterone comes with specific symptoms: lack of ambition and drive, slower recovery from exercise, declining eyesight, decreased muscle mass, increased fat mass, and slower mental function. Several factors conspire to reduce levels: high protein intake (the NHMRC's recommendation is between

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0.8 grams to 1.2 grams per kilogram of bodyweight per day for a person doing a lot of exercise. In meat, protein is 20 percent of the total weight, so 100 grams of meat yields 20 grams of protein. With legumes, protein content is between seven and 10 percent of the total weight); over-training; smoking (it destroys the leydig cells in the male hormonal system, and these cells are what produce testosterone); eating pure sugar (this leads to high insulin, and high insulin creates low testosterone); excess alcohol intake; and drinking more than three cups of caffeine a day.

## 2. Eat a healthy diet

The most effective diet to increase testosterone levels is the Mediterranean diet. The healthy fats and zinc in nuts, seeds and olive oil are used to make hormones, and whole grains and low-GI foods like these both boost and sustain our energy. Oats increase free testosterone levels because they contain beta-sisterol, which is a building block for free testosterone.

## 3. Drink red wine responsibly

By drinking a small amount – 150ml

– you'll benefit from the powerful anti-inflammatory flavonols myricetin and quercetin; the catechins and the epicatechins similar to those found in green tea; and the proanthocyanins and anthocyanins, including some pterostilbene resveratrol.

## 4. Exercise

Energy creates energy. Weight-bearing exercise increases bone mineralisation by stressing bones. Walking is good, but weight training is even better. Also effective is high intensity interval training (HIIT), which alternates short bursts of vigorous exercise with resting intervals. Perform these bursts for 15 minutes three times a day, as HIIT also temporarily boosts testosterone levels.

## 5. Add herbal help

Talk to a herbalist about adaptogenic herbs that provide energy support. All ginsengs aid in testosterone production, but it's essential to prescribe the right type and dose. Trials show beneficial effects of ginseng on heart health, diabetes and immunity and – in the ageing – cognition and athletic performance. ❄



## Safety first

Before embarking on a program to boost testosterone levels, it's important to have levels checked, because if you already have high testosterone this can cause fatigue. Having the sex hormone binding globulin (SHBG) checked at the same time ensures accurate assessment.

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