

When Men Grow Breasts
By
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Everybody knows it's normal for women to develop breasts, but increasingly men and even boys are developing breasts. This condition, called "gynecomastia", or enlargement of the male breast, occurs in about half the male population of North America at some stage of their lives, giving rise to a variety of questions, such as "Is this normal?" "What's going on?" "Is it dangerous?" "Is it reversible, and if so, how?" To address these questions one at a time is to shed light on this condition and also demonstrate how to prevent some major health problems.

First, "*Is this normal?*" The short answer is, no, not really, not for men. But it is a natural outcome of certain conditions which represent imbalances or toxicities.

Second, "*What's going on?*" Breast growth (as differentiated from merely fatty breasts) in men, just as that in women, is mediated by estrogen. When estrogen levels get too high in relation to androgens (male sex hormones) a process of "feminization" can occur. In other words, growth of breasts in men.

In a normally balanced body, the ratio of the production of testosterone to that of estradiol (the form of estrogen that's active in this situation) in tissues is approximately 100 units of testosterone to only 1 of estradiol. In the blood plasma, the normal ratio is around 300 units of testosterone to 1 of estradiol. Breast development in men is an the end result of an imbalance between these two hormones: too much estrogen and too little testosterone, a condition the late John Lee, M.D., labeled estrogen dominance, and which some medical literature refers to as "hyperestrinism" (meaning too much estrogen).

Third, "*Is it dangerous?*" The condition itself is not dangerous, meaning that it is a benign rather than malignant breast condition. Rather than being dangerous in itself, it is a precondition: an early warning sign that there's trouble ahead – namely from two main conditions.

First, the hormone estrogen creates a rich growing environment. And when all manner of bugs – viruses, yeasts, bacteria, parasites, fungi, etc - see an estrogen-rich environment, they want to move in and take up residence. This may be one of the reasons why the incidence of breast cancer is increasing in men. Get rid of the estrogen-rich environment, and these pests look for better places to live.

The second trouble ahead has to do with how an estrogen-rich environment increases blood clotting. Too much clotting lead to heart attacks, pulmonary emboli and strokes. Reduce the high estrogen levels and you reduce blood clotting, thus reducing the possibility that a clot could land in your heart, lungs, or brain.

Fourth, *“Is it reversible, and if so, how?”* In a word, yes, provided it is addressed soon enough. The breast changes that take place will gradually resolve, provided they are not too far advanced. In other words, if you or one of the boys or men in your life has this condition, the time to act is now. So, what to do?

All the actions that are effective to reverse this condition have to do with reducing estrogen levels and assisting the body to restore its normal androgen (male sex hormone or testosterone) levels. They include the following:

1. Probably the most important and simplest thing to do is to clean the liver. In clinical practice, the most common cause of too much estrogen is not overproduction, but the liver being too clogged to break down what’s being produced. Time and again I’ve seen men put on the right protocol for their liver and had their breast size reduce like putting a pin in a balloon. Fast!
2. Sometimes men are producing too little testosterone for a variety of reasons. Again, the biggest of these is a malfunctioning liver (the liver converts certain molecules into testosterone). In this case, nutrition and herbs that support the body to produce its own testosterone are valuable. Men can use progesterone cream to raise their testosterone levels because progesterone is converted to testosterone in the male body. Occasionally, testosterone cream may be helpful, but as it’s difficult to know when enough is too much, it’s better to support the body in making its own testosterone whenever possible.
3. Get rid of refined carbohydrates and sugars! These include what we usually think of as carbohydrates---pastas, refined breads and sweets, and also alcohols. Men who consume alcohol may unwittingly be setting up the process of feminization in their bodies. It is especially sad to see as the epidemic of obese young boys munch on candy bars and potato chips and guzzle sodas. During the time their sex organs should be growing, they are growing breasts instead. High carbohydrate consumption leads to cellular resistance to testosterone, so that even if the body is producing enough testosterone, the cells can’t respond to it. The solution is to increase protein intake and drastically reduce carbohydrates.
4. Avoid exposure to external substances that increase estrogen levels or increase them in relation to testosterone. These include:
 - xenoestrogens (environmental estrogen mimics that function like estrogens in the body, but are far more potent than those produced by the body, namely pesticides
 - drugs such as diethylstilbestrol, birth control pills, digitalis, estrogen-containing cosmetics, estrogen-contaminated foods, phytoestrogens, gonadotropins, clomiphene, ketoconazole, metronidazole, alkylating agents, cisplatin, spironolactone, cimetidine, flutamide, etomidate, busulfan, isoniazid, methyl dopa, tricyclic antidepressants, penicillamine, diazepam, omeprazole, calcium channel blockers, angiotensin-converting enzyme inhibitors, marijuana, heroin, finasteride.

These substances are double trouble because they both increase estrogen in relation to testosterone and clog the liver.

Luckily breast growth in boys and men is an obvious early warning sign, which, when heeded, can prevent immune disturbances, male breast cancers, strokes, heart attacks and clots in the lungs. If this is happening in your body, contact your qualified health practitioner to help you discover the right diet and supplements to support your body in reversing this condition.

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