



BREAST CANCER IN MEN: CULTURAL STIGMA

Alright, guys. It's the 21st century and some health conditions seem to still be taboo. Since breast cancer is much more prevalent in women it is often considered a "female" problem and something that men should not talk about. After decades of denial, women are finally benefiting from the reduced stigma associated with carcinoma of the breast. This is evident in the decreasing mortality rate despite the fact that the number of new cases rises each year. By demanding effective detection techniques and treatments and having the courage to set their own embarrassment aside and speak up, women are living longer and fuller lives as breast cancer survivors instead of statistics on someone's mortality chart. So here is an overview of how breast cancer affects men, what to look for, and what to do if you find that you have risk factors or symptoms for breast cancer. Normally this is where the disclaimer goes, but I don't feel like wasting the ink. If you want to know more, do some research.

Breast tissue and related glandular structures are equally present in both boys and girls. In girls, the higher estrogen and related female hormone levels during puberty continuing into adulthood stimulate these structures to develop and grow until they are able to produce milk. In over half of young men going through puberty, some swelling and hardness of the nipples is usually apparent as the breasts begin to develop, but because of the lower estrogen levels in young men, this development almost always halts quickly. In a very small number of men in their late teens, this breast development continues leading to a condition called gynecomastia. Now here's a very important point. It is almost always advisable for a man with advanced gynecomastia to have the breast tissue removed because breast tissue is very sensitive to testosterone and will have a high risk of forming cancer. I have personally experienced this condition during my second growth spurt in my late 20's. My doctor and I closely monitored the growth which stopped fairly quickly so I did not have the surgery. Nevertheless, my risk for breast cancer went up because the breast tissue volume increased slightly.

According to the American Journal of Epidemiology, "an increased risk of breast cancer was most strongly associated with undescended testes and was also related to orchietomy, orchitis [inflammation of the testes secondary to infection], testicular injury, late puberty, and infertility; and a decreasing trend in risk was observed with an increasing number of children. Relative risk estimates were also elevated in relation to a history of high blood cholesterol, rapid weight gain, benign breast conditions [including gynecomastia], and possibly obesity. These findings suggest that breast cancer in men develops in response to androgen deficiency associated with testicular dysfunction and under conditions associated with excess estrogen. Risk was also found to be elevated in men with a history of amphetamine use, diabetes, and cigar smoking." [i] Men with these risk factors should check their breasts frequently due to the higher chance that they will have cancer in their lifetime.

It's important to set shame aside. Men with breast cancer have done nothing wrong, are no less masculine, and do not want or deserve pity. Men deserve good health care just as much as women do. Remember that heart attacks in women are...

...often misdiagnosed because heart attacks were seen as an exclusively male problem in the past. Now we know that's not true and women are surviving heart attacks more often now due to better awareness and earlier diagnosis and treatment.

"Some [men] appeared to use avoidance as a coping strategy. The men were very often excluded from family conversations about breast cancer." [ii] Both women and men feel uncomfortable about certain subjects and unknowingly perpetuate the stigma by excluding each other from discussions about health issues. While increased awareness, diagnostic techniques, and treatment in women is reducing mortality rates in women, breast cancer in men is often ignored or caught late increasing the mortality rate.

Men do not feel the need to check their breast tissue for lumps because breasts are not usually visible on a man's chest, but if you feel through the nipple most men can detect the small tubules and nodes that are the undeveloped breast. At least once every 6 months, men and women should check not only their breasts but their entire body for unfamiliar lumps or irregularities. If you find a lump, check that area frequently. If the lump persists for more than a week or two, go to your doctor and have it checked out. If caught early and removed, carcinomas can be cured with today's technology and medicines. Early detection and proper medical treatment can mean the difference between life or death. It really is that serious. I recently found out that a colleague of mine is going to die because she sought herbal therapy when she found a lump in her breast. After more than 6 months of teas and meditation, the lump grew and finally metastasized and is now in her lungs, kidneys, liver, and brain. This is often what happens with men. Even if they find a lump, they will often remain in denial for months as the cancer progresses. Cancer does not go away if ignored but it can be cured if you take action.

- W. T. Loesch III, Vice-President

i American Journal of Epidemiology Vol. 135, No. 7: 734-748, Copyright © 1992 by The Johns Hopkins University School of Hygiene and Public Health

ii Journal of Medical Genetics, 1998, Vol 35, 739-744

HAIR LOSS TYPES: SUDDEN VS. GRADUAL

Almost everyone experiences a decrease in hair density as they age. Most people will begin to notice this gradual thinning effect only after it has been going on for 10-20 years. When they are young, boys and girls usually have thick, healthy hair that is growing near the scalp's maximum output. This is encouraged by rising hormone levels as we approach puberty and continues into early adulthood. During this time the number of hairs coming in equals or exceeds the number falling out leading to an increase in hair density. As hormone levels fall to healthy adult levels suitable for successful reproduction, the signal telling the follicles to grow also decreases. For most, this leads to a condition where the number of hairs growing in drops below the number falling out. If this were a bank account, you'd eventually start bouncing checks. Since the difference is usually insignificant to a 20 year-old no one pays attention or does anything about it.

After another 30 years of this continuous deficit, many people first begin to notice their hair loss when they are able to see their scalp through the hair. At this point 50-70% of the hairs have been lost. Since this also coincides with middle-age, this is the time most people decide to do something about their hair loss. Using hormone therapies like Propecia® or Minoxidil are options, but remember that nature does it best. Your body is doing what it is supposed to do. When we start trying to artificially manipulate hormone levels even the best treatment will probably have some side-effects. These hormones often cause moodiness, weight gain, lethargy, and with Minoxidil some people experience headaches or changes in vision. Other therapies include deep-cleansers and scalp stimulators like the Loesch® programs.

Based on clinical studies the Loesch® Hair Growth System is effective for about 90% of the people who use it as directed. Unfortunately, there is one type of hair loss that is untreatable. Sometimes when a boy reaches the end of puberty around 18-23 years old, his levels of estrogen and progesterin fall as they are supposed to, but his level of testosterone remains high. Along with other factors, this can cause the follicles in the "male pattern baldness" areas to suddenly switch off. These men experience rapid, pronounced hair loss and will very often be nearly bald within a year or two. In these cases, even hair transplant therapy will not help because all of the follicles are affected. The ones that are still growing around the perimeter of the head are programmed to fall out eventually so moving them to an area with reduced blood flow like the crown will probably be the trigger that makes them shut down. My advice to these men: save your money and be stylish. Shave it.

- W. T. Loesch III, Vice-President

FEATURED PRODUCT

Saw Palmetto Extract (DHT Inhibitor)

Saw Palmetto extract has been used for centuries to treat a variety of health problems. It contains beneficial fatty-acids as well as phytosterols that inhibit the action of DHT on the hair follicles reducing and preventing long-term damage to the hair bulb that produces the hair shaft.



800.231.7157

BLOCKING DHT: ONE ANTIADROGENIC METHOD

At Loesch Laboratory Consultants, Inc., we are constantly monitoring the cutting edge of research and clinical trials looking for things that we think might help our clients. We're not looking for hype, we're looking for things that are actually effective. It's a rare thing to find something that is real and not some marketing executive's attempt to confuse the public with a little data and a lot of speculation. We've recently found something worthy of our attention.

One of the ways to treat hair loss is to try to block the effect of DHT (Dihydroxytestosterone) on the follicles. DHT can switch hair follicles off permanently with long-term exposure and is present in all men at level indirectly related to testosterone levels. Keep in mind that extreme treatments can come with extreme side effects. Propecia® is a drug that does a very good job of blocking DHT, but its side effects are similar to female premenstrual syndrome because the drug is a feminizing hormone. We don't usually recommend using hormones until everything else has failed and a client is willing to accept the risks involved with hormone use.

After extensive research, we have added Saw Palmetto Extract to our product line. Saw Palmetto Extract contains phytosterols and other antiandrogenic compounds and best of all, it's a natural product rather than some strange synthetic chemical. Saw Palmetto successfully inhibits the action of DHT on hair follicles, but not to such a degree that it would cause side effects like Propecia®. Saw Palmetto has been studied by several reputable groups and has been found to have other beneficial effects stemming from the same antiandrogenic action that prevents hair loss. The same hormones and hormone by-products that are harmful to hair follicles are also harmful to the male prostate gland. The Journal of the American Medical Association reports that Saw Palmetto helps reduce benign prostatic hyperplasia (enlarged prostate). When used as directed, this natural compound promotes normal healthy function of the urinary, reproductive, and digestive tracts in both men and women. If you're looking for a way to naturally reduce hair loss, consider adding Saw Palmetto Extract to your daily regimen.

NUTRITIONAL APPROACHES TO HEALTH

Dr. Bruce West, a founding member of the National Academy of Research Biochemists, has been writing articles about our hair loss prevention and treatment techniques in Health Alert for decades (www.healthalert.com). He has the same approach to medicine as we do at Loesch Labs. Dr. West is an expert in nutrition, pain management, kinesiology, and rehabilitation and bases his treatment on the premise that to get well you have to cure the underlying medical problem, not just treat the symptoms. [i]

At Loesch Labs, we don't bother with magic pills or once-every-90-day treatments that only give short-term results. Chemicals that stick to hair making it look thicker do nothing to treat the underlying problem of hair loss and can actually make it worse by causing long-term damage to the follicles. Hair loss is most often caused by a combination of factors such as age, heredity, seborrheic dermatitis, sebaceous buildup in the follicles, poor nutrition, and environmental damage. In this article, I'd like to focus on the nutritional aspect of hair loss.

Over the last 57 years we have seen how important proper diet can be, not just for treating hair loss but for improving overall health and increasing the quality of our clients' lives. We have carefully selected some dietary supplements to help our clients maximize their results. Dr. West has had excellent results over the past 30 years simply by adjusting patients' diets to correct deficiencies that often lead to serious imbalances over time. For example a person who eats only fried foods and avoids vegetables will eventually deplete their body of vital nutrients like beta carotene, Vitamin C, D, and E, and other compounds needed for healthy living. Adjusting your diet to a healthier one can help, but alone, that is often not enough to cure a given condition. Adding dietary supplements to make up for the nutrients you don't receive in your diet is very important. If you don't know what you're missing from your diet then a multivitamin like Centrum would be a good thing to start with. As you become more familiar with the foods you eat and what nutrients...

...they contain, you can then begin to better understand what is missing and take more of those specific supplements. For example, anemia is not always caused by an iron deficiency, but if you're anemic it would probably be a good idea to take an iron supplement just to help make your recovery easier.

This approach is based on some sound advice about healthcare: "Become an expert on your own condition." If a person is diagnosed by a doctor with acute functional dyspepsia, they can either trust their doctor to tell them everything they need to do and to make decisions for them...oh yes...and never make a mistake; or they can go to the Internet or the local library and learn everything they can about their condition. Acute Functional Dyspepsia (AKA: heartburn) can be caused by many things and now there are many ways to treat it including changes in diet, antacids, prescription drugs, exercise, relaxation techniques and more. The point is, you are the one who must live in your body. Don't trust it to anyone else. Double check what your doctor tells you and learn about your own condition so you and your doctor can make decisions together. Your doctor is a highly paid consultant who is dedicated to improving your quality of life.

Now a note of caution. Dietary supplements are just that...supplements. They are not meant to replace a healthy diet or to let you maintain poor eating habits. Also, it is possible to overdose on many types of supplements. The water-soluble vitamins are very safe. Supplements like Vitamin C can be taken in very high doses without much risk because they are easily flushed out by the kidneys, but certain vitamins and minerals can make you sick if you take too much. Prenatal vitamins are often recommended for patients who need additional supplements, but these should be taken with caution. Oil-soluble vitamins like prenatal vitamins, Vitamin E (in oil), and Vitamin A Palmitate can build up in your system causing joint pain, soreness, and flu-like symptoms. Always consult your doctor or a licensed nutritionist before beginning anything too extreme.

i. HEALTH ALERT © 2007, 100 Wilson Road - Suite 110, Monterey, CA, 93940, (831) 372-2103

CAN STYLING PRODUCTS LEAD TO HAIR LOSS?

For Women

It naturally follows that you have to have hair to have a hairstyle. Unfortunately, many people do not notice gradual hair loss until they can see their scalp through their hair. A lot of loss has occurred by then, but much of the hair can be recovered if treated properly. For women this poses a very specific problem. Long hair is difficult to deal with so many women wash their hair only once or twice a week. If they notice hair loss, they will often jump to the wrong conclusion...that they are washing their hair too much. Actually, the opposite is true. Daily hair washing is not just good hygiene, it promotes a healthy scalp. Infrequent washing leads to a buildup of sebum which, over time, can seriously damage the follicles leading to irreversible hair loss. Many women who call our office complain that their infrequent washing leads to a sulfur smell. This is often the result of allowing sebum to build up to a toxic level.

Another problem faced by those who color their hair is the effect of harsh chemicals on the scalp. Frequent chemical treatments can damage the scalp and the follicles if not performed properly. Only professionals should apply bleaching treatments, relaxers, straighteners, and level 3 hair colors because they can protect the scalp as they work. It is very difficult to do this properly on yourself. Women will often think that less-frequent washings will make their hair color last longer, and it will last a bit longer, but at what cost? The long-term damage the follicles will suffer as a result of being bathed in rancid sebum all that time could lead to the loss of more hair later in life.

As a company offering deep-cleansing scalp treatments, we always stress how important it is to remove sebum. Why? Because as sebum reacts with air it turns rancid and gradually more toxic during the day. Almost all natural oils have this tendency to rancify. That's why olive oil, jojoba oil, canola oil, and others can't be left out too long. Many products contain these natural oils which, when applied to hair can help lock in moisture and give hair a shiny quality. Unfortunately, if they get onto the scalp these natural oils will oxidize just as sebum does becoming toxic to the follicles. If you are using a product containing natural oils on your hair it is even more important than ever to use a deep-cleansing treatment every day...or at least every other day...to prevent this toxic buildup. Excessive use of styling waxes and pomades without proper daily cleaning can clog follicles with rancid waxy residue and increase your hair loss rate.

For Men

Many men with very short hair or shaved heads think that it's ok to use bar soap on the scalp. Not so. The scalp is structured differently from other types of skin and has different needs. Almost all bar soaps contain detergents that are drying to the scalp and they often contain deodorants for the skin which make the scalp even more dry. Even if you have no hair above the surface, you still have follicles below the surface of the scalp. Use shampoo even on a shaved head to avoid over-drying the scalp. If you want to let your hair grow out in the future, you'll do well to take care of the follicles even while you're shaving your head.

While many men shave their heads to hide hair loss, other men who shave or cut a full head of hair very close may be allowing hair loss to progress invisibly. This might be a convenient and trendy style but don't sacrifice your ability to grow a full head of hair just because you can't see it right now. As we age, the number of hairs coming in decreases and the number of hairs falling out increases. It's important to continue your cleaning regimen to keep these follicles "awake" as long as possible.

Men often use wax-based styling products on short hair. They are convenient and make it easy to keep your hair in place all day, but they have a drawback. As sebum comes out of the scalp and begins to mix with these waxes, its thickness increases making it much more difficult to remove it. Regular shampoos do a poor job of cleaning this sort of pasty sebum. Make sure you are using a combination of products that can remove this buildup. Both Loesch® shampoos (Original Special Shampoo and Professional Restore & Thicken Shampoo) are specifically designed to remove the worst sebum buildup including waxy residues.

- W. T. Loesch III, Vice-President

SUGGEST A TOPIC FOR THE NEXT NEWSLETTER

To suggest a topic for a future issue of this newsletter, send an email to sales@loeschlab.com or send a letter to the address below. While we can't review every topic in this publication, we welcome your input and advice.

PUBLISHED FROM OUR NEW LOCATION

Loesch Laboratory Consultants, Inc
4311 South Drive
Houston, Texas 77053-4820

Phone: 281.835.8729 Toll-Free: 800.231.7157
Internet: <http://www.loeschlab.com>
Email: sales@loeschlab.com

EARLY RELEASES BY EMAIL

You can receive an early release of the next newsletter by sending an email request to sales@loeschlab.com. You'll receive the next issue before it's printed. Keep up-to-date on informative articles and important health issues by requesting early releases today.