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Testosterone therapy postprostate cancer

DEAR DR. ROACH: I had my prostate removed for prostate cancer in 2009 at age 70. I waited until now to start taking testosterone to feel better, because I was feeling very listless, with no sex drive. My cancer surgeon and urologist approved, and they are monitoring me every 60 to 90 days.

It is working very nicely. The injections are monthly. For many years I could not get to sleep, so for the past three years I have been using zolpidem 10 mg, and two months ago, I reduced it gradually to 5 mg. Is the testosterone responsible for my sleeping better, and can I gradually decrease the dose to stop it completely? Do you have any suggestions in addition, to help this effort? I am very physically active with aerobics and weights. - D.D.

ANSWER: First off, let me comment on taking testosterone with a history of prostate cancer. You probably do have an increased risk of prostate cancer recurrence due to testosterone treatment, but clearly your doctors and you have discussed it and they are watching you carefully. I have always believed that sometimes-risky treatments can be appropriate as long as you understand the risk, and it may be reasonable to take the testosterone given the symptoms vou were having.

The effects of testosterone on sleep are variable. Sleep apnea (not breathing properly during sleep, often but not always related to being overweight) may get worse for some men taking testosterone. However, many men report an improvement in sleep quality, so it is possible that the testosterone is helping you.

As far as zolpidem goes, I strongly believe that most people should use the least amount of sleeping medication possible. I think it would be a good idea to try to get off it completely. Zolpidem, like virtually all sleeping medications, increases risk of falls, as well as having other possible side effects.

DEAR DR. ROACH: After an

extreme case of vertigo, including vomiting and being taken to the emergency room, my unsteadiness remains. Over a week later, I need to use a walker to be safe. I am 79, and this happened once four years ago, but without the aftereffects. Any suggestions? — M.W.

ANSWER: The major causes of vertigo, acute labyrinthitis and benign paroxysmal positional vertigo, often continue to produce attacks that tend to lessen in severity up to a month after the initial severe attack. A walker may be a useful precaution while recovering. If the problem persists, I strongly recommend a visit with a physical and/or occupational therapist for vestibular rehabilitation, which is physical therapy to restore balance. It also might be necessary to revisit your doctor to make sure of the original diagnosis.

The booklet on vertigo explains this disruptive condition in detail and outlines its treatment. Readers can order a copy by writing: Dr. Roach — No. 801W, Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475. Enclose a check or money order (no cash) for \$4.75 U.S./\$6 Canada with the recipient's printed name and address. Please allow four weeks for delivery.

King Crossword

36

ACROSS Ice cream flavor, for 15

short Greek mountain

Raced 12 Head light?

Sister Superhero garb

Powerful stick Vicinity

Like some desserts Mideast nation

"- the fields we go"

Skillet 24 Energizes, with "up"

Geometric 401(k) alter-

native Leave unpaid 56

Charged bit Type of parking

38 Ceraceous 100 square meters

Lemieux milieu

Horoscope illustration Wine glass

Egyptian bird

50 Floral garland 52 "Arrivederci" Take a stance 53 54 Past

55 Roundish do Spotted Announcer

Pardo

58 Dissolve

53

DOWN

Restaurant employee

Corridor

- podrida Universe Worldwide crimefighting

Opposed Sacred beetle 38 Irrational distrust Duel tool

50

54

group

Press for

payment

10 11 Bargain 19 Exist Hot tub 21 24

Spot on a die 25 Geological period 26

30 Bagel topping 51

for short 43 Reed instru-Eden

44 Dressed 46 Biography Count coun-Dumbfound terpart 48 Hit the horn Faith

55

58

36

37

31 Whatever

number

Meadow

Source of

streaming

Postal codes,

video

Biz abbr.

ld partner

Out of bed

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28

29

SALOME'S STARS

ARIES (March 21 to April 19) You're moving from a relatively stable situation to one that appears to be laced with perplexity. Be patient. You'll eventually get answers to help clear up the confusion around you.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) A vexing situation tempts you to rush to set it all straight. But it's best to let things sort themselves out so that you can get a better picture of the challenge you're facing.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20) Financial matters could create some confusion, especially with a torrent of advice pouring in from several sources. Resist acting on emotion and wait for the facts to emerge.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22) That goal you've set is still in sight and is

still in reach. Stay with the course that you're on. Making too many shifts in direction now could create another set of problems.

LEO (July 23 to August 22) It might be time to confront a trouble-making associate and demand some answers. But be prepared for some surprises that could lead you to make a change in some long-standing plans.

VIRGO (August 23 to September 22) Congratulations. You're making great progress in sorting out all that confusion that kept you from making those important decisions. You're on your way now.

LIBRA (September 23 to October 22) A difficult experience begins to ease. That's the good news. The not-sogood news is a possible complication that could prolong the problem awhile

longer. SCORPIO (October 23 November 21) Your self-confidence gets a much-needed big boost as you start to unsnarl that knotty financial problem. Expect some help from a sur-

prising source.

focus on the positive.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22 to December 21) Congratulations. Any lingering negative aftereffects from that not-so-pleasant workplace situation are all but gone. It's time now to

CAPRICORN (December 22 to January 19) Your self-confidence grows stronger as you continue to take more control of your life. Arrange for some well-earned fun and relaxation with someone special.

AQUARIUS (January 20 to February 18) As usual, you've been concerned more about the needs of others than your own. You need to take time for yourself so that you can replenish all that spent energy.

PISCES (February 19 to March 20) Stronger planetary influences indicate a growing presence of people eager to help you navigate through the rough seas that might mark your career course.

King Crossword **Answers**

Solution time: 25 mins.







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