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Breakthrough in the treatment of male hypogonadism, a major cause of erectile dysfunction

*Sexual Dysfunction affects over 152 million men worldwide
Hypogonadism is the most common cause of Erectile Dysfunction (ED), affecting 1 in 6 men between the ages of 20 and 75*



Global pharmaceutical leader Bayer HealthCare held a press conference discussing the new long-acting hormone therapy injection in Egypt, representing a breakthrough in the treatment of hypogonadism (testosterone deficiency in men). A leading cause of sexual dysfunction, hypogonadism affects 152 million men worldwide. The conference was led by Andrology professors from Egypt and the United Kingdom representing the Egyptian Society of Andrology and the Arab Association for Sexual Health.

"Hypogonadism, also known as testosterone or male hormone deficiency, cannot - in general - be considered a disease; it is a physiological symptom bound to occur after a certain age, similar to menopause in women," said Dr Mohamed Farid, Professor and Head of the Andrology Department at Cairo University, and Head of the Egyptian Society of Andrology.

"One of hypogonadism's main causes is natural ageing, where testosterone levels drop at a rate of 1% annually after the age of 30. Loss of libido and erectile dysfunction are one of the most important symptoms of hypogonadism in addition to sleep disruption, laziness, general physical weakness, weak muscles, obesity, belly fat accumulation, body hair loss, skin changes, low bone density and mineral levels."

Dr Bahgat Metawee, Professor of Andrology and Genito-Urethral surgery at Cairo University, and former Head of the Egyptian Society of Andrology, outlined treatments available for hypogonadism and emphasised the benefits offered by the new drug. "Testosterone replacement therapy, is the main treatment and is available in various medical products. Using tablets is not optimal as the drug is not fully absorbed, transdermal testosterone patches may cause skin irritation, and intramuscular injections taken every one to three weeks may cause testosterone levels to fluctuate thereby undermining efficacy. The latest testosterone drug, a long-acting injection, is the first of its kind specifically designed to treat hypogonadism. What makes this new drug more effective and convenient is its ability to sustain consistent hormone levels, with a testosterone injection required once every three months only."

Dr Geoffrey Hackett, Professor of Urology and Sexual Medicine Consultant at the University of Bedfordshire in London, UK said: "Current international guidelines recommend that men with type 2 diabetes, morbid obesity or sexual dysfunction, as well as those taking chronic painkillers, should be routinely screened for low testosterone and offered treatment when low levels are found. Oral testosterone is not regarded as safe for long-term use and men often forget to apply gels or experience skin rashes or irritation and discontinue treatment. Short-acting injections are unacceptable for long-term use and produce swings in blood levels and offer poor symptom control. The long-acting depot injection of testosterone undecanoate provides sustained levels of testosterone within the normal range over a three month period. Patients are therefore confident that they are receiving an effective dose over a sustained period. Long-acting depot injections of testosterone undecanoate have rapidly become the first line treatment for testosterone deficiency in European Clinical Practice."

"Hypogonadism is the most common cause of Erectile Dysfunction (ED) which affects nearly 152 million men worldwide, or around 16% (1 in 6) of men aged between 20 and 75. ED rates are expected to rise to 322 million cases in 2025," said Dr Mohamed Farid. "Despite the widespread incidence of the disease, the latest statistics show that only about 15%-20% of ED cases are treated. The largest study conducted on men's lifestyle and sexual behaviours revealed a strong correlation between ED and depression. Men suffering from ED may experience a loss of self-respect and self-worth, in addition to tension in interpersonal relationships. 25% of men suffering from ED have reported feelings of anxiety and depression."

Dr Bahgat Metawee said: "The testosterone hormone in men goes through 3 different phases. The first occurs during foetal development, where testosterone is responsible for the development of the reproductive organs. The second phase covers puberty (ages 14 to 20), with the hormone regulating all changes taking place during that period, including bone and muscle building as well as sexual drive and capacity. During the 3rd phase - at around age 40 - some men may experience a significant drop in testosterone levels, with an ongoing decrease that can reach up 30% or 40% by age 60. In such cases, and after ascertaining prostate health and measuring blood testosterone levels, it is recommended to use long-acting testosterone injections as a safe treatment option."