

Testosterone Gel

Fact Sheet

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What is Testosterone gel?

Testosterone gel has been used as a priming agent prior to IVF cycles. Recent research suggests that testosterone gel may have a significant impact on the fertility rate of women with poor ovarian reserve and poor response to IVF cycles (Saharkhiz et al., 2018).

How does Testosterone gel work?

It has been suggested that androgens play a critical role in follicular growth. The addition of androgen during the early follicular phase might have a beneficial effect on the number of small antral follicles and improve the ovarian sensitivity to FSH.

A 2015 Cochrane review found moderate quality evidence for an improved live-birth rate when pre-treatment with testosterone was compared with placebo or no treatment (OR 2.60, 95% CI 1.3 to 5.2; four RCTs, N=345). However, there is insufficient evidence to draw any conclusions about the safety of testosterone (Nagels et al., 2015).

How to use Testosterone gel.

Instructions for use of Testosterone gel 1% metered dose pump transdermal gel, 12.5mg/actuation:

- ✘ Testosterone gel has been proposed as pre-treatment to both GnRH-agonist or GnRH-antagonist IVF stimulation cycles.
- ✘ Use for 21 days prior to FSH start.
- ✘ Use 1 actuation (pump) daily, applied to front of thighs in thin layer. It is not necessary to rub it on the skin. Allow drying for at least 5 minutes before dressing. Avoid the area coming into contact with other persons, particularly children, by covering with clothing. Wash hands with soap and water after applications. Avoid showering, bathing or swimming within 4 hours of application.

What are some risks of using Testosterone gel?

- ✘ Reaction at the application site, erythema, and dry skin may be experienced.
- ✘ Androgenic side-effects may be experienced, including (but not limited to): increased body and facial hair growth, acne, clitoral enlargement and voice-deepening.
- ✘ Testosterone may present a teratogenic risk if inadvertently used or continued in pregnancy, with a potential adverse virilising effects on the fetus.
- ✘ It must not be used in pregnant women under any circumstances.

References

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