

# Focus on Health

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## Alternative Testing

There is now an alternative to sigmoidoscopy, colonoscopy, and virtual colonoscopy to screen for colon cancer. The test, called "Insure", costs \$60. It is an immunochemical test for human hemoglobin in stool, and requires no special diet. The directions are simple and can be done by the patient at home and mailed directly to the lab. I now offer it to all patients over age 50, as I offer a blood test yearly (CA27.29) to screen for breast cancer rather than yearly mammography.

## Things You Need to Know

1.) A society wide reduction of hemoglobin A1C, a measure of blood sugar levels, of 0.1% has the potential to reduce the total U.S. mortality by up to 6%.  
2). Within 6-12 months of discontinuing hormone replacement, more that 96% of postmenopausal women will show altered vaginal pH, a marker for tissue change and its associated genital atrophy, leading to rapidly occurring dyspareunia (painful intercourse).  
3). Although cardiovascular disease is still the leading cause of death overall for people of any age in this country, cancer is now the leading cause of death prior to age 85. Chemotherapy and radiation, which is the standard treatment for metastatic cancer, may delay death, but is harmful to the body's immune system and does not make sense as a way to cure metastatic disease.

4) For patients whose LDL cholesterol levels are over 60, or C Reactive protein levels are over 2, the rate of recurrent cardiovascular adverse events (heart attack, stroke, aneurysm rupture) is more than double the rate of the average population.  
5). Emergency contraception (also known as the "morning-after pill") is not an abortifacient. It simply prevents conception by a combination of delaying ovulation and a local effect on the endometrium which prevents fertilization.  
6). For optimal protection against atrial fibrillation and emboli, people can use both an anticoagulant such as Coumadin and an antiplatelet medication such as baby aspirin. This treatment minimizes the risk of bleeding problems.

## Too Little

## or Too Much

Several patients have requested that I describe the most frequent symptoms associated with having a free estradiol which is below the normal range, and conversely those associated with being above the normal range (which is 0.5 to 1.5 picograms per milliliter). Normal free testosterone levels are between 2.2 and 7.2 picograms per ml.

### Low estradiol (estrogen):

1. Sleep disruption – wakes up 3-4 in AM
2. Headaches
3. Mean
4. Teary
5. Exhausted

### High estradiol:

1. Can't get to sleep at night
2. Breast soreness
3. Fluid retention
4. Feels wired

### Low testosterone:

1. No libido
2. Difficulty reaching orgasm
3. Low energy and stamina
4. Bad mood

### High testosterone:

1. Hair loss
2. Aggressive
3. Weight gain
4. Increased facial hair

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