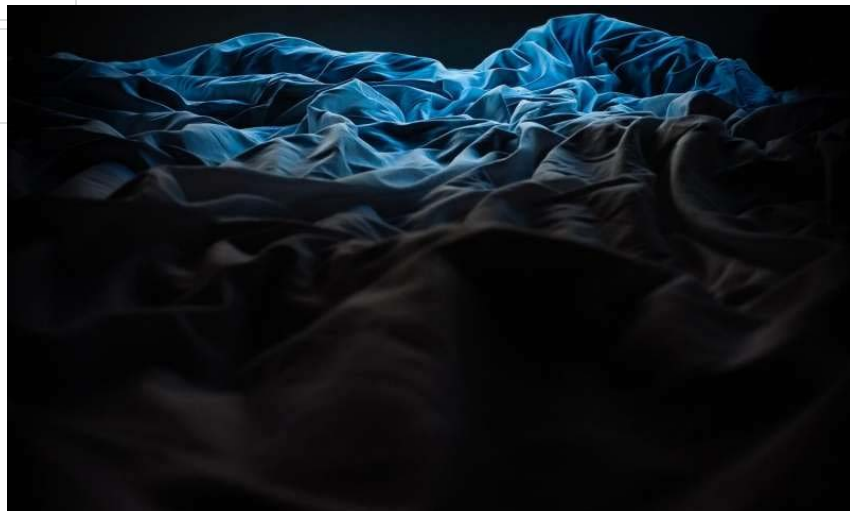


Study shows lack of interest in sex successfully treated by exposure to bright light

September 19, 2016

Print



Credit: CC0 Public Domain

Exposure to bright light increases testosterone levels and leads to greater sexual satisfaction in men with low sexual desire. These are the results of a pilot randomised placebo-controlled trial, presented at the ECNP conference in Vienna.

Facebook advertisement with the text 'facebook' and a green button that says '今すぐ無料登録' (Sign up now for free).

Low sexual desire affects significant numbers of men after the age of 40, with studies finding that up to 25% of men report problems, depending on age and other factors. Scientists had previously noted that sexual interest varies according to the seasons, prompting the idea that levels of ambient light may contribute to sexual desire.

Now a group of scientists from the University of Siena in Italy have tested sexual and physiological responses to bright light. They found that regular, early-morning, use of a light box – similar to those used to combat Seasonal Affective Disorder – led both to increased testosterone levels and greater reported levels of sexual satisfaction.

The scientists, led by Professor Andrea Fagiolini, took recruited 38 men who had been attending the Urology Department of the University of Siena following a diagnosis of hypoactive sexual desire disorder or sexual arousal disorder – both conditions which are characterised by a lack of interest in sex. Each man underwent an initial evaluation to determine the baseline level of interest in sex, with testosterone levels also being measured.

The researchers then divided the men into two groups. One group received regular treatment with a specially adapted light box, the control (placebo) group was treated via a light box which had been adapted to give out significantly less light. Both groups were treated early in the morning, with treatment lasting half an hour per day. After two weeks of treatment or placebo, the researchers retested sexual satisfaction and testosterone levels.

Professor Fagiolini said: "We found fairly significant differences between those who received the active light treatment, and the controls. Before treatment, both groups averaged a sexual satisfaction score of around 2 out of 10, but after treatment the group exposed to the bright light was scoring sexual satisfaction scores of around 6.3 – a more than 3-fold increase on the scale we used. In contrast, the control group only showed an average score of around 2.7 after treatment".

日本株続落?これから要注意

次の株価10倍、ストップ高候補銘柄を提供 豊富な情報、正確、早さが定評/無料 Go to p.medieus.jp



The researchers also found that testosterone levels increased in men who had been given active light treatment. The average testosterone levels in the control group showed no significant change over the course of the treatment – it was around 2.3 ng/ml at both the beginning and the end of the experiment. However, the group given active treatment showed an increase from around 2.1 ng/ml to 3.6 ng/ml after two weeks.

Professor Fagiolini explained: "The increased levels of testosterone explain the greater reported sexual satisfaction. In the Northern hemisphere, the body's Testosterone production naturally declines from November through April, and then rises steadily through the spring and summer with a peak in October. You see the effect of this in reproductive rates, with the month of June showing the highest rate of conception. The use of the light box really mimics what nature does.

We believe that there may be several explanations to explain the underlying mechanism. For instance, light therapy inhibits the pineal gland in the centre of the brain and this may allow the production of more testosterone, and there are probably other hormonal effects. We're not yet at the stage where we can recommend this as a clinical treatment. Even at that stage, there will be a few patients – for example those with an eye condition or anyone taking medicines which affect light sensitivity (some antidepressants, and some antibiotics, for example) – who would need to take special care.

Advertisement for 'activa' Contract Research Organization Latin America, featuring the text 'BOUTIQUE CRO' and a large 'CLICK FOR MORE INFO' button.

Table with 3 columns: Featured, Last comments, Popular. It lists various news items with their dates and comment counts.

more »

However if this treatment can be shown to work in a larger study, then light therapy may offer a way forward. It's a small study, so for the moment we need to treat it with appropriate caution".

The researchers note that there are several possible reasons for lack of sexual desire. Treatment depends on the underlying cause, but current therapeutic options include testosterone injections, antidepressants, and other medications. The researchers believe that light therapy may offer the benefits of medication, but with fewer side effects.

Commenting, Professor Eduard Vieta (Chair of the Department of Psychiatry and Psychology at the University of Barcelona Hospital Clinic and treasurer of the ECNP) said: "Light therapy has been used successfully in the past to treat some forms of depression and this study suggests now that it may also work to treat low sexual desire in men. The mechanism of action appears to be related to the increase of testosterone levels. Before this kind of treatment, which is likely to be better tolerated than pharmacological therapy, gets ready for its routine use, there are many steps to be implemented, including replication of the results in a larger, independent study, and verifying whether the results are long-lasting and not just short-term".

**Explore further:** Testosterone treatment improves sexual activity, walking and mood in older men

**More information:** Abstract; P.4.b.010 Light therapy as a treatment for sexual dysfunction; focus on testosterone levels (Monday 19th Sept, 12.15-13.45); D. Koukouna, L. Bossini, I. Casolaro, C. Caterini, A. Fagiolini.; University of Siena, Department of Molecular Medicine, Siena, Italy. University of Siena Medical Centre - Azienda Ospedaliera Universitaria Senese - Department of Mental Health; Presented at the 29th annual ECNP Congress, 17th to 20th September, Vienna.

**Provided by:** [European College of Neuropsychopharmacology](#)

18 shares

[feedback to editors](#)

## 日本株続落？これから要注意

次の株価10倍、ストップ高候補銘柄を提供 豊富な情報、正確、早さが定評／無料

### Related Stories

## Testosterone treatment improves sexual activity, walking and mood in older men

February 17, 2016

As men age, their testosterone levels decrease, but prior studies of the effects of administering testosterone to older men have been inconclusive. Now, research shows that testosterone treatment for men over 65 improves ...

## Topical Rx restores testosterone levels to normal in men

February 22, 2016

(HealthDay)—Application of once-daily topical testosterone effectively restores normal testosterone levels in men, according to a study published in the March issue of The Journal of Urology.

## Testosterone undecanoate improves sexual function in men with type 2 diabetes

May 6, 2016

In a recent placebo-controlled study, long acting testosterone undecanoate (an ester of testosterone) improved erectile function, intercourse satisfaction, and sexual desire scores in type 2 diabetic men with severe hypogonadism, ...

## Testosterone therapy improves sexual interest, function in older men

June 29, 2016

Older men with low libido and low testosterone levels showed more interest in sex and engaged in more sexual activity when they underwent testosterone therapy, according to a new study published in the Endocrine Society's ...

## Two percent testosterone solution improves sex drive and energy levels in men with hypogonadism

August 17, 2016

For men with hypogonadism, a condition in which the body does not produce enough testosterone, low sex drive and fatigue are common symptoms. For these men treatment with a 2% testosterone solution (T-sol) can be effective ...

Medical Xpress on facebook

## Can nicotine protect the aging brain?

September 20, 2016

Everyone knows that tobacco products are bad for your health, and even the new e-cigarettes may have harmful toxins. However, according to research at Texas A&M, it turns out the nicotine itself—when given independently ...

## Drug-resistant germs thrive in America's corroding water systems

September 23, 2016

(HealthDay)—The thousands of miles of aging, corroding pipes that bring water to Americans each day may be home to dangerous drug-resistant bacteria, a new report warns.

## Science can shape healthy city planning

September 23, 2016

Previous studies have shown a correlation between the design of cities and growing epidemics of injuries and non-communicable diseases such as heart disease, diabetes and cancer. A three-part series published in The Lancet ...

## Thirdhand smoke lingers in the home long after smokers have quit

September 22, 2016

Even when you quit smoking, residue left behind by cigarette smoke can stick to surfaces, penetrate deep into materials in your home and settle in for a long time to come. A new study led by researchers at San Diego State ...

## 50-country comparison of child and youth fitness levels

September 21, 2016

An international research team co-led from the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario (CHEO) and the University of North Dakota studied the aerobic fitness levels of children and youth across 50 countries. The results are ...

## Study questions benefits of testosterone replacement for 'low T'

September 21, 2016

The prescription of testosterone supplementation for cardiovascular health, sexual function, physical function, mood, or cognitive function in men with "low T" is not supported by clinical trials data, conclude

## Low testosterone thresholds established for type 2 diabetes

August 25, 2016

researchers ...

Research into type 2 diabetes conducted by Western Sydney University has for the first time established a range of clinical thresholds for testosterone levels in men associated with developing diabetes.

0 comments



Please sign in to add a comment. Registration is free, and takes less than a minute. [Read more](#)

[Click here to reset your password.](#)  
[Sign in to get notified via email when new comments are made.](#)

[top](#)

[Help](#)

[Science X Account](#)

[Cancer / Oncology](#)

[Connect](#)

[Home](#)

[About us](#)

[Sponsored Account](#)

[HIV & AIDS news](#)



[Search](#)

[FAQ](#)

[Newsletter](#)

[Immunology news](#)

[Mobile version](#)

[Contact](#)

[RSS feeds](#)

[Genetics news](#)