

THE IMPACT OF METABOLIC SYNDROME ON THE MALE REPRODUCTIVE SYSTEM

ISSN (E): 2938-3765

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Abstract

Metabolic syndrome (MS) is a cluster of metabolic disorders, including obesity, insulin resistance, dyslipidemia, and arterial hypertension. It has been established that MS negatively affects the male reproductive system, leading to decreased testosterone levels, impaired spermatogenesis, and erectile dysfunction. This article examines the pathophysiological mechanisms underlying these disorders and discusses modern approaches to correcting reproductive dysfunction in men with MS.

INTRODUCTION

Metabolic syndrome is one of the most common metabolic disorders, affecting 20–25% of the adult population [1]. Men with MS are more likely to experience hypogonadism, infertility, and erectile dysfunction. The key pathophysiological mechanisms include endothelial dysfunction, oxidative stress, and chronic inflammation, all of which contribute to reproductive dysfunction [2].

1. Mechanisms of Metabolic Syndrome's Impact on the Male Reproductive System

1.1. Decreased Testosterone Levels

Excessive visceral fat accumulation is associated with increased aromatase activity, an enzyme that converts testosterone into estradiol. This leads to lower testosterone levels and the development of hypogonadism [3]. Insulin resistance also suppresses luteinizing hormone (LH) secretion, reducing Leydig cell stimulation and testosterone production [4].

1.2. Impaired Spermatogenesis

Men with MS exhibit changes in semen parameters, including decreased sperm concentration and motility, as well as an increased number of abnormal forms [5]. Oxidative stress caused by hyperglycemia and dyslipidemia damages sperm DNA, reducing fertility [6].

1.3. Erectile Dysfunction

Erectile dysfunction (ED) in MS is linked to endothelial dysfunction, reduced nitric oxide (NO) production, and impaired blood flow in the corpus cavernosum [7]. Insulin resistance disrupts the PI3K/Akt pathway, which regulates smooth muscle relaxation in blood vessels, further exacerbating ED [8].





2. Correction of Reproductive Disorders in Metabolic Syndrome

2.1. Lifestyle Modifications

A 5–10% weight reduction improves testosterone levels and semen quality [9]. Regular physical activity and a low-carbohydrate diet reduce insulin resistance and inflammation, contributing to hormonal balance restoration.

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2.2. Pharmacotherapy

Metformin enhances tissue insulin sensitivity and helps normalize testosterone levels [10]. Phosphodiesterase type 5 (PDE5) inhibitors (sildenafil, tadalafil) improve erectile function by increasing nitric oxide levels [7]. Hormone therapy is prescribed for severe hypogonadism but requires monitoring due to cardiovascular risk [3].

Conclusion

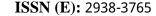
Metabolic syndrome has a significant negative impact on the male reproductive system, leading to hypogonadism, infertility, and erectile dysfunction. The main mechanisms include chronic inflammation, insulin resistance, endothelial dysfunction, and oxidative stress. Correcting MS through lifestyle changes, pharmacotherapy, and emerging approaches such as exosomal therapy can improve reproductive outcomes in men.

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Volume 3, Issue 3, March 2025



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