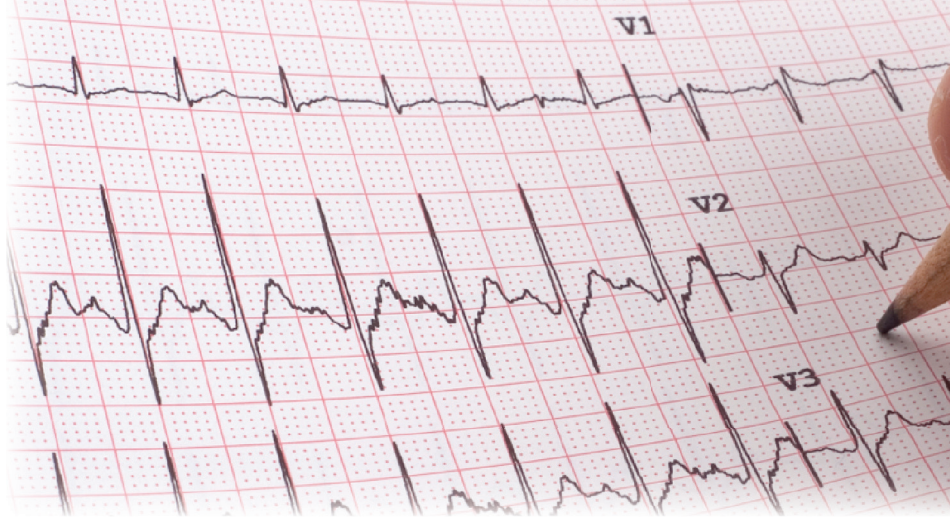


# Media Alert: Health Update for You & the Man in Your Life

By Michelle F. Solomon



**H**ow about this for an endorsement? Dr. Edward Lichten so firmly believes in the link between hormones and men's heart health, he says he himself would have been dead "10 years ago without it."

A study in the *Alternative Medicine Digest* states that half a million men in the United States die from diseases of the heart and blood vessels each year. The study links andropause (the male equivalent of menopause) to a reduction of male hormones (androgens).

"It is a known fact that athletes can push to higher heights, run faster, lift more when they add testosterone. Muscles get bigger and strong on testosterone," said Lichten, a board-certified Birmingham gynecologist, who is recognized as an innovative in hormone therapy for both men and women.

"We also know that testosterone deficiencies are associated with Alzheimer's disease, depression, weight gain, increased levels of cholesterol, increased abdominal fat and decreased sexual function," he said.

Levels of testosterone decrease with age, but Lichten, who is known as a strong advocate for replacing natural hormones in the body to prevent disease rather than masking symptoms with pharmaceuticals, says getting testosterone levels back in men can actually help prevent heart attacks.

"Testosterone can reduce blood glucose levels. We've already seen this by using testosterone to treat diabetes," said Lichten. Lichten believes that the heart muscle, which has to beat every day and every second for (he gives the example of 80 years), has 10 times more testosterone receptors than the muscles anywhere else in the body.

"So it's logical that any deficiency in testosterone would affect heart function," said Lichten. Testosterone has also been used to reduce blood pressure and improve vascular circulation. Not surprising, according to Lichten.

"What hasn't been realized is that testosterone has some very specific actions that are protective to the heart," he said. Lichten believes that testosterone also has an "anti-stickness effect."

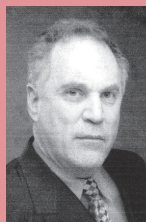
"What happens is that the plaque platelets don't stick," said Lichten. Arterial plaque is what causes high blood pressure and can lead to stroke and heart attack. "Testosterone has an anti-cholesterol effect, a thinning effect. We've seen people stop their cholesterol medication and drop 100 points with testosterone. Cholesterol by itself is not bad. Cholesterol doesn't cause the plague. It's when it gets 'rusty' or inflamed," said Lichten.

"In essence what you've done (with testosterone) is made them stronger and given them a stronger functioning heart, therefore they have less risk for angina and they feel better." Many studies show that low testosterone levels and high levels of estrogen are what causes cardiovascular disease in men.

Once again, Lichten says he's not surprised. "Men's levels have dropped by 50 percent since 1950 (sperm count and testosterone levels) because of higher estrogen being fed to animals, environmental toxins, and other causes. Now we have the ability to replace it. It's not hopeless. We just have to diagnose it early and treat it early," said Lichten.

#### GRADUATE EDUCATION

University of Akron, Bachelor of Arts  
Ohio State University College of Medicine,  
Doctor of Medicine  
Ohio State University Hospital,  
Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology  
Diplomat Board of OB GYN



Edward M. Lichten, M.D.  
Medical Director  
Lichten Wellness Center

#### MAJOR PROFESSIONAL SOCIETIES

American Medical Association  
Fellow, American College of  
Obstetricians and Gynecologists  
American College of Surgeons  
American Association of  
Gynecologic Laparoscopists  
American Association for the  
Study of Headache  
American Fertility Association  
Fellow and Board Member, American  
Academy of Anti-Aging Medicine

180 East Brown Street • Birmingham (248) 593-9999