



THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG PUBLIC HEALTH RESEARCH CENTRE

“Testosterone and the Modern Masquerade of Rejuvenation”

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Date: August 11, 2015 (Tuesday)

Time: 13:15 – 14:45 (*sandwich lunch from 13:15 – 13:30; seminar begins at 13:30*)

Venue: Seminar Room 1, G/F, Laboratory Block, LKS Faculty of Medicine Building, 21 Sassoon Road, Pokfulam, Hong Kong

Abstract:

Awareness of mortality has often led people to wishful thinking aiming to delay or reverse ageing culminating into a fashionable hobby that flourishes during prosperity. Its greatest flowering was the rejuvenation quackery era at the turn of the 20th century using testis extracts, slices or manipulation. This popular fad disappeared in the 1930's coinciding with the discovery of testosterone (T) during the Depression but resurfaced over the last two decades under the guise of “andropause”, “late onset hypogonadism” and “LowT” based on observational studies linking cardiovascular disease and other disorders with low circulating T, over-interpreted to suggest protective effects of T. This has led to massive increases in testosterone prescribing in North America and reflected increases in many other countries. Recent studies provide evidence that, among men without pathological disorders of the reproductive system, low circulating T represents a “sick eugonadal” or “non-reproductive illness syndrome” rather than a genuine deficiency state. This is part of a non-specific adaptive hypothalamic response to systemic disorders, whereby these effects may be beneficial, neutral or harmful. Hence testosterone treatment for non-reproductive disorders requires rigorous proof of efficacy and safety. In addition, recent studies also provide troubling, albeit inconclusive, adverse safety signals for T treatment of men without pathological reproductive system disorders.

Bio-sketch:

David Handelsman is the inaugural Professor/Director, ANZAC Research Institute (1998), Professor of Reproductive Endocrinology and Andrology (University of Sydney) and founder of the Andrology Department, Concord Hospital (1999). After training as an Endocrinologist, he has been postdoctoral Fellow working in the USA and Germany before becoming Australia's first Professor of Andrology (1996).



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He has served on numerous research and health policy advisory bodies including WHO (1988-1994), Australian Drug Evaluation Committee (1994-1998), World Anti-Doping Agency's Health, Medicine and Research Committee (2011-16). He was President, Endocrine Society of Australia (1992-4) and Secretary, International Society of Andrology (1997-2001).

His expertise in Andrology (male reproductive health, medicine and biology) involves research into basic, clinical, translation and public health domains focused on androgen physiology, pharmacology and toxicology. Recent areas of interest include genetic mouse models of androgen action in the testis, prostate and ovary, steroid mass spectrometry, anti-doping science and clinical pharmacology and use/abuse of androgens. He has supervised 34 graduate students including 22 PhD students

He has 500 papers in peer-reviewed journals, reviews, book chapters, reports and editorials which are cited >16,000 times (h index 71, Google Scholar) and he is the most cited author on the topic of "androgens" or "testosterone". In 2013, he wrote an invited editorial for the New England Journal of Medicine.

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