**How Clomid Works**

To understand how clomiphene works, you need to know how the pituitary controls the making of testosterone in the testis. Testosterone is made by Leydig cells in the testis. The pituitary releases a hormone called luteinizing hormone (“LH”) that stimulates the Leydig cells to make testosterone. Testosterone is converted to the female hormone estrogen and estrogen tells the pituitary to stop making more LH. This kind of negative feedback system is common when it comes to how hormones work. It’s just like a thermostat and heater. As the room gets warmer, the thermostat sends less electricity to the heater. When the room gets colder, the thermostat sends more electricity to the heater.



Clomiphene works by blocking estrogen at the pituitary. The pituitary sees less estrogen, and makes more LH. More LH means that the Leydig cells in the testis make more testosterone.

Giving testosterone to a man does just the opposite. The pituitary thinks that the testis is making plenty of testosterone, and LH falls. As a result, the testis stops making testosterone, and the usually high levels of testosterone in the testis fall to the lower level in the blood.

So clomiphene is a way to increase testosterone in the blood and the testis at the same time. It preserves testis size and function while increasing blood testosterone. Unfortunately, clomiphene is not FDA approved for use in the male. Like most of the medications that we use to treat male fertility, the pharmaceutical company that originally sought approval by the FDA did it for women . Using clomid for men is “off label”, meaning that it’s not FDA approved for use in men even though studies support it's use.

 It can be used in the male, either for fertility or low testosterone levels. It’s an off label prescription drug. It works, and is usually well tolerated by men who take it.

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