

## YOUNG AND VIGOROUS.

Dr. Ron Livesey was fat, tired and out shape. At 49, he felt that his best years were behind him. So one day seven years ago, on his way to a meeting, he stopped at a doctor's office in Palm Spring, Calif., for his first hormone injection.

Early the next morning, he was at the medical meeting. To his surprise, he found himself alert, taking everything in. He continued the hormone treatment. "people started commenting that I had so much more energy," he said. He lost weight- thanks, he said, to diet changes and exercise made possible by the increased vigor.

It is expensive: \$ 1,000 a month but beyond the cost lies a problem of modern medicine. Until recently, most scientists considered anti-aging treatments to be little more than snake oil, provided by charlatans. Now, few doubt that growth hormone and testosterone can reshape aging bodies, potentially making them more youthful.

But whether they counteract aging is unknown. And their long-term risks are ill defined. So medical experts ask whether it is right to regard aging as a disease, as fierce as a malignant cancer, to be fought with any and all means, tested or not.

Human growth hormone has been approved by the Food and Drug Administration for use by people with medical deficiencies, and once a drug is on the market, doctors can legally prescribe it for any reason.

Time , February 19, 2003. (235 mts)