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Definitive study shows hormone use doubles breast cancer risk

If you're one of those women still taking hormone replacement therapy to treat menopause symptoms, or if you used hormones for years, a new study proves your risk of breast cancer is high.

The study results were revealed on Saturday, Dec. 6, at the San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposium.

The researchers analyzed data from the Women's Health Initiative (WHI) study, which tested the effects of estrogen and progestin on 16,608 women, but was halted in 2002 before the study was finished due to findings that hormone replacement therapy (HRT) increased risk of invasive breast cancers and also put women at risk of blood clots, stroke and heart disease.

Although the 2002 WHI study showed a 26 percent increase in breast cancer amongst women taking HRT, researchers have debated whether the risk only applies to older women (60 and above) who are past menopause since it was mostly women in that age group that participated in the WHI study. Was the risk the same for younger women just entering menopause? **This new study found that YES, younger women in their fifties also had an increased risk.**

The new study tracked 15,387 of the 16,608 women through to July 2005, monitoring the number of breast cancer cases as they occurred.

They found that risk rose at the start of hormone use, peaked when the study ended, then fell as nearly all the women stopped using the hormones. At the peak, they found the breast cancer risk to be twice that of those not taking HRT. Even those women who took HRT for just a few years had a higher risk of getting breast cancer. And the study showed that women taking HRT for five years had double the risk of getting breast cancer.

An earlier study, published in the March 5, 2008 edition of the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, showed women who took HRT were still at the same risk of developing breast cancer three years after they stopped taking the medication.

"Women need to know the information in this study and they also need to know that within a few years of stopping, their risk of getting breast cancer will go down, even for women who took HRT for a long time. And there are ways to reduce the risks associated with HRT," says Lorna Vanderhaeghe, women's health expert and author of *Sexy Hormones* and *No More HRT: Menopause Treat the Cause*.

Reduce your risk quickly

"If you were, or still are taking HRT, it's important to take steps now to reduce your risk," says Vanderhaeghe. "There are several lifestyle changes women can make to reverse the effects of



HRT. Scientists have studied many foods and nutrients for their ability to alter or turn on or off our genes and the food we eat can either keep dangerous disease-causing genes dormant, or wake them up with a vengeance.”

Lorna recommends eating these foods and nutrients that are proven to positively affect our genes:

- **Curcumin** - the yellow pigment in turmeric, a curry spice, has been shown to halt all stages of abnormal cell growth. Eat curry, or take curcumin as a supplement.
- **Sulforaphane** - a powerful gene manipulator found in broccoli and **D-glucarate** found in fruits and vegetables. These nutrients help prevent toxins from accumulating inside our bodies by supporting our liver, which helps eliminate cancer-causing toxins from the body.
- **Green tea** - extensively researched for its cancer protective effects. It has been found to work on the HER-2 gene associated with aggressive breast cancer. The HER-2 gene causes growth of cancer cells and green tea slows the signaling of this dangerous gene in some women.
- **Indole-3-carbinol (I3C)** – a plant nutrient found in cruciferous vegetables like broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts and kale. Research has shown that I3C helps to break cancer-causing estrogens down into non-toxic forms, and it eliminates harmful estrogen mimickers. I3C is also effective at keeping the balance of healthy estrogens in the body while supporting the liver hormone function. It helps maintain a healthy cervix, protects against HPV cervical lesions and controls abnormal cell growth found in those with uterine fibroids and endometriosis.
- **Rosemary** - a potent antioxidant that inhibits mammary cancer development and helps to detoxify carcinogenic estrogens.
- **DIM** – found in cruciferous vegetables - helps break down cancer-causing estrogens to non-toxic forms.

In addition to getting the above nutrients, Vanderhaeghe says we must reduce our overall load of environmental estrogens from cosmetics, pesticides and some foods (soy, coffee, commercial dairy products, farmed fish, red meat and alcohol). By doing so, we will reduce our risk of breast and other forms of cancer. For information on chemicals in your cosmetics (shampoo, skin cream, fragrances, make-up etc.), visit the Environmental Working Group's web site at: www.ewg.org.

If you suffer from menopause symptoms like hot flashes and night sweats, Vanderhaeghe says “there are so many solutions to help women, that less than 10 percent of women will need hormone therapy of any kind.” For the 10 percent of women with severe, stubborn symptoms, who do require hormones, the dose should be low, short-term and bioidentical.” There is only **ONE** safe form of estrogen—ask Lorna which one it is.



Lorna Vanderhaeghe is a women's natural health expert. She has a Master of Health Studies and a degree in Biochemistry. The author of eight books, Lorna has been educating people on how to combine the best of mainstream medicine with scientifically-backed nutrients and diet changes to achieve optimal wellness.

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