Making an informed choice
Understanding the benefits and safety profiles of different Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT)

Women can experience vastly different symptoms throughout the menopause, so it’s important that treatment is tailored to reflect individual needs and changing symptoms. Not all HRT treatments are the same; it’s essential that you understand both the short and long-term benefits and safety profiles of each to ensure that you maintain the best possible health and quality of life at every stage of the menopause.

Comparing rates of Coronary Heart Disease in women currently taking HRT, to the UK Average¹
The baseline risk of coronary heart disease for women around menopausal age varies from one woman to another according to the presence of cardiovascular risk factors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1,000 women</th>
<th>Difference in Coronary Heart Disease incidence per 1,000 menopausal women aged 50-59 over 7.5 years, based on randomised controlled trial estimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>26 cases UK General population</td>
<td>HRT with oestrogen and progestogen is associated with little or no increase in the risk of coronary heart disease*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31* cases Women on Oestrogen plus Progestogen</td>
<td>HRT with oestrogen alone is associated with no, or reduced, risk of coronary heart disease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 cases Women on Oestrogen alone</td>
<td>Variance of 1.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comparing rates of stroke in women currently taking HRT, to the UK Average¹
The baseline risk of stroke for women around menopausal age varies from one woman to another, according to the presence of cardiovascular risk factors, however the base-line risk of stroke in women under 60 years is very low.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1,000 women</th>
<th>Difference in stroke incidence per 1,000 menopausal women aged 50-59 over 7.5 years, based on randomised controlled trial estimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11 cases UK General population</td>
<td>HRT tablets (but not patches or gels) slightly raise the risk of stroke. However, it is important to remember that the risk of stroke in women under 60 is very low.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11* cases Women on Oestrogen plus Progestogen</td>
<td>Variance of less than 1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 cases Women on Oestrogen alone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Please note, the risk varies depending on the type of progestogen, oestrogen dose and route of administration involved – please ask your GP for more details on the treatment options available
**Comparing rates of breast cancer in women currently taking HRT, to the UK Average**

The baseline risk of breast cancer for women around menopausal age in the UK varies from one woman to another.

- **UK General population**: 22 cases
- **Women on Oestrogen plus Progestogen**: 18 cases
- **Women on Oestrogen alone**: 27 cases

HRT with oestrogen and progestogen can be associated with an increase in the risk of breast cancer. Any increase in the risk of breast cancer is related to treatment duration and reduces after stopping HRT.

HRT with oestrogen alone is associated with little or no increase in the risk of breast cancer.

**Comparing rates of fragility fractures in women currently taking HRT, to the UK Average**

The baseline risk of fragility fracture for women around menopausal age in the UK is low and varies from one woman to another.

- **UK General population**: 69 cases
- **Women on any HRT**: 46 cases

HRT can be good for bone health; your risk of fragility fracture is decreased while taking HRT. This benefit is maintained during treatment, but decreases once treatment stops. The benefit may continue for longer in women who take HRT for longer.

**Variance of less than 1%**

**Variance of more than 2%**

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* Please note, the risk varies depending on the type of progestogen, oestrogen dose and route of administration involved – please ask your GP for more details on the treatment options available.

**References**


**Reporting of side effects**

If you get any side effects, talk to your doctor, pharmacist or nurse. This includes any possible side effects not listed in the package leaflet. You can also report side effects directly via the Yellow Card Scheme at www.mhra.gov.uk/yellowcard.

By reporting side effects you can help provide more information on the safety of these medicines.

This educational resource is to be used by healthcare professionals to share with their patients.

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