

Menopausal hormone therapy does not affect the risk of dying, study shows

March 6 2015

Menopausal hormone therapy (HT) does not have a significant effect on death, according to a new review of the medical literature published over the past three decades. The results, which included studies with follow-up as long as 18 years, will be presented Friday at the Endocrine Society's 97th annual meeting in San Diego.

"At present, we do not have evidence that hormone therapy in postmenopausal [women](#) increases mortality or protects from death compared with women who never used hormones," said lead investigator Khalid Benkhadra, MD, a research fellow at Mayo Clinic, Rochester, Minn.

The results, Benkhadra said, should allay concerns of some women with debilitating menopausal symptoms who have feared taking hormones.

Benkhadra and colleagues reached their conclusion after comprehensively searching several large databases of published medical literature from their earliest inception (1982 and later) through August 2013.

They conducted a systematic review and meta-analysis, or quantitative statistical analysis, of the [medical literature](#) using only studies of moderate to high-quality scientific evidence. The researchers included clinical trials of [postmenopausal women](#) in the analysis only if the studies lasted longer than six months, randomized patients to receive HT or either placebo (sham treatment) or no treatment. Women were age 50

or older in the 43 studies included in the analysis.

The investigators found no statistically significant relationship between HT use and all-cause mortality—death due to any reason—or death due to heart attack, breast cancer or stroke. There also was no significant association between HT use and death when they performed a subgroup analysis based on hormone type, estrogen alone or estrone plus progesterone, according to Benkhadra.

Benkhadra said their research could be used to clarify the indications for taking HT.

Provided by The Endocrine Society

Citation: Menopausal hormone therapy does not affect the risk of dying, study shows (2015, March 6) retrieved 19 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2015-03-menopausal-hormone-therapy-affect-dying.html>

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