

[IMAGE]

Are Antibiotics Putting You at Risk for Breast Cancer?

Antibiotics are prescribed for a number of infections that can start as early as infancy; depending on one's propensity for developing infections, antibiotic use can be used extensively during a lifetime. But a recent study shows that antibiotic use over many years could increase the risk for breast cancer.

Researchers studied 2,266 women older than 19 years with primary, invasive breast cancer from a large, nonprofit health plan (case group), and 7,953 randomly selected women from the same health plan without cancer (control group). The control group subjects were matched to case group subjects based on age and length of health-plan enrollment.

Conclusion: According to the study, "Use of antibiotics is associated with increased risk of incident and fatal breast cancer. It cannot be determined from this study whether antibiotic use is causally related to breast cancer, or whether indication for use, overall weakened immune system function or other factors are pertinent underlying exposures." The researchers affirm that although additional research is needed, the findings in this study "reinforce the need for prudent long-term use of antibiotics."

This study just goes to show that there are risks involved when taking prescription medications. If you are taking antibiotics, or have taken large amounts of antibiotics in the past, talk to your doctor about the findings in this study and whether there are alternative nonpharmaceutical means of fighting infections otherwise treated with antibiotics.

For more information on women's health, visit www.chiroweb.com/find/archives/women.

Reference

Velicer CM, Heckbert SR, Lampe JW, et al. Antibiotic use in relation to the risk of breast cancer. *Journal of the American Medical Association* 2004;291(7):827-35.

Page printed from:

http://www.toyourhealth.com/mpacms/tyh/article.php?id=518&no_paginate=true&no_b=true