

[IMAGE]

## Hormone Therapy and Breast Cancer: Risks May Linger for Years

By Editorial Staff

Hormone replacement is a common therapy that helps women combat the symptoms of menopause brought on by changes in sex hormone production. Unfortunately, women who use hormone replacement therapy have a higher risk of breast cancer than women who don't, and even more troubling, the risk may persist for up to a decade even after discontinuing HRT.

According to new research published in *The Lancet*, women who take combination HRT (estrogen-progestin) have a greater risk than women who take estrogen-only therapy, but the increased risk of breast cancer is higher for just about every type of hormone replacement therapy with the exception of vaginal estrogens. Based on an analysis of 58 previously published studies involving more than 100,000 women with invasive breast cancer, the research review revealed that five years of HRT starting at age 50 increased breast cancer risk until age 70 compared to women who did not use HRT.

breast cancer - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark This isn't the first time hormone replacement therapy, particularly combination therapy, has come under fire for the potential association with breast cancer. However, it's also important to note that research suggests HRT may be beneficial for bone and heart health. The bottom line: Talk to your doctor about whether HRT is right for you; which type may work best; and if non-pharmaceutical options exist that can take breast cancer and other risks out of the equation altogether.

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