

Complications of Hormone Replacement Therapy

- The USPSTF* recommends against the routine use of combined estrogen and progestin for the prevention of chronic conditions in postmenopausal women. It recommends against unopposed estrogen use in postmenopausal women who have had a hysterectomy.
- Combined estrogen and progestin has NO beneficial effect on coronary heart disease, and may increase risk. Unopposed estrogen also has no beneficial effect on heart disease, the main cause of mortality in postmenopausal women.
- Unopposed estrogen and combined estrogen and progestin increase the risk of dementia and lower global cognitive functioning.
- Unopposed estrogen and combined estrogen and progestin also increase the risk of venous thromboembolism and stroke.
- The unopposed estrogen arm of that trial was terminated in 2004 because of this increased stroke risk in combination with the lack of effect on the risks of heart disease or breast cancer.
- Combined estrogen and progestin increases the risk of coronary heart disease, stroke, and venous thromboembolism. These risks arise within the first one to two years of therapy. Other risks, such as the risk of breast cancer, appear to increase with longer term use.

* US Preventive Services Task Force



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*These statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration
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