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Thank you for entrusting in the compounding services at Madison Medical Compounding Pharmacy to help meet the unique medication needs of your patients. We are excited to share our monthly newsletter with you and look forward to working with you. Please don't hesitate to let us know how we can assist you and your practice.

LeAnn Chambers, Pharm.D. and Matthew Chambers, Pharm.D.

Reflecting on the Women's Health Initiative (WHI) Studies

Over two decades ago, the Women's Health Initiative (WHI) clinical trials brought significant changes to the use of hormone replacement therapy (HRT), leading to a dramatic reduction in hormone prescriptions worldwide. The initial findings created widespread concern about the risks associated with HRT, which resulted in many women no longer seeking relief from menopausal symptoms.



However, a recent review published in the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) offers a fresh perspective. It highlights the potential benefits of hormone therapy for women under 60 who are experiencing common menopausal symptoms, such as vasomotor issues. This evolving understanding encourages a more personalized approach to HRT, especially when initiated during early menopause.

The review also points to reduced risk of certain adverse events in younger women who start HRT during early menopause. Moreover, the type of hormone therapy prescribed appears to be a crucial factor. For example, estrogen therapy in women who have had a hysterectomy has been associated with positive health outcomes in long-term follow-ups.

While this updated analysis provides valuable insights, there is still room for ongoing research and discussion around hormone therapy, particularly in the context of bioidentical hormones. Many providers and patients are interested in exploring whether different

formulations could further optimize outcomes for women navigating menopause.

As we move forward, it's important to continue evaluating the evolving evidence on hormone therapy to provide women with informed options that prioritize their individual health needs.

[JAMA. 2024 May 28;331\(20\):1748-1760.](#)

Estrogen, Cardiovascular Health, & Sexual Function

The Kronos Early Estrogen Prevention Study (KEEPS) was designed to address gaps in understanding the effects of timely menopausal hormone treatments (HT) on cardiovascular health and other effects of menopause after the premature termination of the Women's Health Initiative (WHI).

The Kronos Early Estrogen Prevention Study (KEEPS) was a randomized, double-blinded, placebo-controlled trial to test the hypothesis that initiation of hormone therapy (HT) in healthy, recently postmenopausal women (n=727) would slow the progression of atherosclerosis. After 4 years, there were no severe adverse effects, including venous thrombosis. Several ancillary studies demonstrated reduced hot flashes, improved sleep, and maintenance of bone mineral density. Sexual function improved with transdermal 17 β -estradiol (t-E2). There were no significant effects on cognition, breast pain, or skin wrinkling. KEEPS and its ancillary studies have supported the value and safety of the use of HT in recently postmenopausal women and provide a perspective for future research to optimize HT and the health of postmenopausal women. The KEEPS continuation study continues to pursue these issues.

Transdermal estradiol treatment was associated with a significant increase in mean lubrication and decreased pain compared with placebo. Transdermal estradiol treatment resulted in fewer women with low sexual function compared with placebo, while oral conjugated equine estrogens (CEE) produced no significant benefit.

[Menopause. 2019 Sep; 26\(9\): 1071–1084.](#)

[JAMA Intern Med. 2017 Oct 1;177\(10\):1471-1479](#)



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