

HRT is a Good Thing!

At least, according to Barb Bancroft and Dr. Theresa McCallum, both of whom were speakers at the ORNAA Conference in Red Deer.

As “a woman of a certain age”, I felt the need a few years ago for something to help mitigate the side-effects of my aging process. The internal combustion aspect was manageable, except when I was scrubbed, and especially when my glasses kept sliding south. That drives me crazy! In my case, HRT was indicated. The additional hormones have certainly helped stabilize my thermostat and have definitely moderated the occasional strong desire to lose more than a little self-control!

Like many people, I had heard of studies that shone a negative aspect on HRT, including a breast cancer study. Fortunately, there is a minimal history of breast cancer in my family, but it's there none-the-less.

Both Ms. Bancroft and Dr. McCallum are strong advocates for HRT, not just for the entire menopausal timeframe, but for the remainder of your life. They both spoke of the obvious alleviation of menopausal symptoms, but also spoke of numerous studies showing the long-term positive benefits far outweigh any potentially negative ones.

Dr. McCallum clarified the one breast cancer study that seems to have garnered a lot of attention. The one aspect of the study that showed an increased risk of breast cancer was in a group of women who commenced HRT more than 10 yrs following menopause. Therefore, the recommended start of HRT is during menopause.

Dr. McCallum is a urologist who deals with a number of incontinence issues following menopause. Because the hormones contribute to the elasticity and “youthfulness” of the tissues, not only does your skin benefit, so does your mucosal tissues. She said that the benefit to the vaginal and urethral mucosa and integrity of the pelvic floor made HRT worthwhile just for that aspect.

Both speakers covered the huge benefits of bone health and that far more women die of osteoporotic fractures and have decreased quality of life as they get older because of not having the estrogen protecting effect. Likewise for hypertension and cardiac disease, we're protected through menopause and then we quickly catch up to the guys.

Both reiterated the numerous studies showing the benefits and encouraged women who are struggling with their menopausal symptoms to not be afraid of HRT and the long-term benefits associated with the therapy.

Thank goodness, 'cause I love my hormones!
Respectfully submitted,
Heather Lifeso