

Natural Hormones, the Safe Alternative to Prempro Have Your Cake and Eat It Too!

by Richard H. LeConey, M.D.

Ladies, are you now thoroughly confused about whether or not to take hormone replacement therapy for peri- or postmenopause? Is there any possible way that the doctors and scientists researching hormone replacement could have made the situation any more confusing? With the latest barrage of coverage regarding the W. H. I. (Women's Health Initiative) study, it would be hard to envision how. The recent frenzy in the media resulting from the last week's announcement of the dangers of Prempro (Premarin plus Provera) for postmenopausal hormone replacement has resulted in a near panic for both patients and their doctors. Even though there has always been disagreement among doctors and scientists regarding the risks and benefits of hormone replacement therapy for women, there is probably more confusion now than at any time in the past. It seems hard for the public to understand why there is so much continuing difference of opinion regarding a treatment that has been in widespread use since the '60s.

The real problem with the interpretation of the recently publicized results from the W. H. I. study is that there has been a sweeping generalization of the harmful effects observed from the use of Prempro in hormone replacement therapy to include all forms of hormone replacement therapy. And that is absolutely not scientifically valid! It seems that the scientists directing this study refused to acknowledge that the negative results of this study are most likely due specifically to the use of the synthetic hormones, Premarin, Provera and Prempro, instead of bio-identical natural hormones. There is absolutely no scientific basis to assume that the same negative results would have occurred if the study had used natural hormones instead of synthetic. In fact, there is a significant body of evidence that shows that all of the negative results from the use of Prempro (Premarin plus Provera) are probably due to its synthetic nature. Simple logic, and a number of scientific studies, would argue that these problems observed with the use of Premarin, Prempro or Provera rarely occur in young healthy women when their levels of natural hormones are at their peak.

At the Institute of AntiAging Medicine, I have, for many years, cautioned women about the dangers linked with synthetic hormones like Provera, as well as the negative effects of Premarin, which is extracted from the urine of pregnant horses. Research has shown that over half of the estrogen-like compounds in Premarin are native only to horses and completely foreign to human biology. Other research has shown that, because these foreign hormones cannot fit into a woman's normal metabolic chemistry, they result in the formation of metabolites, which have been shown to induce breast cancer. Many women when placed on this unnatural hormone substitute, for the symptoms of menopause, know immediately that something is wrong, experiencing weight gain, breast tenderness, heavy periods, bloating, sleep disturbance and cognitive changes, among other side effects.

In my experience, for literally hundreds of women, replacing Prempro or Premarin with pure bio-identical natural hormone therapy, has been an overwhelmingly satisfactory experience. These women have experienced the benefits that they had come to expect from replacing those natural hormones lost in the peri- and perimenopause. They experienced a more positive, happy mood with elimination of the blue moods frequently

associated with menopause. They had elimination of the irritability and "stressed-out" feeling commonly experienced in Peri and postmenopause. Their skin was clear and hair was thicker, and they could now sleep through the night and wakeup refreshed. They had more stamina, more energy and libido than they had felt in years. Not a single woman receiving natural hormone replacement therapy at the Institute of Antiaging Medicine has been diagnosed with any of the cancers found with Prempro such as breast or ovarian cancer. This is despite the fact that with such a large number of patients, we should have seen a few cases of these cancers, simply based on their statistical probability of occurrence in the normal population. Nor have we had a single heart attack, stroke or blood clot, as was witnessed in the studies using Premarin, Provera or Prempro.

The true conclusion from the study that is being so widely discussed on



TV and in news and health magazines is that Prempro is a bad drug. The real question is why was it ever used in the first place?

Provera, which is the synthetic progesterone substitute that was used in this hormone replacement study, was never developed, or intended for hormone replacement in the first place. It was originally intended solely for short-term use to stop vaginal bleeding due to hormone imbalance in younger women.

Provera is a hormone hybrid that has multiple effects not found in progesterone, the natural hormone. Every gynecologist over 50 years old can remember when Provera was only used to stop vaginal bleeding after that it became popular as a long-acting contraceptive shot known as Depo-Provera. Most gynecologists will also attest to the fact that Depo-Provera is poorly tolerated by many women when used as a contraceptive, causing a host of unpleasant side effects. The next step or for Provera was

its use in postmenopausal hormone replacement. In virtually every study using Provera as a synthetic progesterone substitute in postmenopausal hormone replacement, it has been shown to destroy the positive benefits of estrogen that were found in the study group that took estrogen alone. In one particularly well-designed smaller study that compared the use of natural progesterone and the synthetic progestin Provera, none of the negative effects occurred in the natural progesterone group.

So if you want to have your cake and eat it too, choose natural hormone replacement and experience the same natural benefits as you did when you were 25 years old, without the risk of heart attack, stroke or cancer.

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