

Therapeutic Trends

Hormone Replacement Therapy: The Ups and Downs

Insight and Outlook from IMS HEALTH

The first drop in hormones for women was the decline of estrogen and progesterone levels experienced by many women after menopause. A majority of women turned to hormone replacement therapy for symptom relief.

The second fall occurred when the 2002 study by the Women's Health Initiative (WHI) found that long-term use of combined HRT increased a woman's risk for heart disease and breast cancer. This led to a double-digit drop in prescriptions dispensed in Canada during 2003—a decrease of 26.8%. Today, HRT prescriptions continue to fall albeit at a slower rate. In 2006, prescriptions went down 6%.

In 2001, the year before the WHI reported the increased risk associated with long-term use of HRT, Canadian women filled 12.55 million prescriptions annually. By 2005, less than half of that number of prescriptions were filled (5.86 million).

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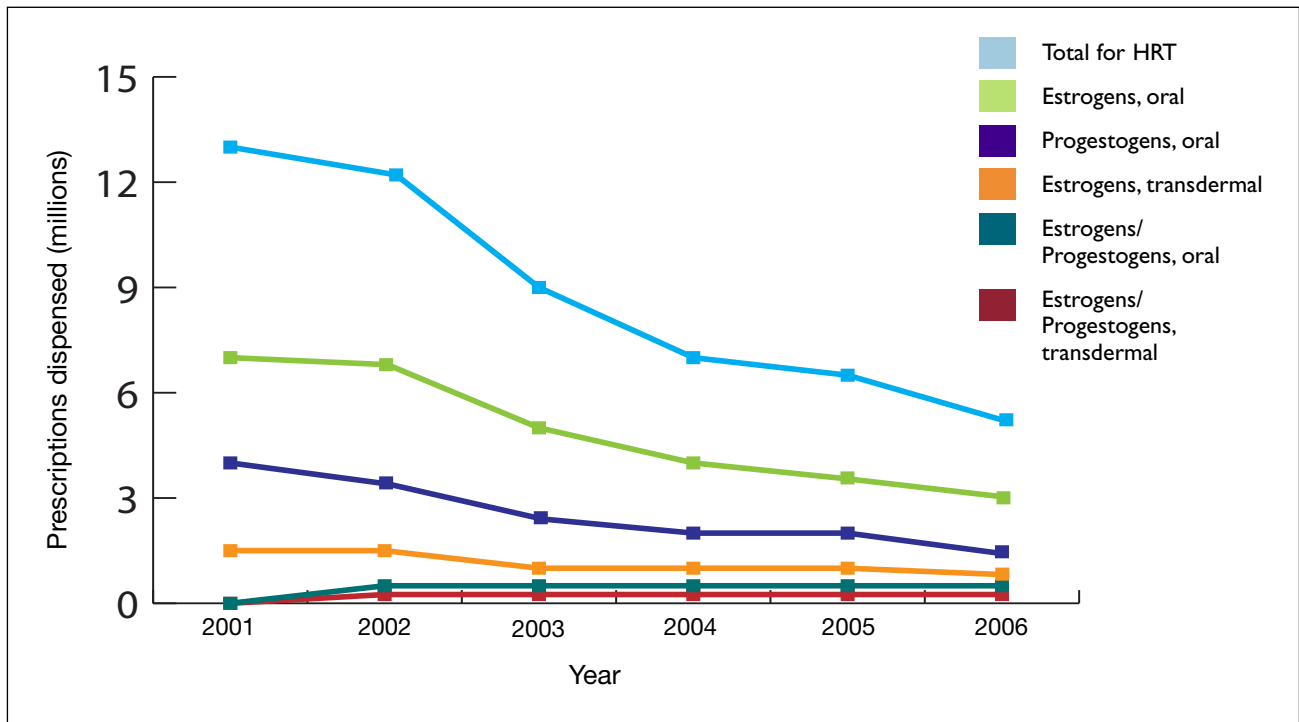


Figure 1. Estimated number of prescriptions dispensed in Canadian retail pharmacies, 2001 to 2006.

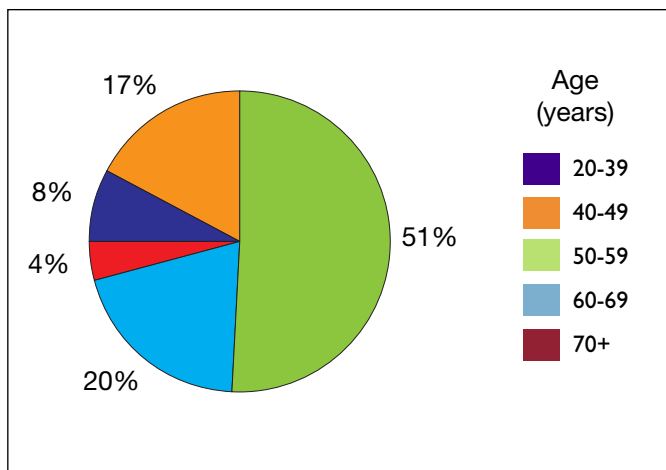


Figure 2. HRT drug recommendations** by age, 2005
 **Drug recommendations made during visits by women to their Canadian office-based physician.

HOW THE DRUGS ACT

There are two types of female sex hormones: estrogen and progesterone. In women, these hormones are secreted by the ovaries from puberty until menopause.

A decline in estrogen and progesterone levels occurs naturally after menopause. The sudden reduction in levels of estrogen often causes distressing symptoms and

doctors may suggest HRT to reduce the symptoms of menopause and to delay some of the long-term consequences of reduced estrogen levels, such as osteoporosis.

Because estrogen increases the risk of hypertension, thromboses and breast cancer, there are risks associated with the long-term use of HRT in older women. **CPM**

Table 1
 Most dispensed HRT drugs in Canada, 2006*

HRT drug	Prescriptions dispensed
1. Premarin	2,075,102
2. Prometrium	486,550
3. Ratio-MPA	460,425
4. Estrace	465,573
5. CES	372,358
6. All others	1,748,691

* 12 months ending July 2006. Estimated prescriptions dispensed in Canadian retail pharmacies.

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Announcement

Jeffrey Simbrow Associates receives finalist award in International Global Awards



Jeffrey Simbrow Associates would like to announce that their "Making the Connection" cholesterol awareness program for Pfizer received a finalist award in the international Global Awards for the best integrated consumer campaign. The campaign finished in the top eight of more than 1200 submissions from around the world.

According to their website at theglobalawards.com, the Global Awards are the world's largest and most coveted healthcare communications awards and are the only ones dedicated to the recognition of excellence on an international basis. The Global awards receive entries from healthcare corporations, hospitals and education groups, as well as from advertising agencies, design studios and production companies. The result is an unparalleled combination of medical, pharmaceutical and general health-related marketing messages to be judged.