

Estrogens and the heart: doubts and benefits

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Since the first secondary prevention trials were published in 1998, the prospect of hormone replacement therapy (HRT) to prevent atherosclerotic heart disease in post-menopausal women has changed dramatically. Early harmful effects of HRT and lack of beneficial effects on coronary heart disease (CHD) event rates in high-risk women have challenged the beneficial results from observational studies in the past. An overview will be presented of the metabolic and vascular effects of estrogen and the discrepancies that have arisen between the observational studies and the recent randomized clinical trials will be discussed.

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