

Newsletter - August 2011

Thank you to all who attended our collaborators' meeting in April last year – we hope you enjoyed the day. With more than 10 years' follow-up and a huge amount of data collected this is an exciting time for the study: we are very grateful for the continued support from women in the study and from all our collaborators.

Timing of HRT use affects breast cancer risk

We have updated and extended our results on HRT and breast cancer (first published in 2003). A new finding is that the increased risk of breast cancer in HRT users is greater when HRT is started around the menopause than if it is started later.

Beral V, Reeves G, Bull D, Green J; for the Million Women Study Collaborators. Breast Cancer Risk in Relation to the Interval Between Menopause and Starting Hormone Therapy *J.Natl Cancer Inst* 2011 Feb 16;103(4):296-305. Epub 2011 Jan 28.

Genes and breast cancer risk

Our first publications on genetic factors came out in 2010. Several common genes for breast cancer have recently been identified, each of which carries only a small increased risk. We showed that these genes affect risk separately from non-genetic factors such as HRT and obesity; and that, even in combination, they have only a modest effect on breast cancer risk.

Reeves GK, et al; Incidence of breast cancer and its subtypes in relation to individual and multiple low-penetrance genetic susceptibility loci. *JAMA*. 2010 Jul 28;304(4):426-34

Travis RC, et al; Gene–environment interactions in 7610 women with breast cancer: prospective evidence from the Million Women Study *Lancet* 2010;375(9732):2143-51. Epub 2010 Jun 3.

The 15 other MWS papers published since our last newsletter in 2009 include studies of height and cancer, fluid intake and kidney cancer, and obesity in relation to liver cirrhosis and to hip fracture. All publications are available on the study website: www.millionwomenstudy.org.

Another data entry milestone

In March 2011 we finished entering data from the 2nd general follow up questionnaire. Approximately 700,000 questionnaires were returned from the

mail out of 1.3 million sent out in 2006-7. To mark this occasion we had a small celebration in the unit, with a suitable cake.

The 3rd follow-up questionnaire

Mailing of the 3rd general follow-up questionnaire began in 2010 and will finish in early 2012. We are also investigating online questions to supplement postal questionnaires. Since July 2010 11,000 women have completed a diet questionnaire.

What do you think of our website?

Please let us know if you have any comments or suggestions. Contact: Barbara Crossley barbara.crossley@ceu.ox.ac.uk