

Newsletter - August 2001

Study shows women are accurate in reporting use of HRT and treatment for various illnesses

For women taking part in the Million Women Study, details regarding their use of HRT come directly from the answers they give on their questionnaires. In order to investigate how accurately women report use of HRT, a study of 570 women participating in the Million Women Study was conducted at two general practices in Swindon and Witney. The study compared what women had written on their questionnaires with the medications that they had been prescribed. The results show that women are extremely accurate in reporting their use of HRT, with agreement of over 95% between questionnaire and prescription record data for current use of HRT, ever use of HRT and type of HRT (oestrogen alone, combined oestrogen/ progestogen). Women's reports of receiving treatment for conditions such as hypertension, diabetes, thyroid disease and asthma also showed excellent agreement with prescription of medication for these conditions. These results mean that data from the Million Women Study questionnaires provide a solid basis for looking at the effects of use of HRT on health.

Recruitment is complete

Recruitment for the Million Women Study is now complete and staff at the co-ordinating centre estimate that the total number of women taking part is 1.3 million. This means that over one quarter of women in the UK aged 50-64 is taking part in the study and it is now officially the largest study of its kind in the world. Staff at the co-ordinating centre are busy entering the 13 tonnes of questionnaires into the Million Women Study database- so far, 900,000 questionnaires have been scanned and entered.

October 2001: fourth annual meeting of the Million Women Study collaborators

The fourth annual meeting of the Million Women Study collaborators will take place on October 15th 2001, from 11.00am to 3.30pm, at 44 Lincoln's Inn Fields, in London. There will be talks about the progress of the study, and some recent findings from the Million Women Study will be presented. Topics will include the treatment and experiences of women with breast cancer, endogenous hormone levels and the risk of breast cancer, characteristics of users of HRT and diet in the Million Women Study. There is an invitation and acceptance form attached to this newsletter. We very much hope that you can make it to London for the meeting.

The Million Women Study is expanding!

The main focus of the Million Women Study is investigating the relationship between use of hormone replacement therapy (HRT) and the risk of breast cancer. We are pleased to announce that the study has recently received extra support from the Medical Research Council to expand the scope of the study to examine the relationship between the use of HRT and conditions such as fractures, heart disease, stroke and venous thrombosis (blood clots). This expansion means the study will be able to provide important information about the overall risks and benefits of HRT.