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Menopausal Hormone Therapy May Increase the Risk of Lung Cancer Death, Especially for Smokers

This study showed that women who received hormone therapy with estrogen and progestin to help cope with the symptoms of menopause have a higher risk of dying from non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC) if they develop the disease. They are not more likely to develop NSCLC than women who did not receive hormone therapy. The risk of dying from lung cancer was higher for women with NSCLC who received hormone therapy and smoke.

What this means for patients

?Many women entering menopause have symptoms that may make them consider taking hormone therapy,? said lead author Rowan Chlebowski, MD, PhD, Medical Oncologist at the Los Angeles Biomedical Research Institute at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center. ?Other studies have shown that women taking hormone therapy have a higher risk of stroke and breast cancer. The results of this study show that women considering hormone therapy and their doctors should discuss the risks of hormone therapy, especially for women who smoke.?

Additional studies are needed to find out the degree of this risk for women and the effect of hormones on lung cancer.

What to Ask Your Doctor

- What are the benefits of hormone therapy for menopausal symptoms? What are the risks?
- Are there other ways to help me cope with the side effects of menopause?
- What is my risk of lung cancer?
- If I smoke, how can you help me to quit?

For More Information

Cancer.Net Guide to Lung Cancer [1]

ASCO Answers Fact Sheet: Lung Cancer [2]

Menopause and Cancer [3]

Links:
[1] http://www.cancer.net/patient/Cancer+Types/Lung+Cancer
[2] http://www.cancer.net/sites/cancer.net/files/vignette/ASCO_Answers_Lung.pdf
[3] http://www.cancer.net/patient/Coping/Emotional+and+Physical+Matters/Sexual+and+Reproductive+Health/Menopause+and+Cancer