

How long should I be on HRT and when should I stop taking it

**breast cancer risk, types of hrt, women stop, hrt dose, starting hrt, side effects, blood clots, hormone replacement therapy hrt, gradually reduce, stop taking hrt, vaginal dryness, menopausal symptoms**

Hormone replacement therapy is a treatment that is usually a patch gel or implant that is designed to replace hormones that if reduced in level because of the menopause the reduction in these hormones can be very challenging as when these hormones fall to low levels they can create many symptoms. Some of these can be quite disabling such as vagina dryness cognitive fatigue night sweats, dry skin and a very labile mood. Taking hormone replacement therapy can relieve some of these symptoms, although there are very small risks associated with hormone replacement therapy such as an increased risk of breast cancer with some types of HRT and other factors such as blood clots. It has become increasingly clear however, that the benefits in many cases outweigh the risks for many people particularly if your menopause is early on (under the age of 50). Many people think they have to wait until their periods have stopped to start hormone replacement but you can actually start beginning hormone replacement therapy as soon as you feel and have no there's three other articles experienced significant menopausal symptoms and don't actually need to wait for many blood tests. You usually start with quite a low dose and you can then increase it a bit later on for example after three months if it feels like it is not enough sometimes your GP will recommend changing the type of HRT or adding in other hormones such as testosterone it is actually still possible to get pregnant while taking HRT so you should use contraception until two years after you have completed your last period if you are under the age of 50 or one year if you are older than 50 there is actually quite a wide variety of HRT plans some are continuously taking medicines others are taken in cycles where you take estrogen without stopping but only take the progesterone component for a few weeks a GP with a menopause interest can give you specific advice there is actually no specific limit for how long you can take HRT but we do know that women who take HRT for a very long period of time have higher risks of breast cancer than those who have never used it so it is a good idea to have a regular review and see whether in fact you could choose to stop taking HRT at some point gradually decreasing the dose of HRT is usually the best way because it is less likely to create your symptoms to return if you're not able to take HRT or decide not to do that there are real impacts that you can make through lifestyle measures such as exercise and healthy diet avoiding excessive coffee alcohol and spicy foods and stopping smoking in fact lifestyle approaches to the menopause are a really good place to start and at Shilpa Dave health our health screen is designed to look carefully at your lifestyle and focus on that first which seems a sensible way to approach the menopause and taking care of the things that you can improve on around your lifestyle before rushing into HRT. We use a functional medicine approach focusing on stress exercise lifestyle and nutrition in a coordinated way to try and improve these areas first and support patients whilst also prescribing HRT to those where there is clear benefit. Our health screens are a really good place to start a menopause journey to address and reset what can be a very challenging time of life.