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Hormone replacement use down sharply in Canadian women over 65

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TORONTO — A new report shows hormone replacement therapy use by older Canadian women has dropped dramatically since a major study was published in 2002 linking HRT use to higher rates of heart attack and stroke.

The study, based on data from five provinces, shows that use among senior women dropped to five per cent in 2006-07 from 14 per cent in 2001-02.

The Canadian Institute for Health Information study shows that HRT use dropped each year after the Women's Health Initiative study was released, with the largest annual rate of decline occurring in the two years following the publication of the study.

This report on trends in HRT use in Canada only looks at women 65 and older, and so would only capture part of the picture of what happened after the results of the Women's Health Initiative study were made public.

Hormone replacement therapy is generally prescribed for the symptoms of menopause, which women typically go through in their late 40s and early 50s.

The Society of Obstetricians and Gynecologists of Canada now recommends that if women use HRT they should take the drugs at the lowest effective dose for the shortest time possible.

The five provinces included in the CIHI analysis were Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia.

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