

"I'm scared to take HRT because I may be at risk of clots/stroke"

A very good question & one answer does in no way fit all.

You may have a family history of stroke or clots or may have had a stroke or clot yourself previously and you are very worried that you will have to 'put up' with the symptoms of menopause.

Factors that contribute towards stroke is being overweight and smoking in addition to family history. There are various routes of taking HRT. When applied transdermally, so this can be a patch, spray or gel applied to the skin, there is no increased risk of clot or stroke and far less risk than oral HRT.

I would suggest a full assessment with a GP trained in the menopause, your menopause nurse or menopause specialist to talk you through all the options available to you.

Oestrogen is widely known to have a beneficial effect on cardiovascular (heart) health, it reduces the risk of stroke and cardiovascular disease (CVD) in women. We are better protected against CVD during our pre-menopausal years (from onset of puberty to perimenopause) because of oestrogen. CVD is a main cause of death in women in the UK.

When we go through perimenopause our levels of oestrogen fluctuate and reduce; therefore, when we reach menopause, we are at greater risk of developing CVD. If there are no contraindications for taking HRT, it can be taken perimenopausal or early in the menopause to support protection against CVD.

You can further reduce your risk of CVD by following basic healthy living guidelines.

Exercise

Healthy eating

Stop smoking

Limit or omit alcohol