ORAL FREE COMMUNICATIONS - TUESDAY

F087
HORMONE REPLACEMENT THERAPY IMPROVES POSTURAL BALANCE FUNCTION IN MENOPAUSAL WOMEN
T Naesscn, B Lindmark, C Lagerstrom, H-C Larsen, and I Persson,
Departments of Obstetrics & Gynecology, Centers for Caring Sciences and Audiology, University hospital. Uppsala, Sweden.

To study possible effects of HRT on postural balance function. 100 women (on average 52.6 years and 34 months since last menstrual period) were randomly assigned either to sequential HRT or non-treatment for 3 months, thereafter all were on HRT up to 6 months. Postural balance (sway velocity), was measured by static posturography before and after blind-folding and application of vibration stimuli (20-100 Hz) on the call muscles to induce imbalance. After 3 months, sway velocity in estrogen users had decreased (improved) (p = 0.008) for the frequencies (20-100 Hz) combined and differed from that in non-users (p = 0.048). In estrogen users, sway velocities were consistently lower for all and significantly so for most of the separate frequencies (p = 0.01-0.044). During continued estrogen exposure up to 6 months sway velocity further improved for the frequencies combined, (p = 0.000006), as for the separate frequencies, (p = 0.03-0.000002). This may suggest that more than three months of estrogen exposure is needed to get maximum effects on sway velocity. We conclude that the fracture protective effect of HRT may be partially mediated through effects on postural balance function. This mechanism may explain the rapid increase in forearm fracture incidence early after menopause and the rapid dynamic between estrogen exposure and hip fracture protection.

F088
BONE LOSS IN WOMEN OVER 60 YEARS PREVENTED BY ULTRA-LOW DOSES OF 17-B ESTRADIOL
T Naesscn, L Berglund, and U Ulmsten,
Departments of Obstetrics & Gynecology and 2Geriatrics, University hospital, S-751 85 Uppsala, Sweden.

To study possible effects of ultra-low doses of 17-b estradiol on bone metabolism and bone mass 30 healthy women, 60 years and older, were randomly assigned to a 6-month trial with either an ultralow dose of parenteral estradiol (7.5 µg/24h) delivered by vaginal rings (Oestrin®), or no treatment in the proportion 2:1. Forearm bone mineral density (BMD) increased in estradiol users by 2.1% (95%CI: -0.4, 3.8), p = 0.008, contrasting to a decrease in non-users of -2.7% (±5.1, 0.4), p = 0.077. In repeated measurement analysis, the changes in the two study groups differed significantly (p = 0.0004). Consistent with these changes, serum alkaline phosphatases, bone specific alkaline phosphatase, and osteocalcin decreased in the treatment group (8%, p = 0.019, 14%, p = 0.0006 and 9%, p = 0.02, respectively), suggesting a reduced bone turnover. No significant changes were found in non-users. These data indicate that ultra-low doses of parenteral 17-b estradiol, barely affecting the serum estradiol levels and not necessitating addition of a progestogen, may affect bone loss in elderly women. Low-dose regimens, having few side effects, may potentially enhance the otherwise poor compliance with therapies involving conventional doses and regimens.

F089
THE EFFECTS OF SURGICAL MENOPAUSE AND PARENTERAL HORMONE REPLACEMENT THERAPY ON BONE DENSITY, MENOPAUSAL SYMPTOMS AND HORMONE PROFILES.
CHM Anderson, KS Raju, ML Forsling, MJ Wheeler,
Department of Gynaecology, St Thomas' Hospital, London, UK.

The aims were to compare bone density (BD), hormone profiles and menopausal symptoms in premenopausal oophorectomised women treated with either transdermal estradiol patches or subcutaneous implants. Forty five premenopausal women undergoing TAM BSO were randomised to receive either estradiol implants (50mg). estradiol patches (50µg/24hrs) or oestradiol (50mg) and testosterone (100mg) implants. Vertebral BD was measured preoperatively and after 1 year of treatment. Oestradiol, testosterone and gonadotrophins were measured preoperatively and at 6 months and 12 months and at each visit menopausal symptoms were assessed by means of a questionnaire. There was a significant decrease in BD in women treated by estradiol patch (prop BD 331.9mg/cm², BD at 1 year 317.8mg/cm², p = 0.005). There were no changes in BD in the implant groups. Oestriol levels in the patch group were significantly lower than in the implant groups at 6.8 and 12 months (p = 0.05) and gonadotrophins significantly higher (p = 0.001). There were no differences in the symptom scores between the groups. This study shows that in the doses studied oophorectomised women treated with implants maintained BD, whereas those on patches lost bone. Lower oestradiol concentrations achieved with the patch may account for these findings. Short term menopausal symptoms were relieved in all three groups.

F090
BASELINE CHARACTERISTICS DO NOT AFFECT THE RESPONSE TO RALOXIFENE HYDROCHLORIDE IN JAPANESE WOMEN WITH OSTEOPOROSIS.
H Mori, H Orimo, Y Taketani, J Ishii, T Inoue, T Fujita, Y Ohashi, W Hustler, B Miltak
1Second Department of Internal Medicine, Osaka City University Medical School, Osaka, Japan. 2Department of Gynecology and Obstetrics, University of Tokyo, Tokyo, Japan. 3Saitama Medical College, Iruma, Japan. 4Department of Orthopedics, Hamamatsu University School of Medicine, Hamamatsu, Japan. 5Calcium Institution, Kishiwada, Japan. 6School of Health Sciences and Nursing, University of Tokyo, Tokyo, Japan. 7LRL, Eli Lilly and Company, Indianapolis, IN 46285.

We evaluated the hypothesis that response to treatment with raloxifene, a selective estrogen receptor modulator (SERM), might be predicted by anthropomorphic characteristics or baseline bone turnover rate. This was assessed in a 24-week, prospective, randomized study of Japanese postmenopausal women with osteoporosis (lumbar bone mineral density <2.0 S.D. below peak bone density). Placebo or raloxifene hydrochloride (30 mg/d or 90mg/d) was administered with 800 mg of calcium lactate each day. Biochemical markers of bone turnover [serum osteocalcin (OC), serum tartrate-resistant acid phosphatase (TRAP), urinary deoxypyridinoline/Cr (DPYR) and serum lipids (total, low density lipoprotein (LDL), and high density lipoprotein (HDL) cholesterol)] were measured at baseline and after 4, 8, 12 and 24 weeks of treatment. Lumbar (L-2-L-4) bone mineral density was determined by DXA at baseline and at 12 and 24 weeks.

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