

**Oregon’s Drug Review:
Evidence on Estrogen**

Estrogen tablets, patches, or vaginal rings relieve signs of menopause. These include hot flashes, sleep problems, and mood changes. Vaginal estrogen treats vaginal dryness. Oral estrogen may be used with progesterone. Estrogen oral tablets and topical patches also prevent thinning of bone. Estrogen slightly increases risk for heart attacks and breast cancer.

Which Drugs Were Included In This Review?

This review looked at the following estrogens.

(It did not include estrogen in topical gels or emulsions.)

<p><u>Tablets</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ estradiol (Estrace, Gynodiol) ▪ estradiol & norethindrone acetate (Activella) ▪ ethinyl estradiol & norethindrone (Femhrt 1/5) ▪ estradiol & norgestimate (Prefest) ▪ estrogens conjugated, equine (Premarin) ▪ estrogens conjugated, synthetic (Cenestin, Enjuvia) ▪ estrogens conjugated & medroxyprogesterone (Prempro/Premphase) ▪ estrogens esterified (Menest) ▪ estropipate (Ogen, Ortho-est) 	<p><u>Patches</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ estradiol transderma (Alora, Climara, Esclim, Estraderm, Vlivelle) ▪ estradiol & norethindrone acetate (Combipatch) <p><u>Vaginal Preparations</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ estrogens conjugated cream (Premarin cream) ▪ estradiol cream (Estrace) ▪ estradiol ring (Estring, Femring) ▪ estradiol tabs (Vagifem)
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What Do These Drugs Have In Common?

- Oral and patch forms of estrogens relieve signs of menopause effectively.
- Oral and patch forms of estrogen improve bone density.
- Serious side effects may occur when estrogen is used for more than 5 years. Ask your doctor about the risks and benefits of estrogen for you.

What Are the Key Differences Among These Drugs?

- Some women obtain relief of vaginal dryness with vaginal forms of estrogen.
- Vaginal forms do not prevent osteoporosis.

Ask Your Health Care Practitioner During Your Next Visit:

- Am I taking the most effective drug for my condition?
- Are alternative drugs available that are equally effective?
- Are alternative drugs available that are effective, but less costly?
- Is there a generic available for my brand name drug?

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- Will this drug interact with other medications I take?