

The sex gap in cardiometabolic diseases: What we (don't) know and why it matters?

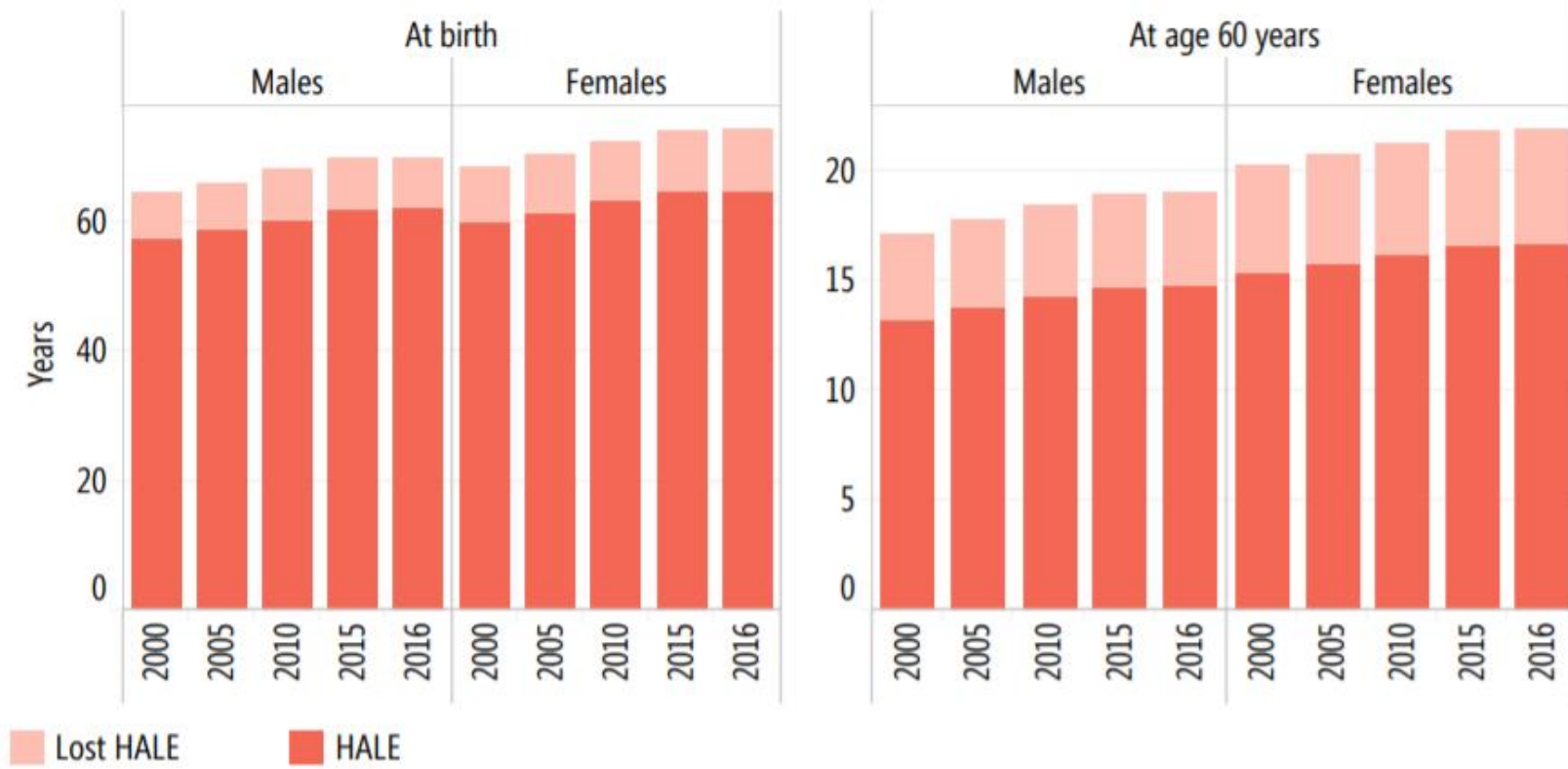
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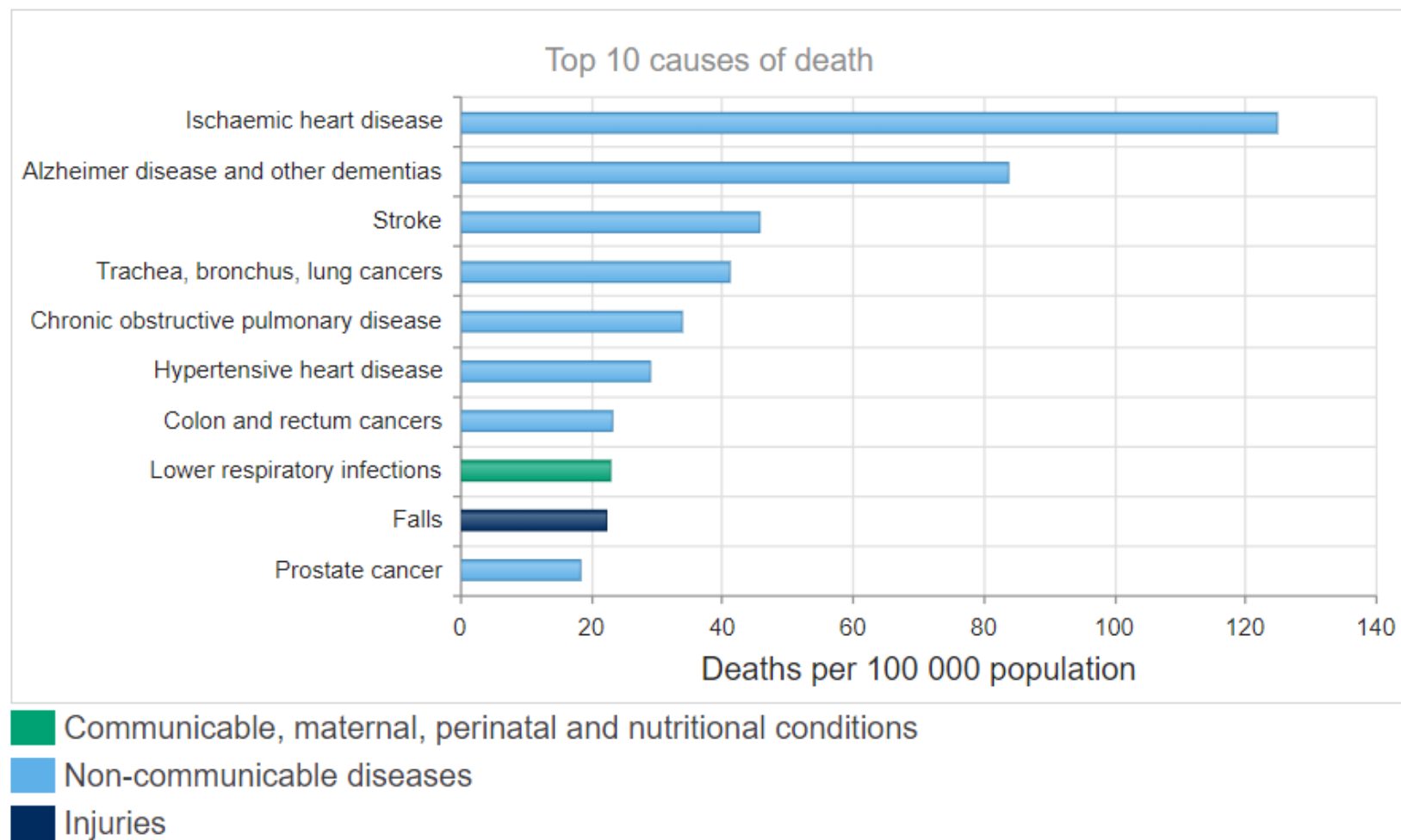
Life expectancy

Fig. 1.3
Global life expectancy and HALE, 2000–2016

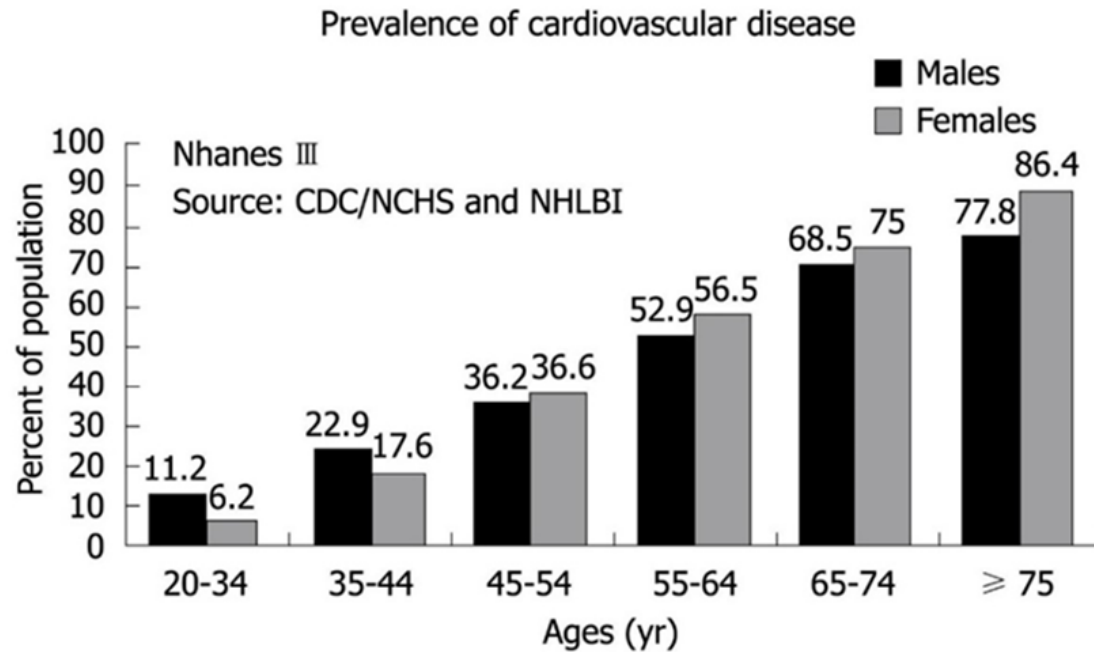


Source: WHO (2018) (2).

Top 10 causes of death, Switzerland

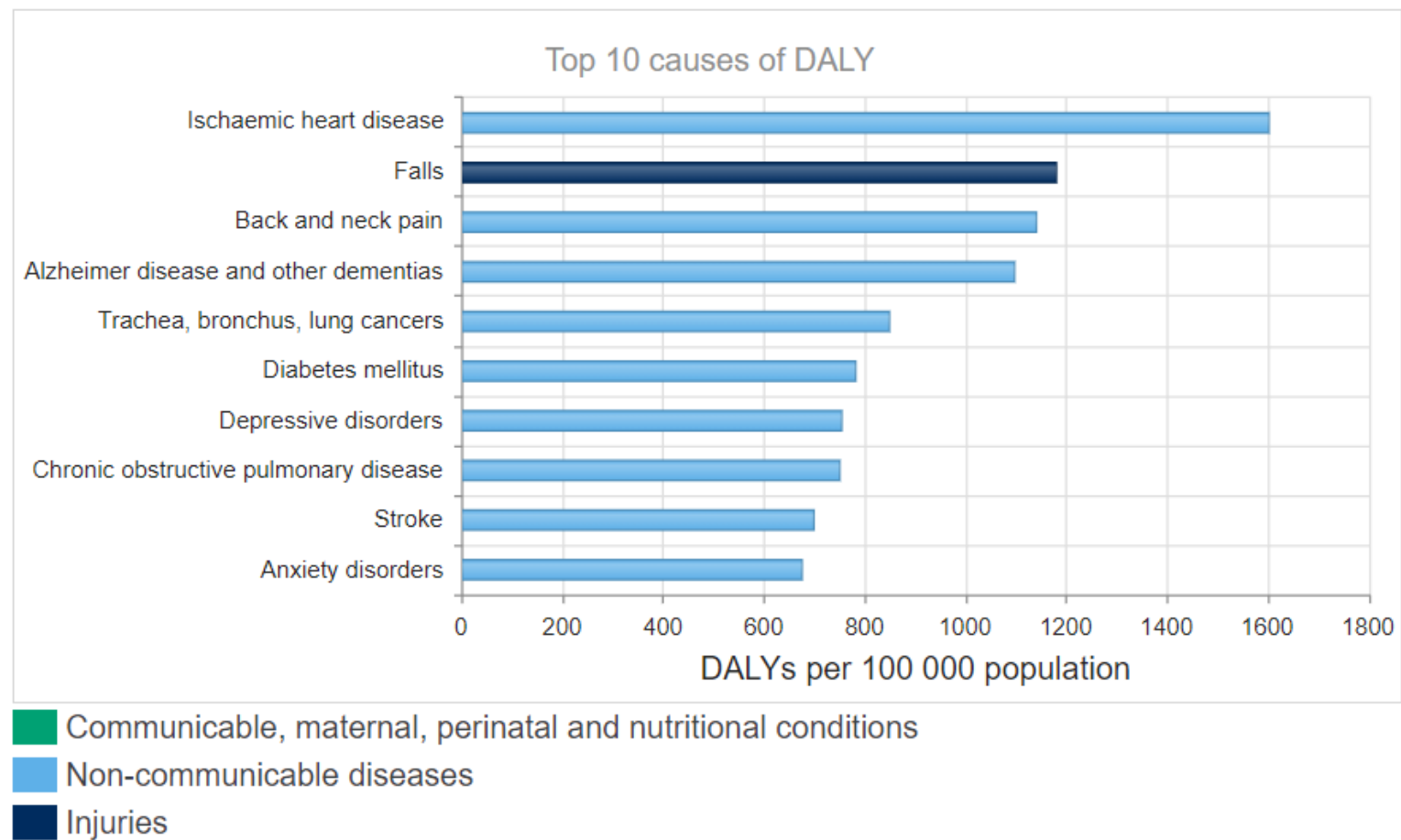


Sex differences in risk of cardiovascular disease



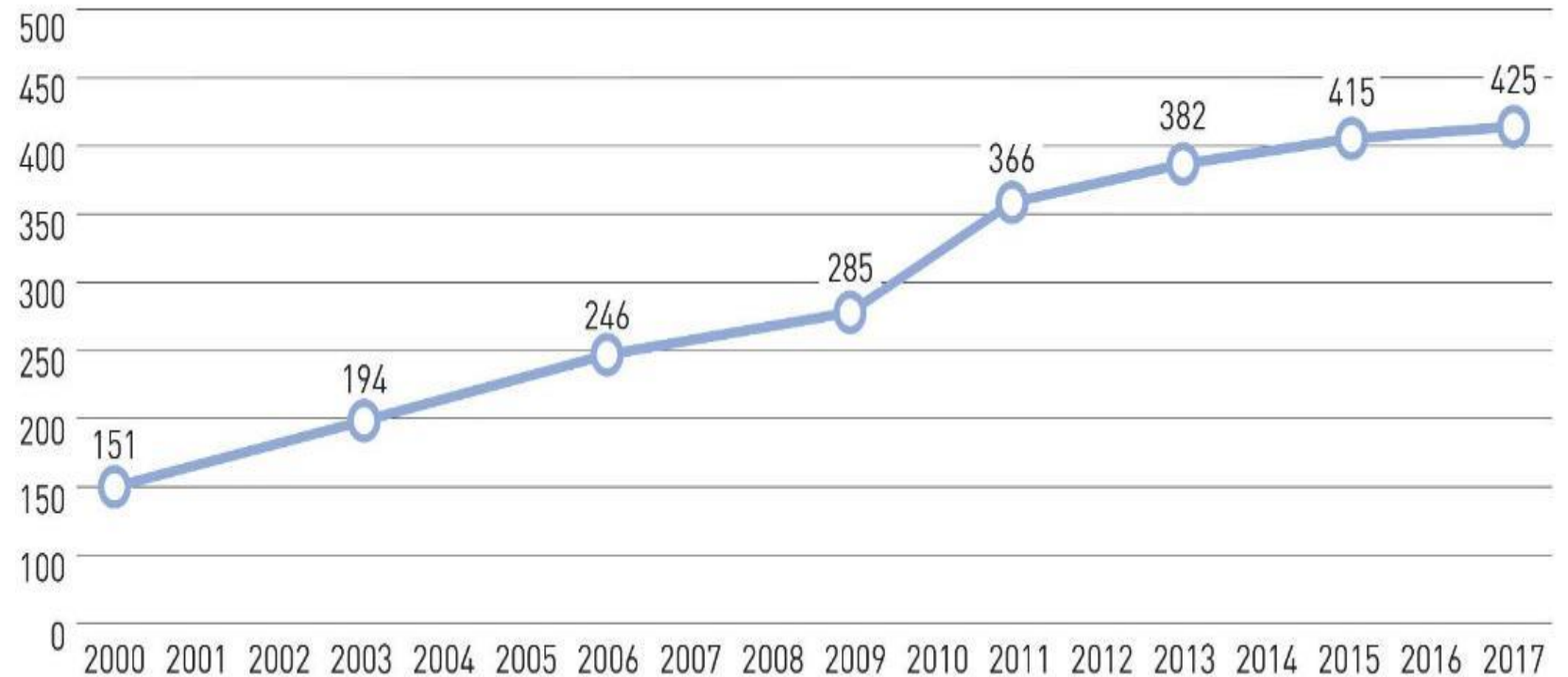
In Switzerland, CVD is responsible for 37 % of deaths among men and 41% among women

Top 10 causes of DALY, Switzerland

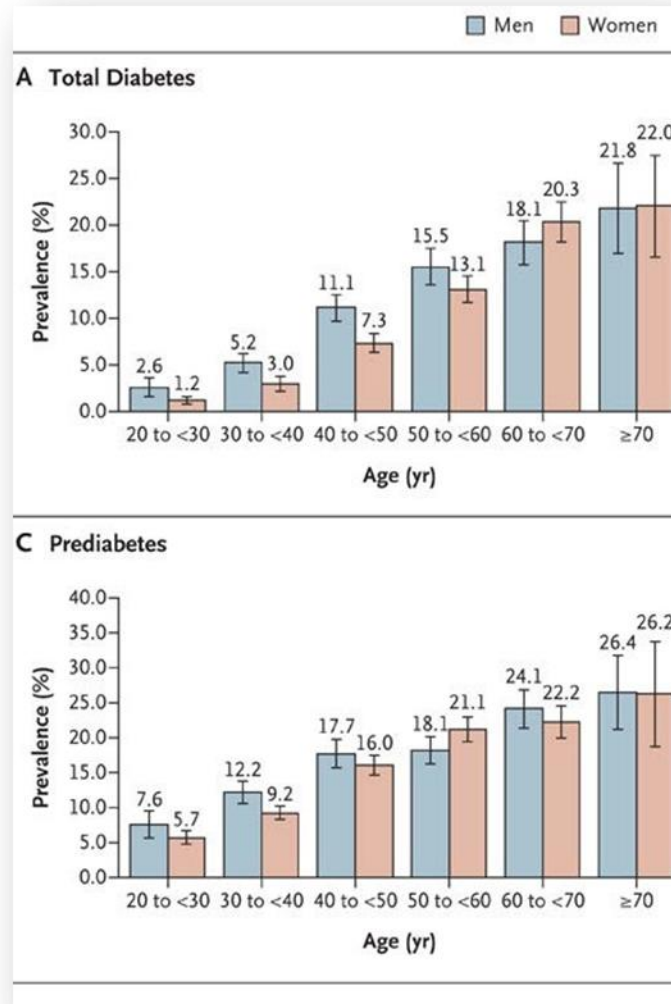


Total number of adults with diabetes (20-79 years), Globally

In 2017
425
million
adults had diabetes

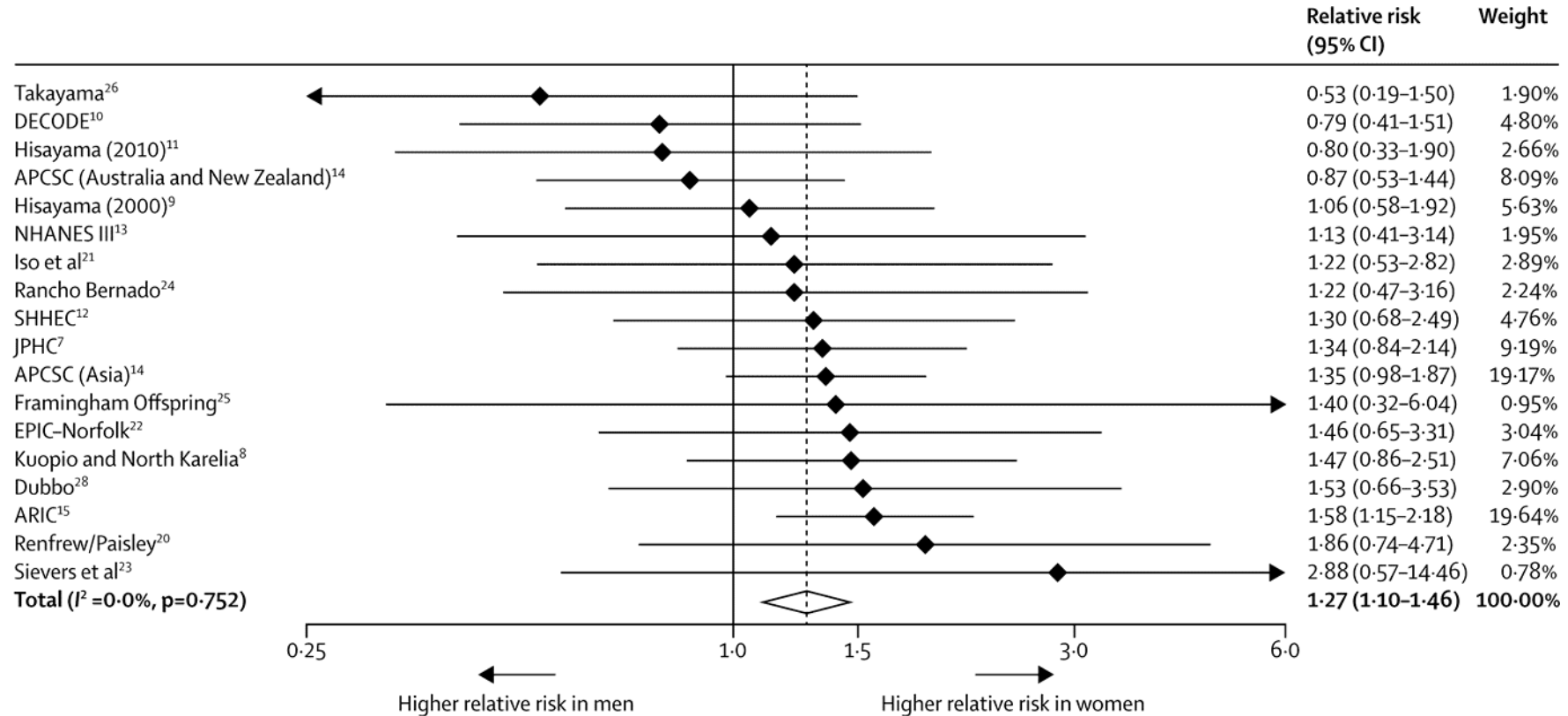


Sex differences in diabetes risk

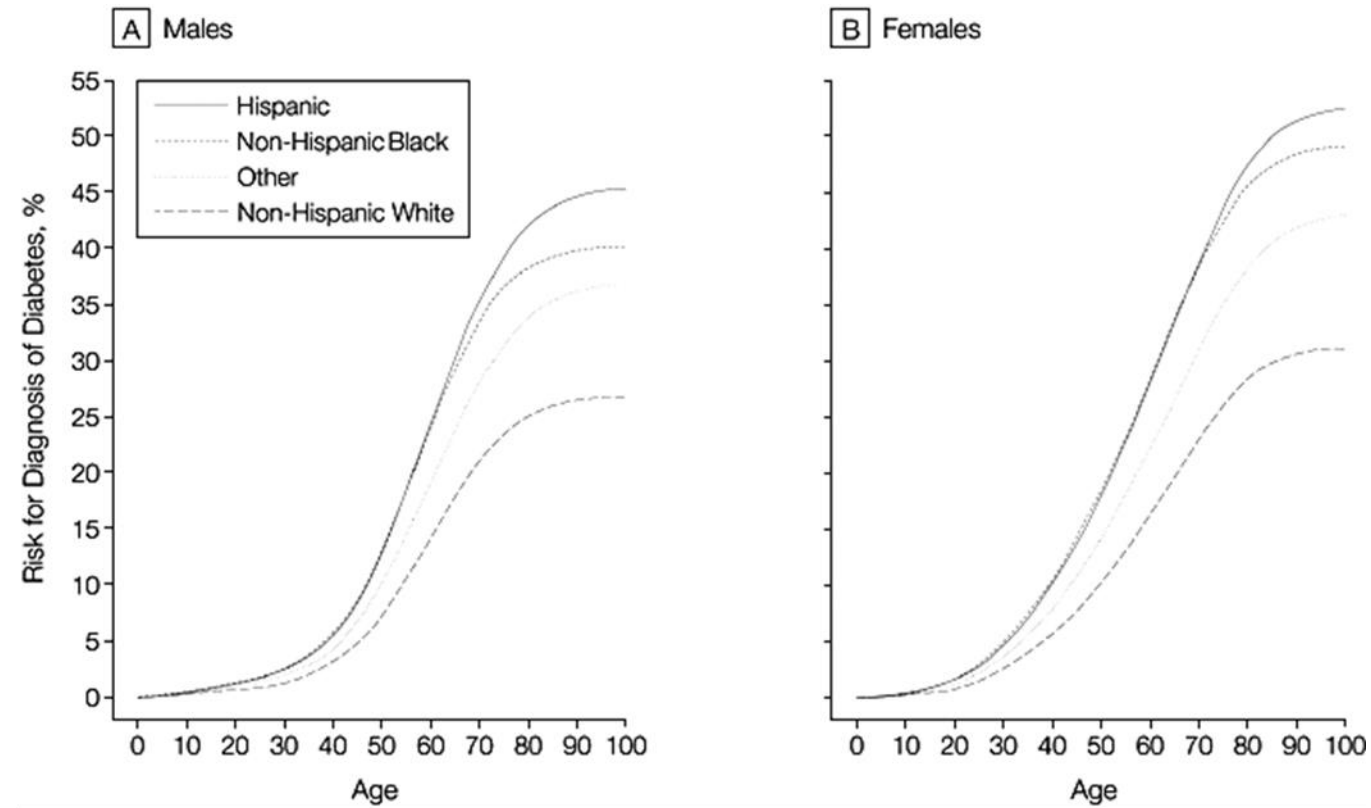


- The prevalence of prediabetes and diabetes is lower in women than in men aged ≤ 60 years
- Women in their 60s and 70s have similar prevalence of diabetes or higher than men of the same age

Diabetic women to men relative risk for CHD and Stroke

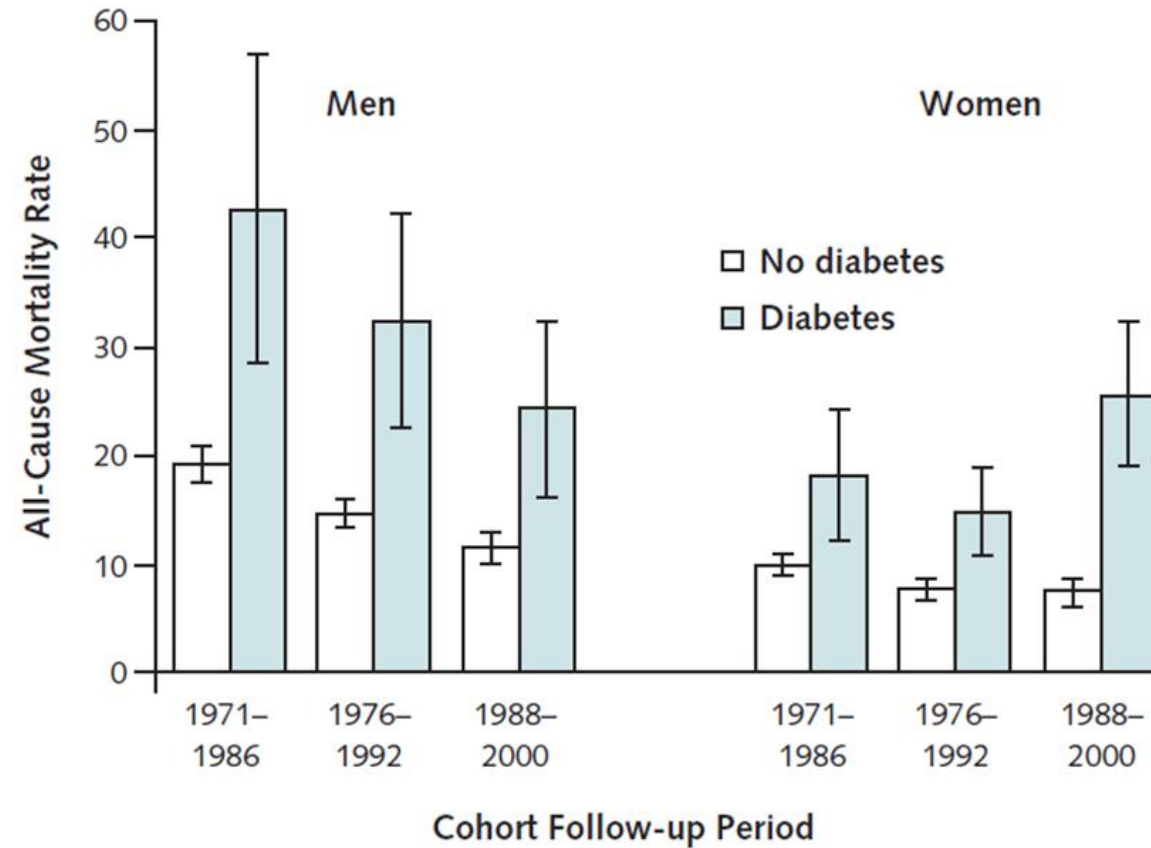


Lifetime risk for diagnosis of diabetes

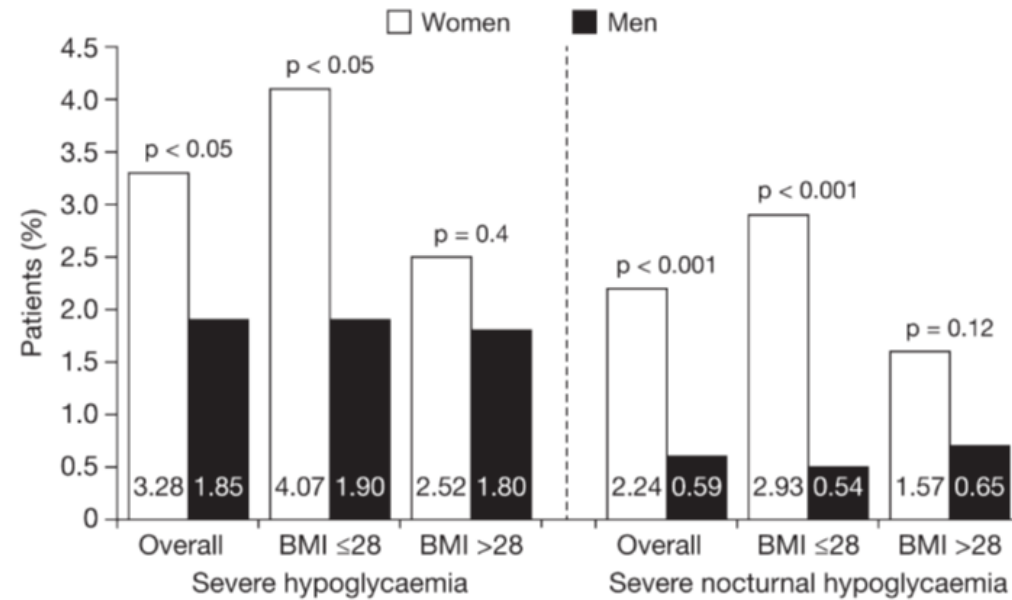
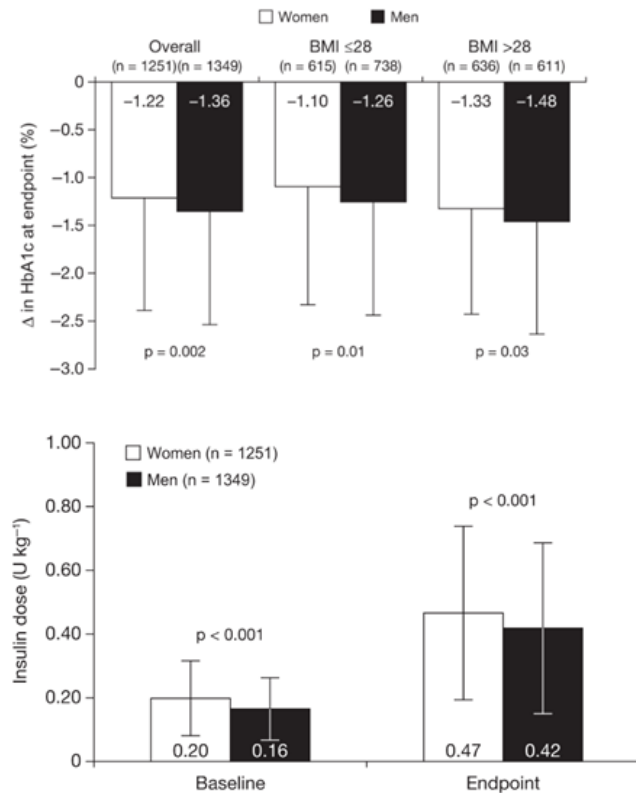


Age-adjusted all-cause mortality

U.S. population
age 35 to 74
years with and
without
diabetes, by
cohort and sex

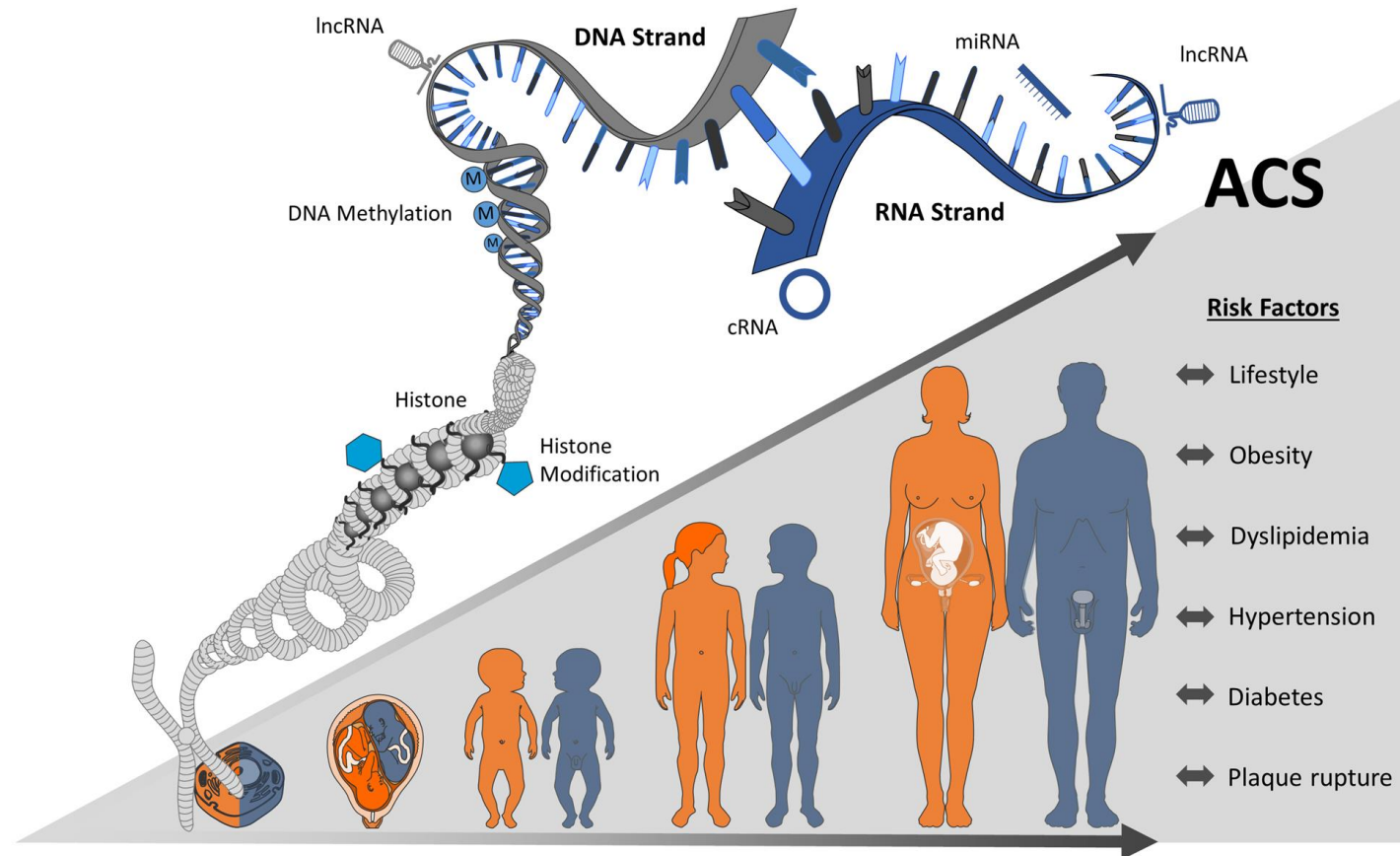


Effect of sex on treatment outcomes in T2D

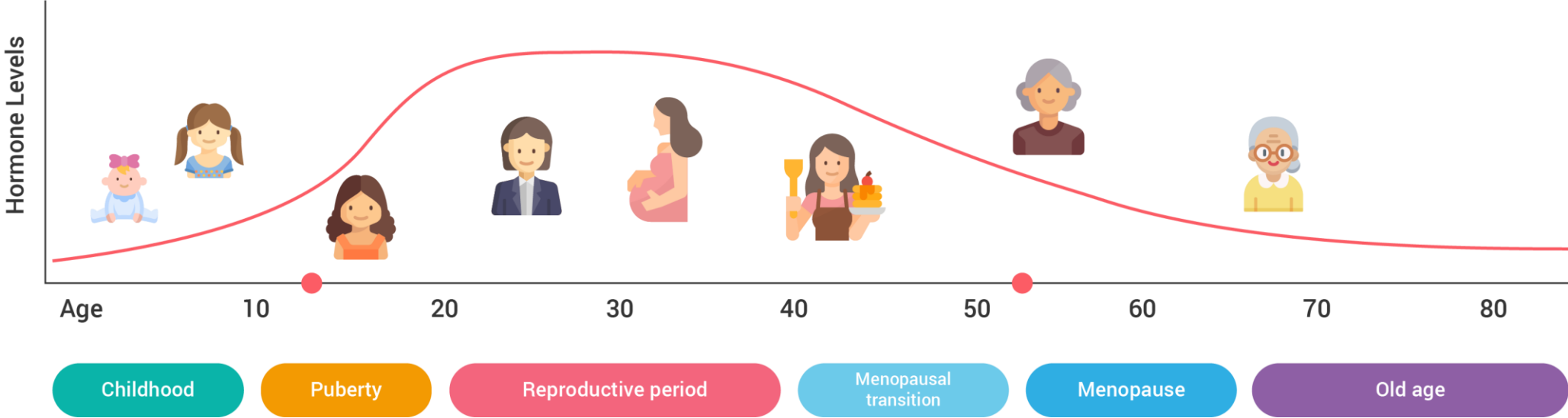


6 RCTs of insulin glargine or NPH insulin

Sex differences in cardiometabolic diseases

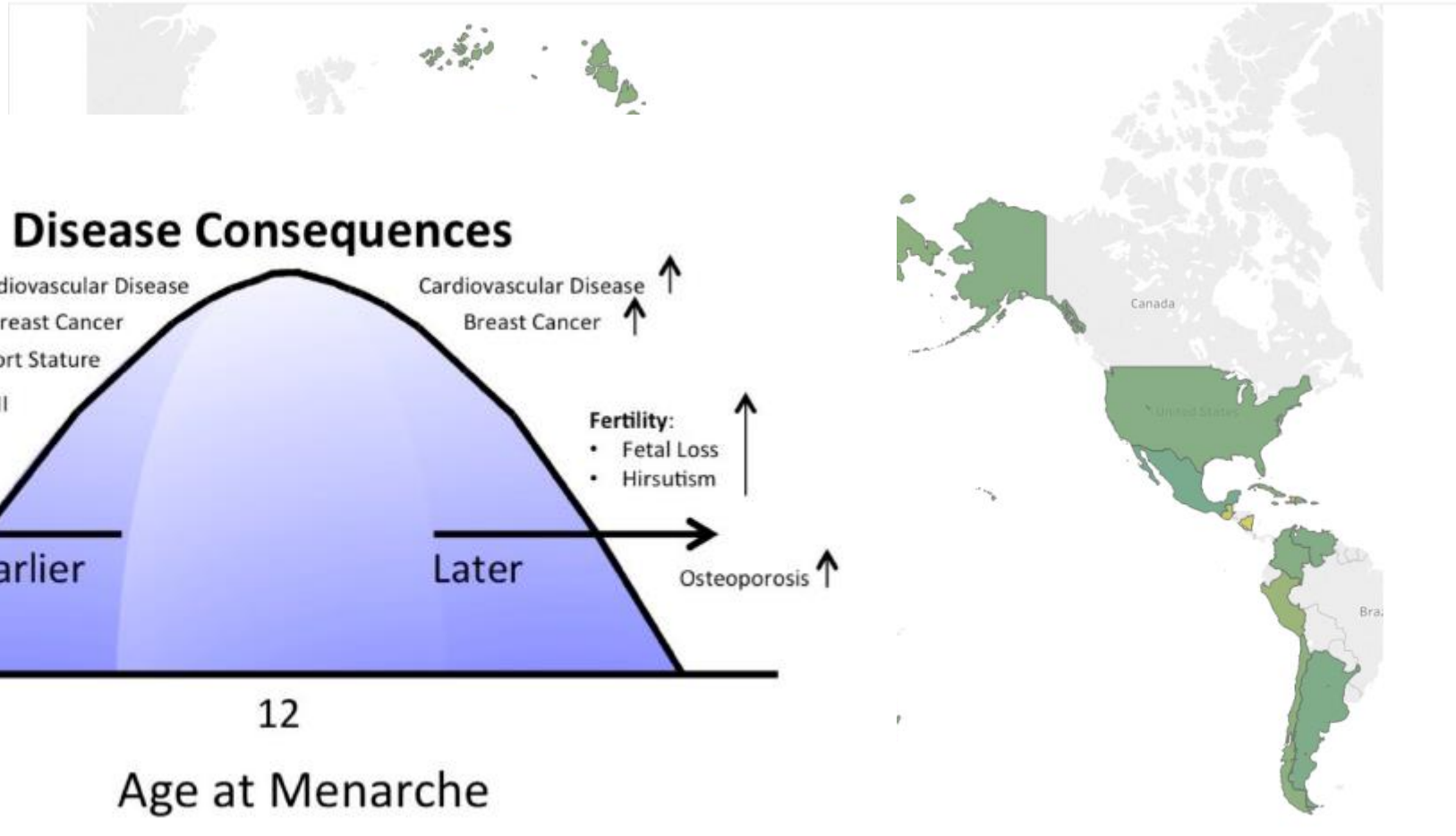


Women's life cycle



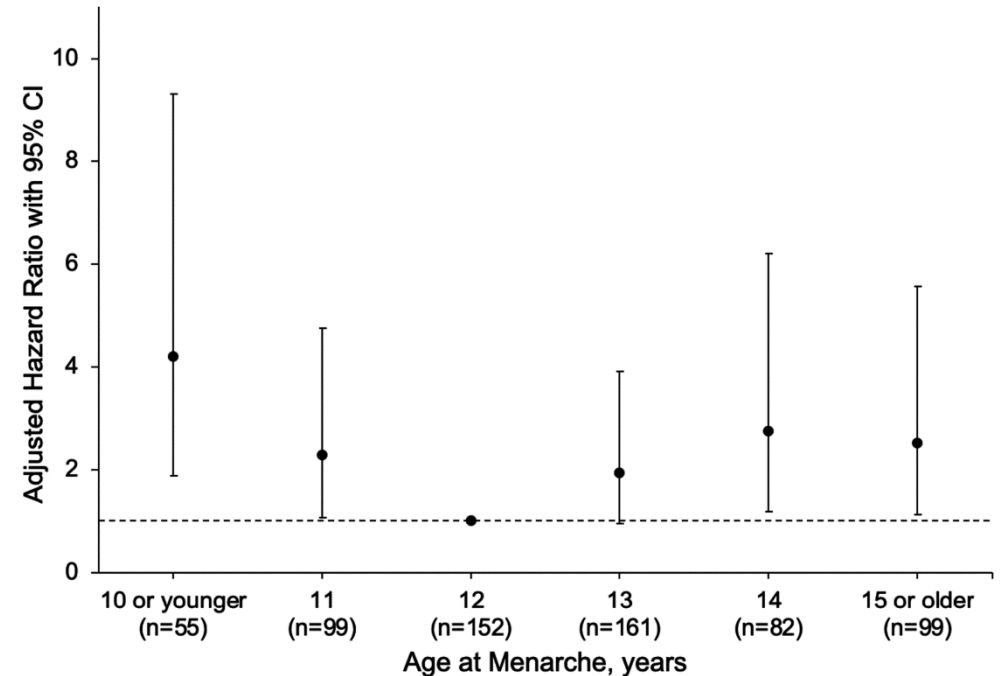
Age at menarche

Age at menarche by country map

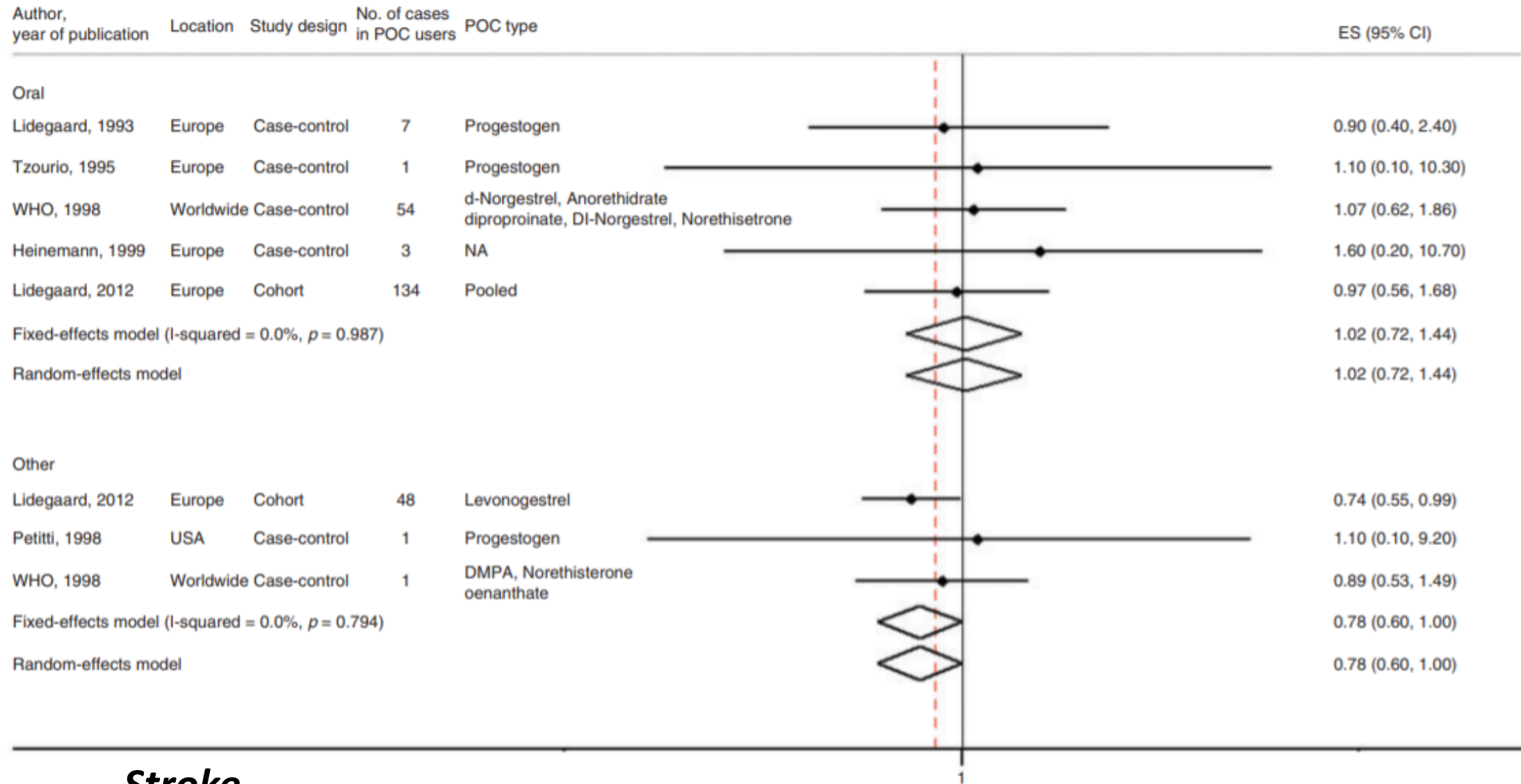


Age at menarche and CVD risk

- The association between the age at menarche and CVD is U-shaped
- Age at menarche could be a potential screening tool for women at risk of adverse CVD events.
- Strong inter-relationship between age at menarche and BMI limits the ability to consider their distinct influences on disease risks in traditional observational studies.



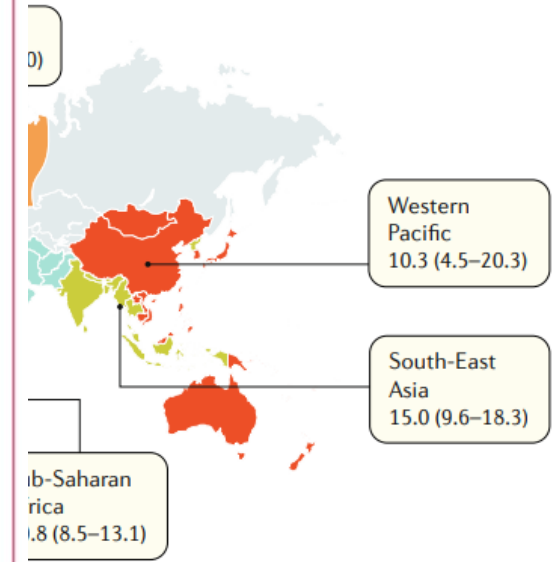
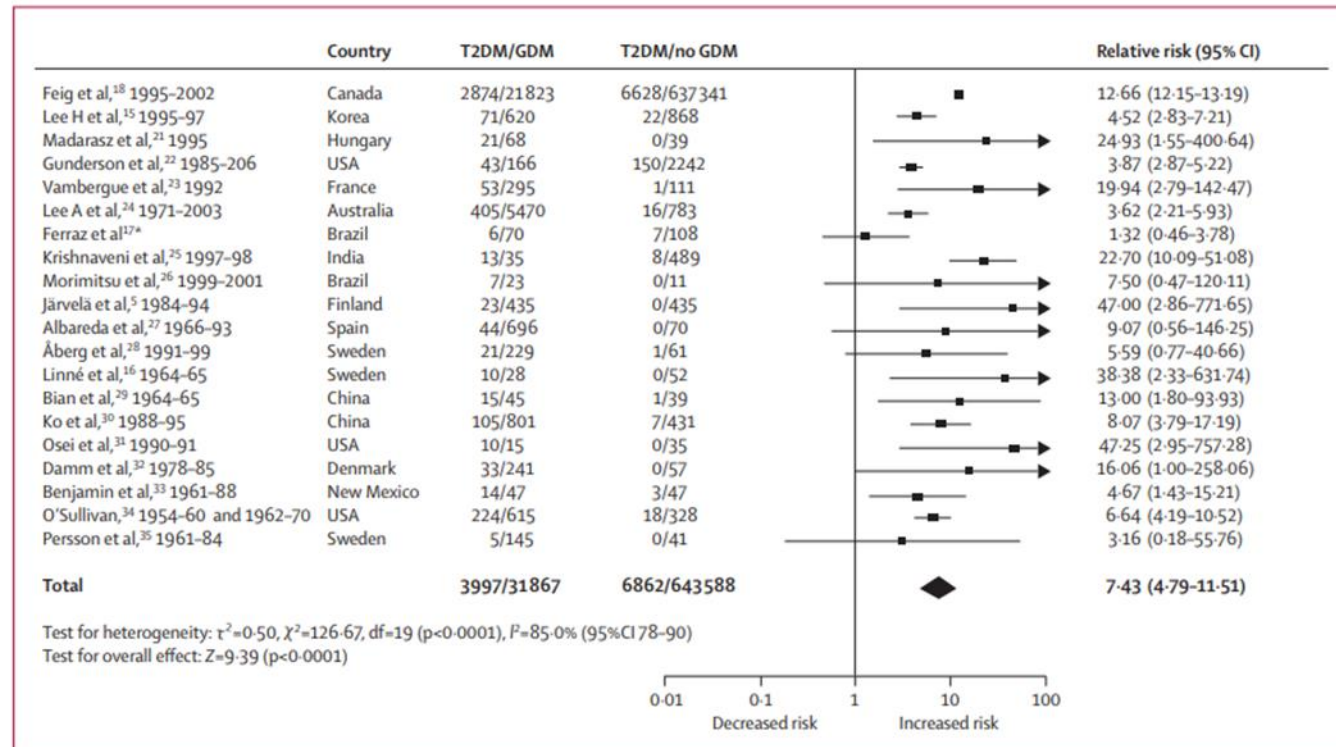
Women's Ischemia Syndrome Evaluation to assess major adverse CVD outcomes (the first occurrence of all-cause death, nonfatal myocardial infarction, nonfatal stroke, or heart failure hospitalization)



Stroke

Gestational diabetes (GDM)

- Hyperglycaemia the pregnancy (late second weeks of gestation) trimester (27–40 weeks delivery)
- The most common pregnancy (1% to > 10%)
- Prevalence of undiagnosed and even overt diabetes increasing.
- Maternal overweight childbearing, previous history of type 2 diabetes are major GDM risk factors



(range) prevalence (%) of gestational diabetes (website).

Figure 2: Risk of type 2 diabetes mellitus (T2DM) after gestational diabetes mellitus (GDM). x-axis is log scale. Each solid square represents a relative risk. Horizontal lines indicate 95% CIs. df=degrees of freedom. *Dates not available.

Gestational diabetes (GDM)

REVIEW

Open Access

Fetal sex and maternal pregnancy outcomes: a systematic review and meta-

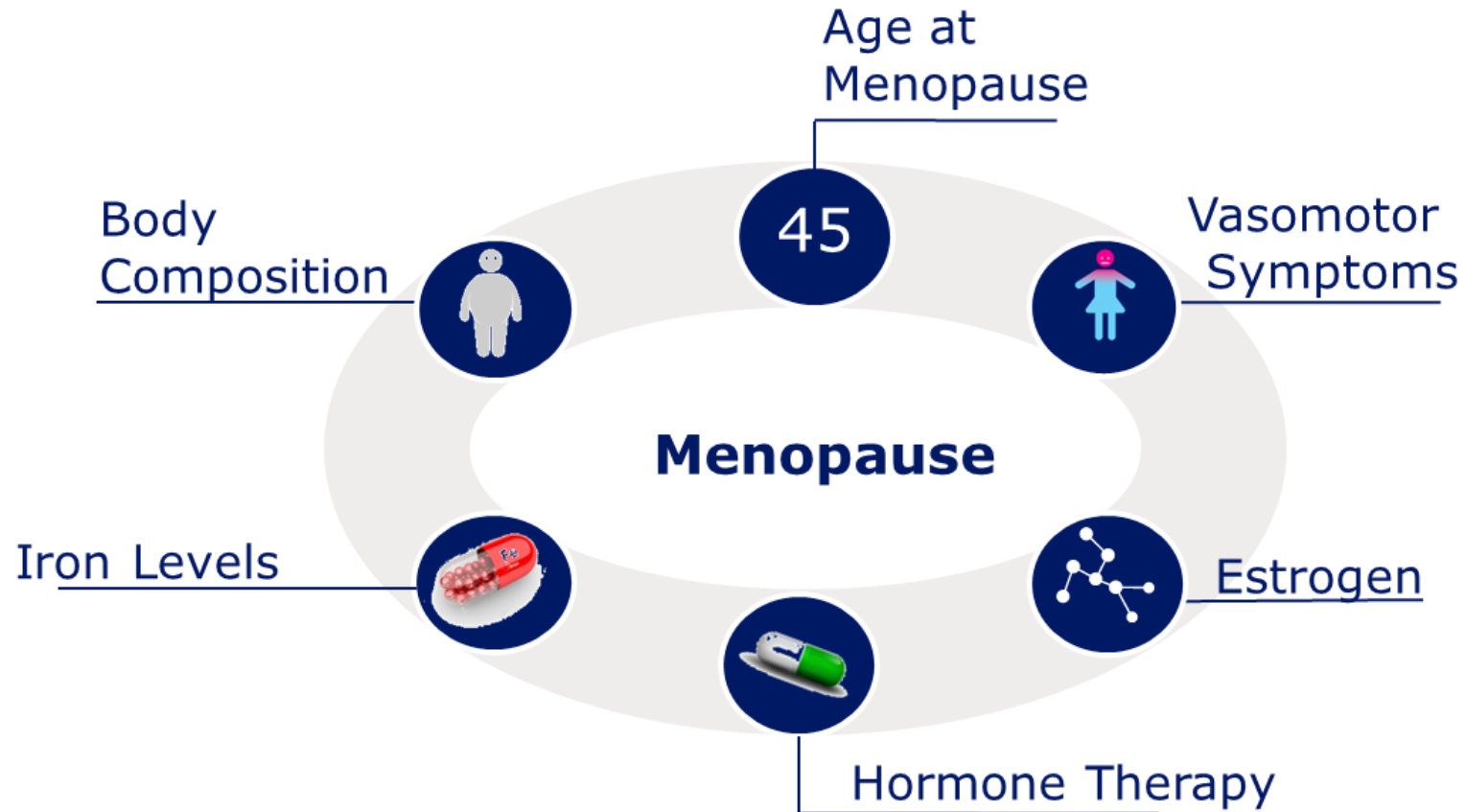


Male fetal sex was associated with term pre-eclampsia (pooled OR 1.07 [95%CI 1.06 to 1.09]) and gestational diabetes (pooled OR 1.04 [1.02 to 1.07]). All other pregnancy complications (i.e., gestational hypertension, total pre-eclampsia, eclampsia, placental abruption, and post-partum hemorrhage) tended to be associated with male fetal sex, except for preterm pre-eclampsia, which was more associated with female fetal sex.

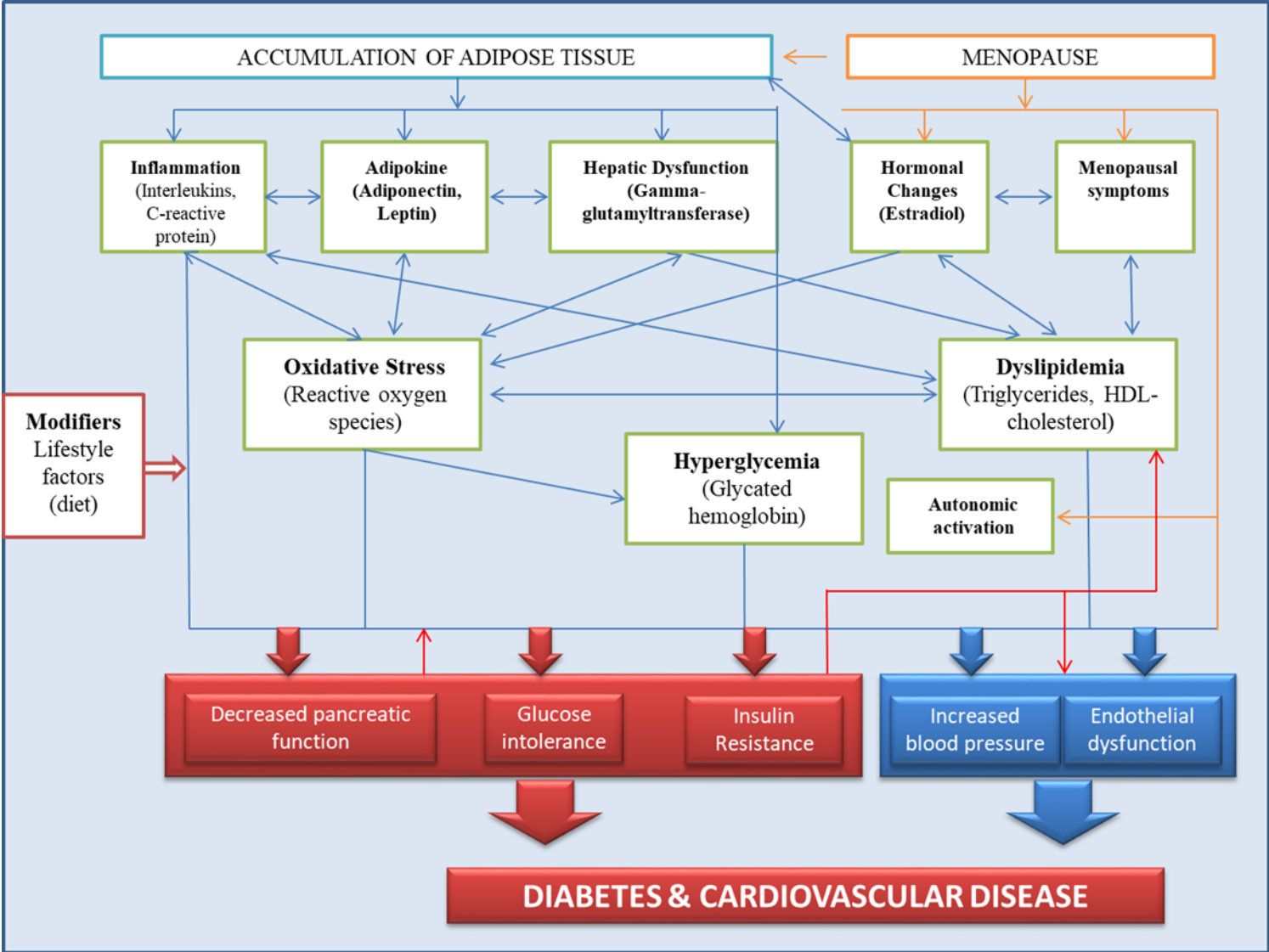
Search strategy: Six electronic databases Ovid MEDLINE, EMBASE, Cochrane Central, Web-of-Science, PubMed, and Google Scholar were systematically searched to identify eligible studies. Reference lists of the included studies and contact with experts were also used for identification of studies.

Selection criteria: Observational studies that assessed fetal sex and the presence of maternal pregnancy

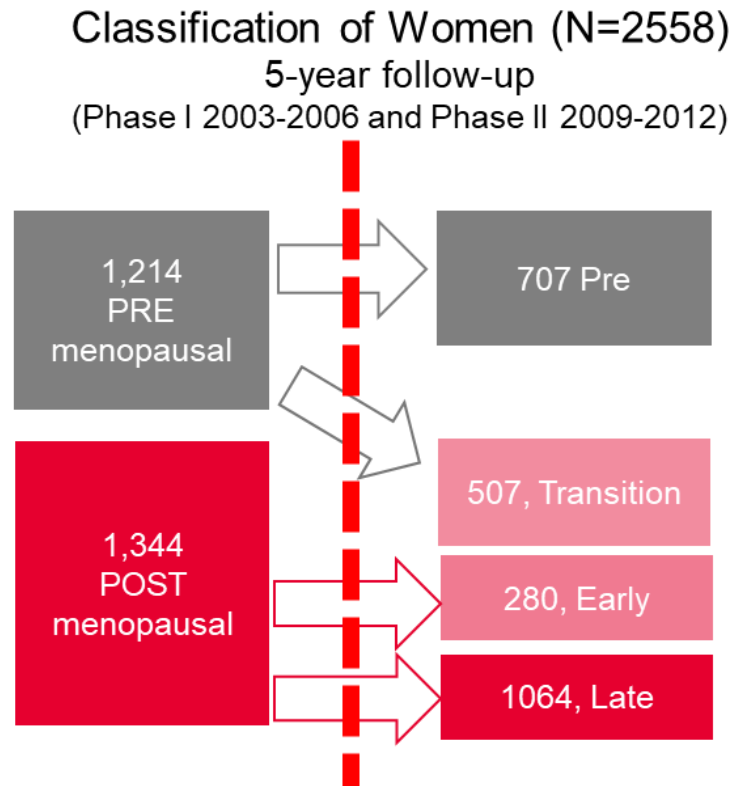
Menopause



Adverse metabolic changes related to menopause



Is chronological ageing or stage of reproductive aging the dominant factor contributing to cardiometabolic changes in women?



COLAUS
Design

Cardiometabolic outcomes

- Blood pressure, serum lipids, glucose level, inflammatory markers, and body mass index

Independent variable

- **Reproductive age** (Pre, Trans, Early, Late) (PRIMARY)
- **Chronologic age** (SECONDARY)

Confounding factors

- Medications and Hormone replacement therapy
- Baseline comorbid CV disease
- Smoking, alcohol, physical activity, education
- Body mass index*

Is chronological ageing or stage of reproductive aging the dominant factor contributing to cardiometabolic changes in women?

Cross-sectional analysis of risk factors

	PRE	TRANS	Early POST	Late LPOST	p-value
Body mass index (kg/m ²)	Ref	0.513 [-0.0814, 0.997]	1.500 [0.722, 2.213]*	2.049 [1.142, 2.845]*	0.000
Systolic blood pressure (mmHg)	Ref	-0.616 [-2.489, 1.257]	-1.663 [-4.259, 0.933]	-0.417 [-3.387, 2.554]	0.691
Diastolic blood pressure (mmHg)	Ref	1.950 [0.701, 3.200]*	3.367 [1.635, 5.099]*	3.196 [1.214, 5.178]*	0.001
Total cholesterol (mmol/L)	Ref	0.087 [-0.0275, 0.203]	0.440 [0.280, 0.600]*	0.380 [0.198, 0.563]*	0.000
High-density lipoprotein (mmol/L)	Ref	0.050 [0.0012, 0.099]*	0.072 [0.0043, 0.139]*	0.066 [-0.0109, 0.144]	0.104
Triglycerides (mmol/L)	Ref	0.015 [-0.037, 0.066]*	0.008 [-0.063, 0.0796]	0.057 [-0.0244, 0.139]	0.206
Fasting glucose (mmol/L)	Ref	0.090 [0.0022, 0.177]*	0.143 [0.022, 0.264]*	0.214 [0.075, 0.352]*	0.003
Insulin (microIU/mL)	Ref	-0.031 [-0.099, 0.038]	-0.026 [-0.120, 0.068]	0.067 [-0.0397, 0.175]	0.222
High sensitivity c-reactive protein (mg/L)	Ref	-0.057 [-0.182, 0.068]	-0.126 [-0.298, 0.0472]	0.031 [-0.167, 0.229]	0.866
Leptin (ng/mL)	Ref	-0.019 [-0.098, 0.059]	0.064 [-0.043, 0.171]	0.086 [-0.0371, 0.209]	0.136
Adiponectin (ng/mL)	Ref	-0.004 [-0.085, 0.076]	0.138 [0.0285, 0.247]*	0.173 [0.0479, 0.299]*	0.004
Tumor necrosis factor-alpha (pg/mL)	Ref	-0.007 [-0.125, 0.109]	0.042 [-0.118, 0.203]	0.050 [-0.135, 0.236]	0.536
Interleukin 6 (pg/mL)	Ref	0.164 [-0.0258, 0.353]	0.343 [0.0847, 0.601]*	0.436 [0.138, 0.734]*	0.003
Interleukin 1b (pg/mL)	Ref	-0.170 [-0.402, 0.063]	-0.098 [-0.419, 0.223]	-0.088 [-0.459, 0.284]	0.703

Corrected for use of hypoglycemic drugs, statins and antihypertensive drugs, **AGE**, smoking history, alcohol-use, baseline physical activity, baseline cardiovascular disease, use of hormone replacement therapy, and body mass index

Is chronological ageing or stage of reproductive aging the dominant factor contributing to cardiometabolic changes in women?

Longitudinal analysis of risk factors

	PRE	TRANS	Early POST	Late POST
Body mass index (kg/m ²)	<i>Ref</i>	2.927 (-2.762, 8.617)	1.492 (-5.606, 8.591)	0.336 (-4.781, 5.452)
Systolic blood pressure (mmHg)	<i>Ref</i>	-1.348 (-19.40, 16.70)	-11.98 (-34.47, 10.52)	7.346 (-8.911, 23.60)
Diastolic blood pressure (mmHg)	<i>Ref</i>	2.161 (-9.808, 14.13)	-2.720 (-17.64, 12.20)	4.806 (-5.977, 15.59)
Total cholesterol (mmol/L)	<i>Ref</i>	0.530 (-0.585, 1.645)	1.112 (-0.279, 2.504)	0.984 (-0.0188, 1.987)
High-density lipoprotein (mmol/L)	<i>Ref</i>	-0.189 (-0.691, 0.314)	-0.347 (-0.974, 0.280)	0.0465 (-0.405, 0.498)
Triglycerides (mmol/L)	<i>Ref</i>	0.440 (-0.0590, 0.940)	0.199 (-0.424, 0.822)	0.0334 (-0.416, 0.482)
Fasting glucose (mmol/L)	<i>Ref</i>	0.274 (-0.461, 1.010)	0.0152 (-0.902, 0.932)	0.137 (-0.524, 0.798)
Insulin (microIU/mL)	<i>Ref</i>	-0.337 (-0.928, 0.253)	-0.207 (-0.936, 0.523)	-0.0757 (-0.592, 0.440)
High sensitivity c-reactive protein (mg/L)	<i>Ref</i>	0.0574 (-1.122, 1.237)	-0.778 (-2.239, 0.684)	-0.0779 (-1.135, 0.979)
Leptin (ng/mL)	<i>Ref</i>	0.175 (-0.833, 1.183)	0.715 (-0.494, 1.924)	0.251 (-0.638, 1.139)
Adiponectin (ng/mL)	<i>Ref</i>	-0.102 (-0.857, 0.653)	-0.00553 (-0.928, 0.917)	0.330 (-0.332, 0.992)
Tumor necrosis factor alpha (pg/mL) ²	<i>Ref</i>	0.107 (-1.007, 1.220)	0.158 (-1.190, 1.507)	0.222 (-0.766, 1.211)
Interleukin 6 (pg/mL)	<i>Ref</i>	0.0159 (-1.825, 1.857)	-0.170 (-2.399, 2.059)	-0.586 (-2.224, 1.053)
Interleukin 1b (pg/mL) ²	<i>Ref</i>	0.133 (-1.742, 2.009)	-1.041 (-3.356, 1.275)	-0.215 (-1.901, 1.471)

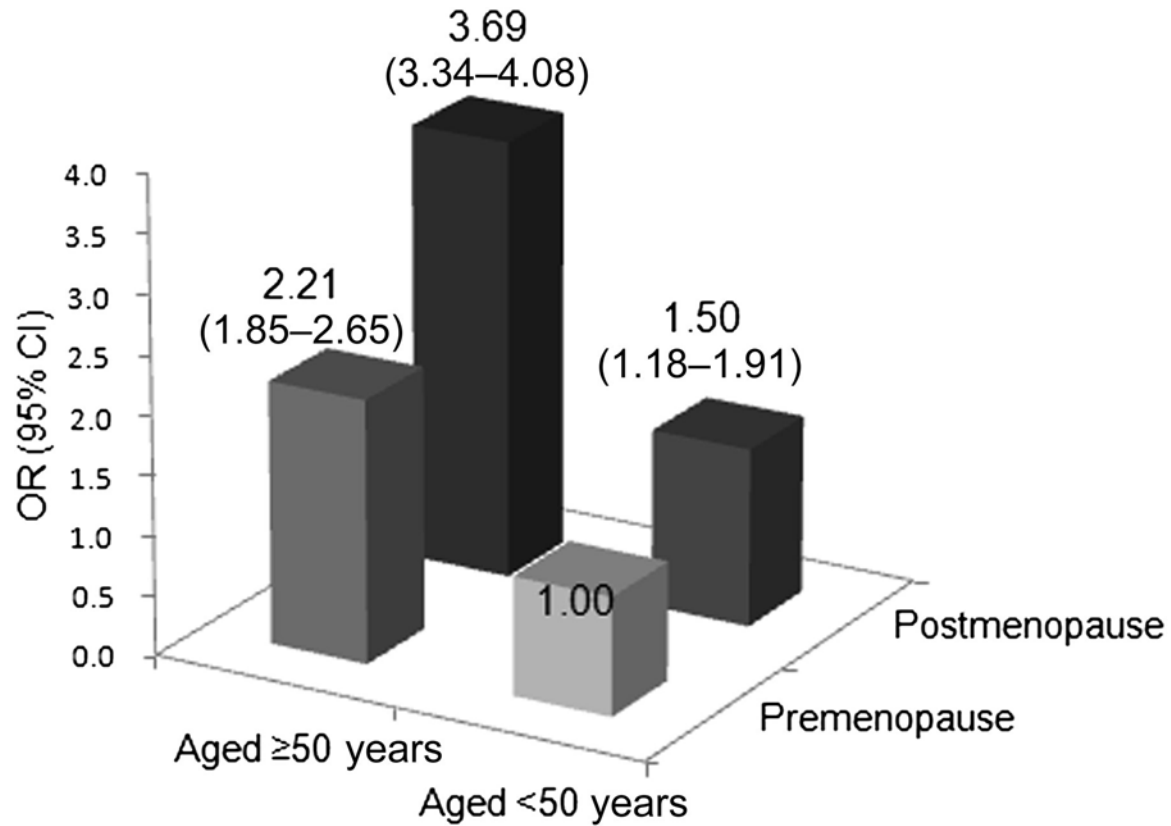
Is chronological ageing or stage of reproductive aging the dominant factor contributing to cardiometabolic changes in women?

Longitudinal analysis of risk factors (using AGE)

Our findings suggest that the accumulation of deleterious exposures and damage with aging might contribute to menopause-related changes in CVD, and future studies will need to disentangle the relative contribution of effect of age and menopause in CVD risk

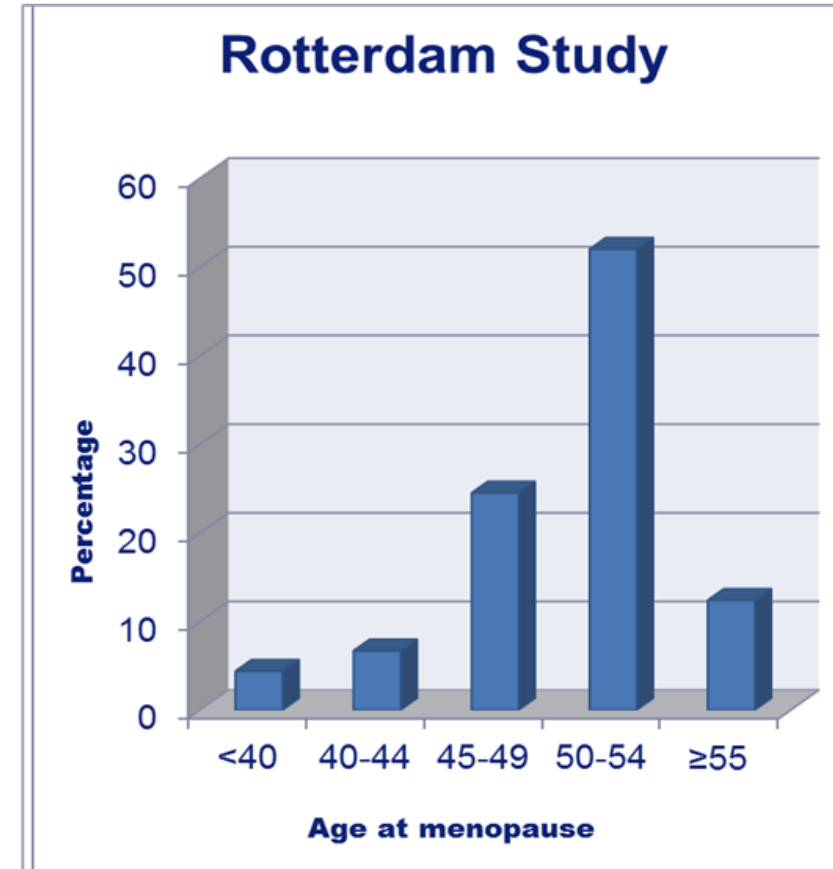
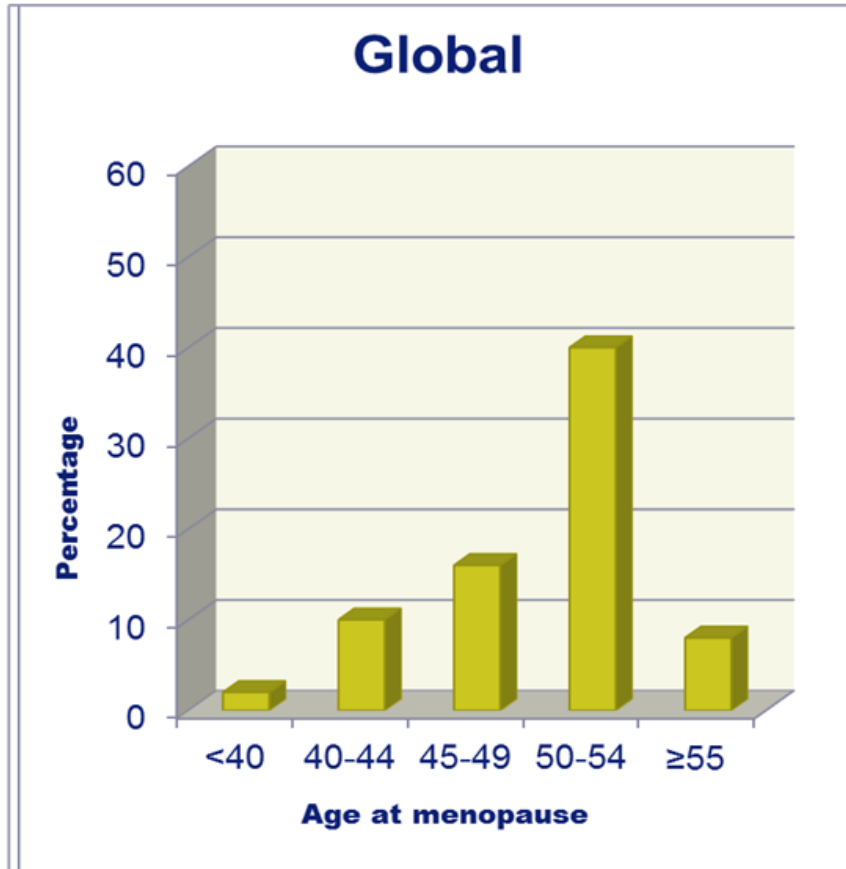
	Beta	95% CI	P value
	-0.014	(-0.041, 0.014)	0.330
	0.736	(0.649, 0.824)	<0.000
	0.018	(-0.040, 0.076)	0.541
	0.023	(0.022, 0.032)	<0.000
	0.006	(0.004, 0.009)	<0.000
	0.006	(0.004, 0.008)	<0.000
	0.0038	(0.0002, 0.007)	0.038
	0.0007	(-0.002, 0.003)	0.614
	0.002	(-0.003, 0.008)	0.455
	-0.002	(-0.006, 0.003)	0.422
	0.009	(0.005, 0.012)	<0.000
	0.006	(0.001, 0.011)	0.022
	-0.013	(-0.021, -0.004)	0.004
	-0.007	(-0.014, -0.0002)	0.042

Menopause and Diabetes: independent of age

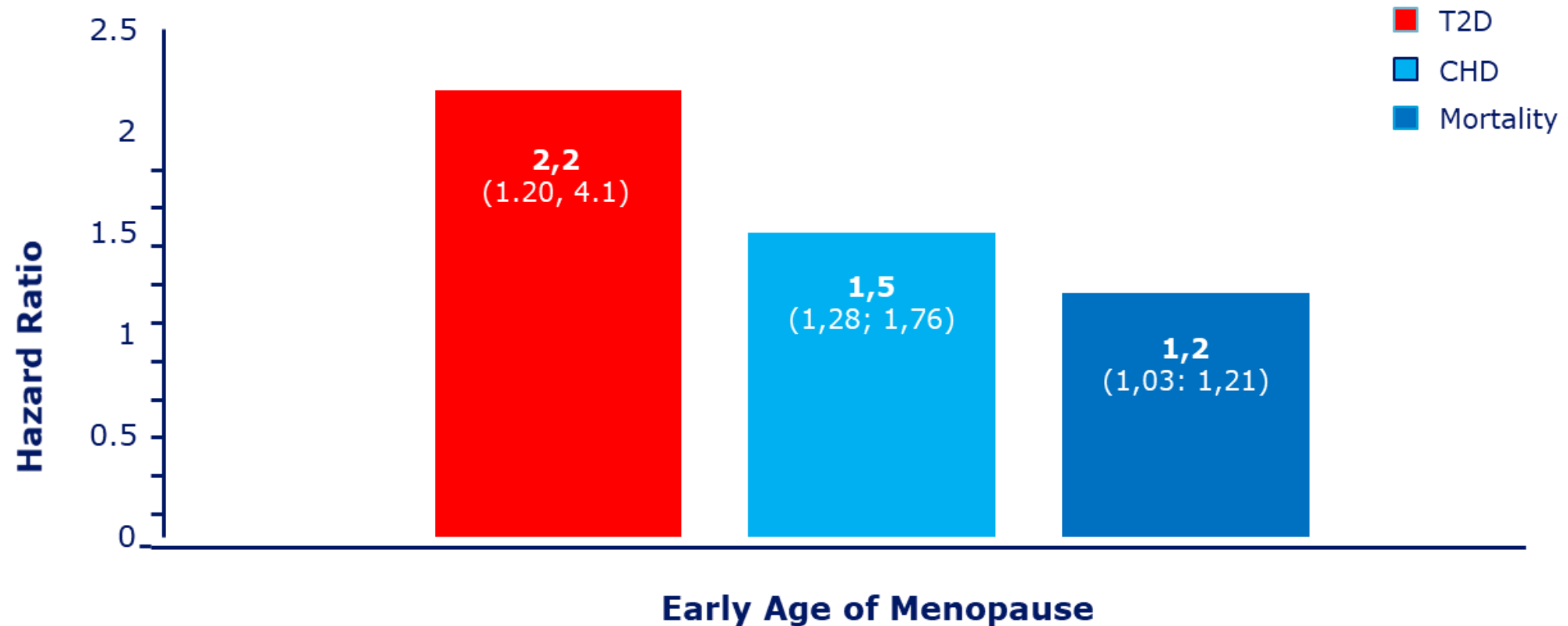


- Older age and postmenopausal status alone significantly associated with an elevated OR for dysglycemia
- The postmenopausal condition and older age additively influence an elevated risk
- Early onset of menopause is associated with increased risk of T2D

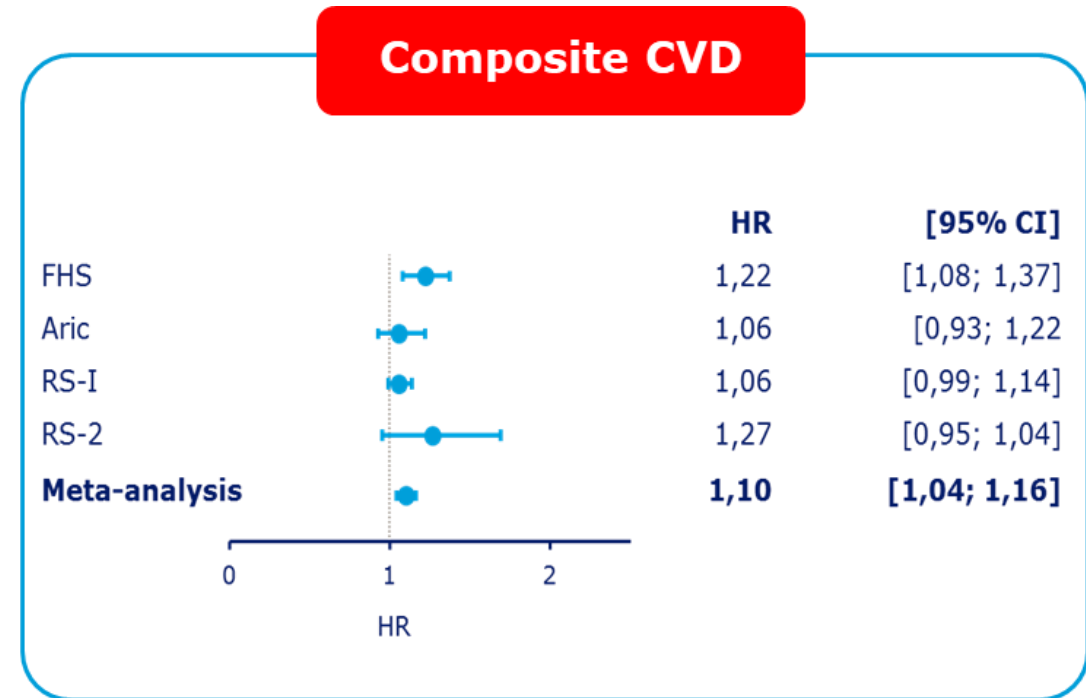
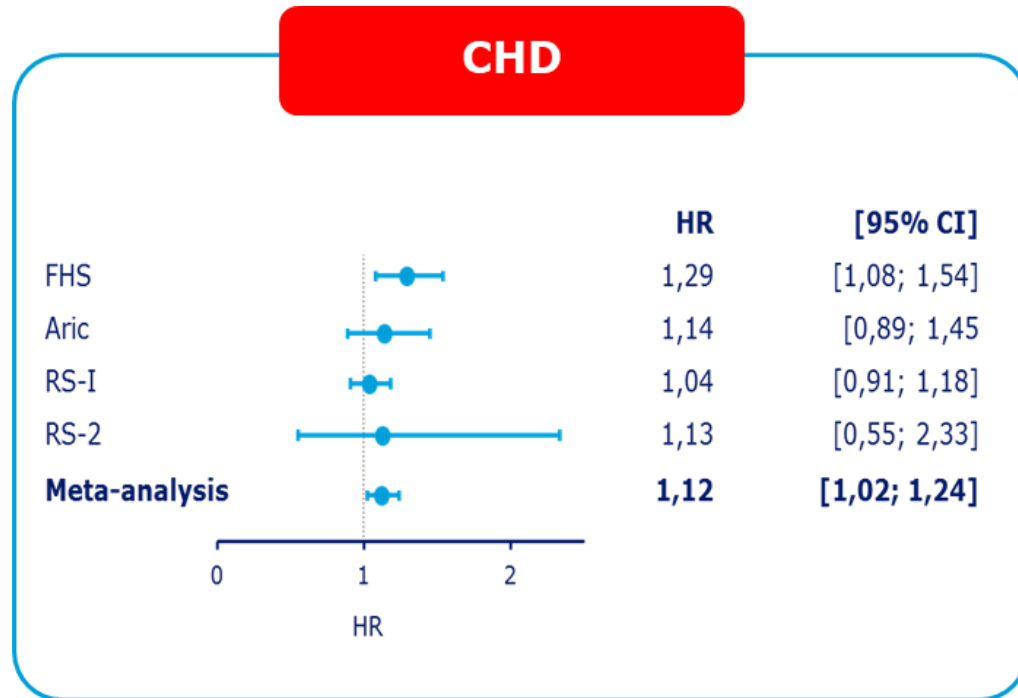
Age at menopause



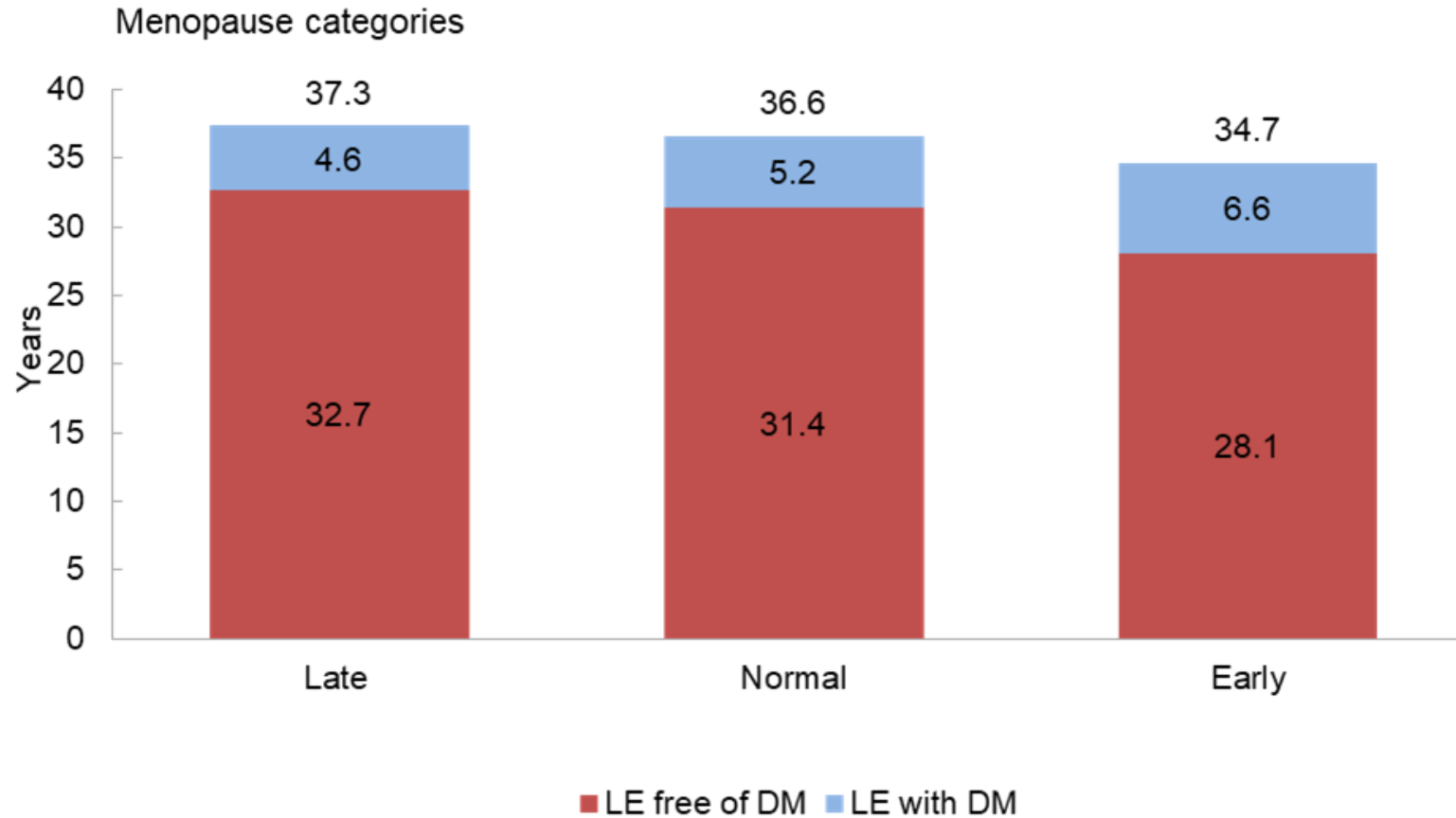
Early menopause and cardiometabolic risk



Early menopause and cardiometabolic risk

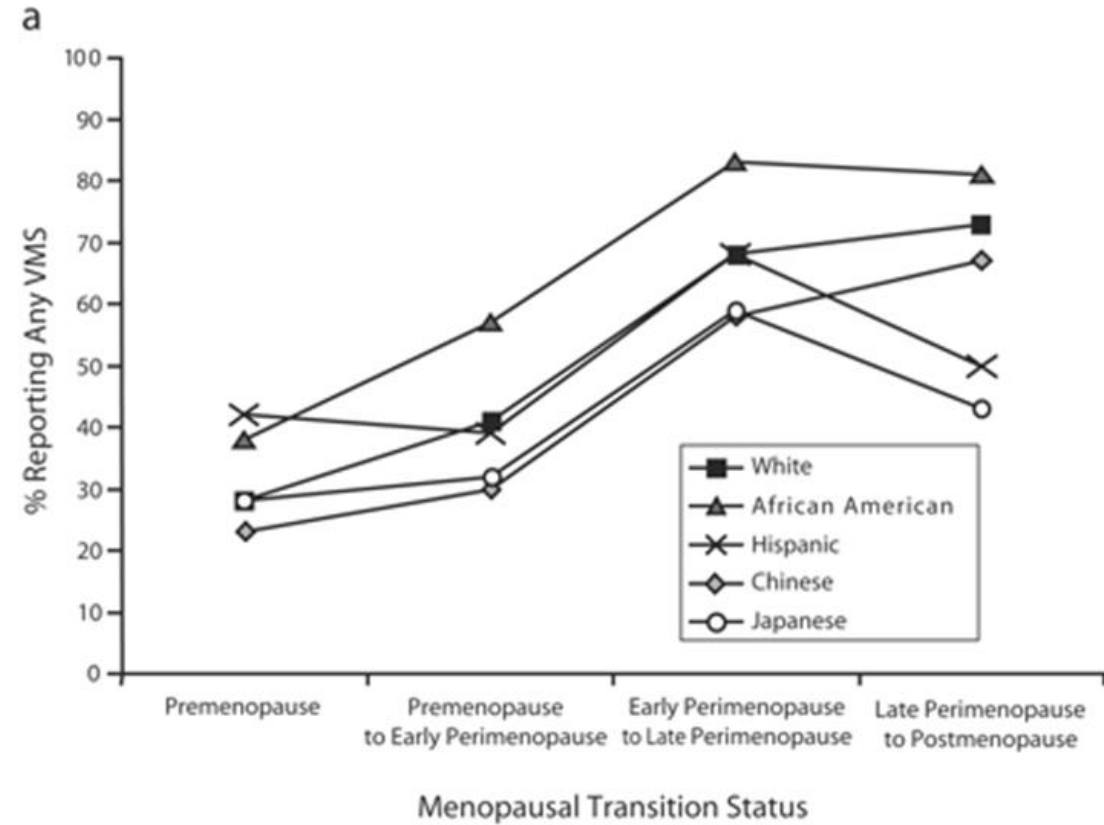


Early menopause and life expectancy

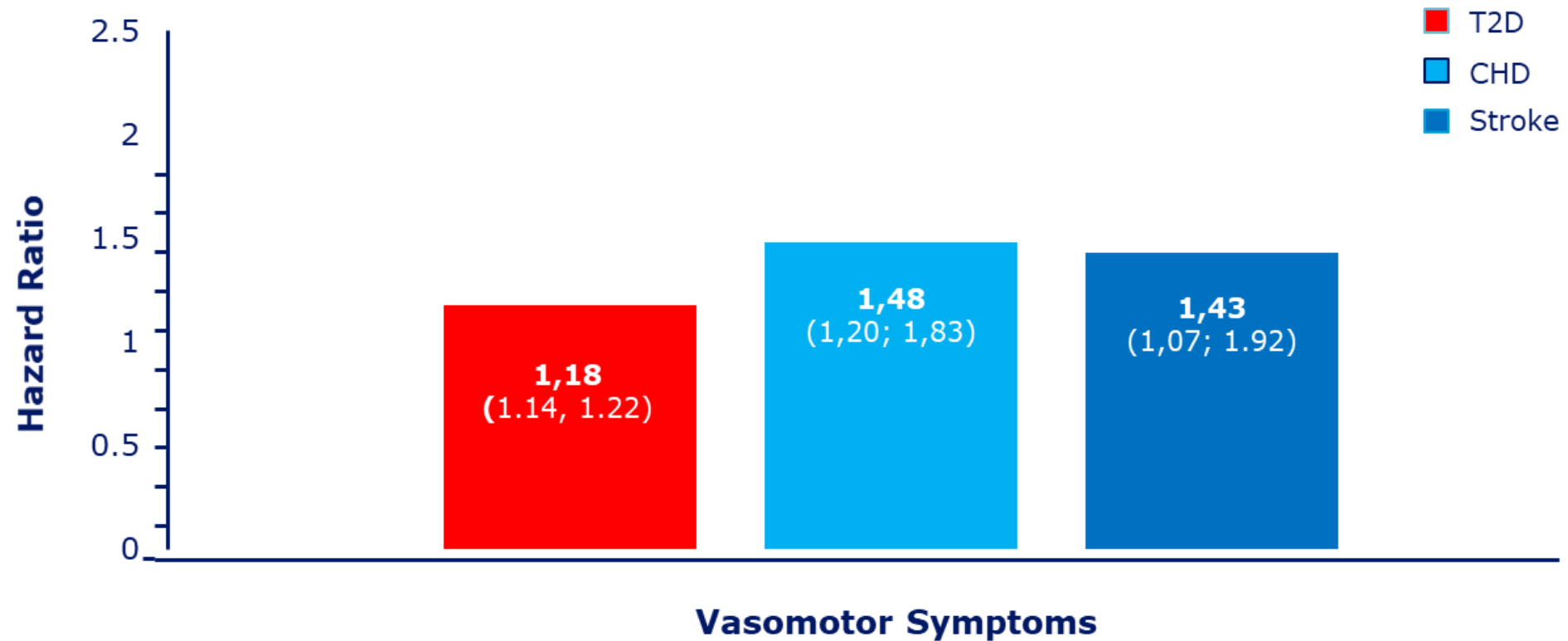


Menopausal symptoms

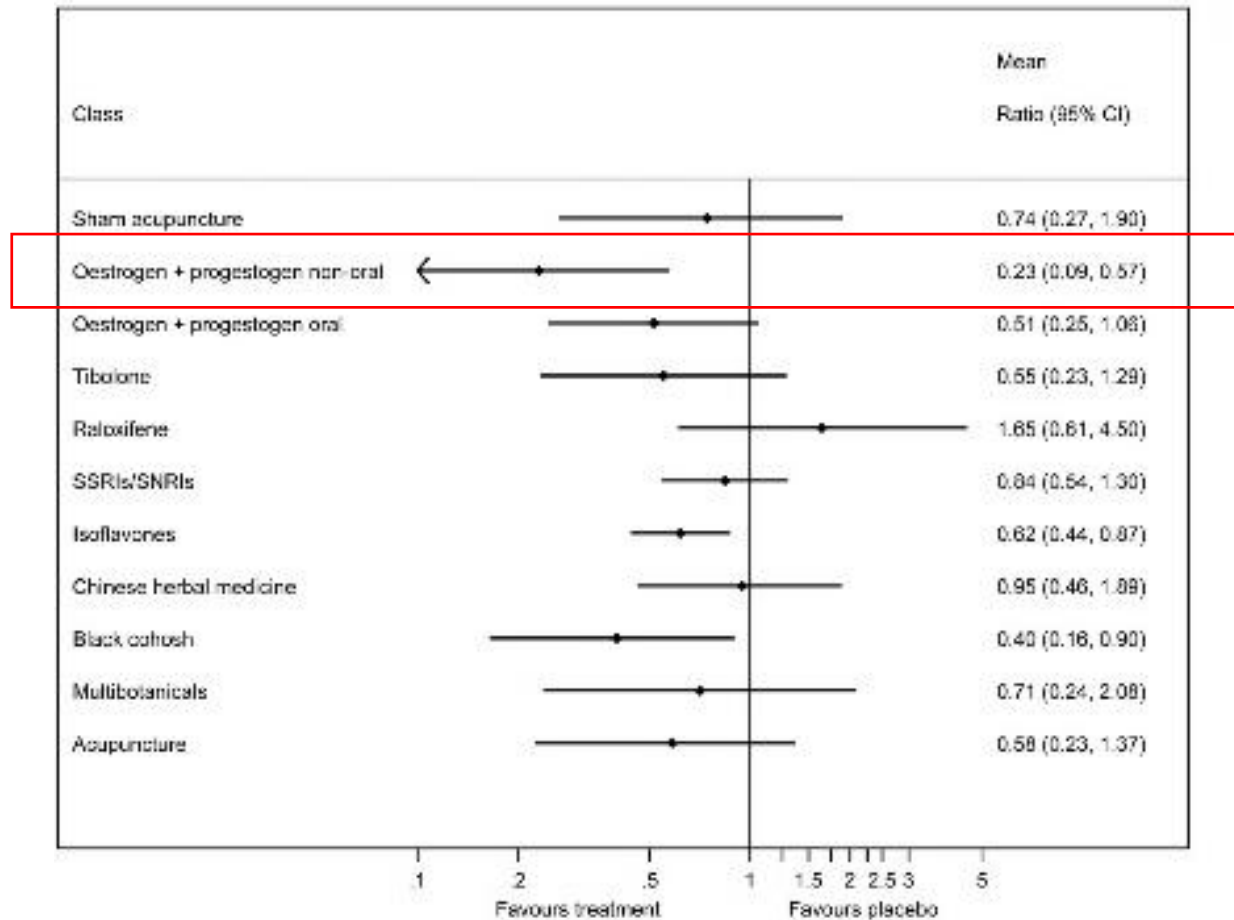
- **Vasomotor symptoms**
 - Hot flashes and night sweats
- **Other menopausal symptoms**
 - Anxiety
 - Depression
 - Irritability
 - Fatigue
 - Decreased libido
 - Insomnia



Vasomotor symptoms



Treatment of menopausal symptoms



Hormone therapy and cardiovascular disease

Women's Health Initiative Hormone Trials

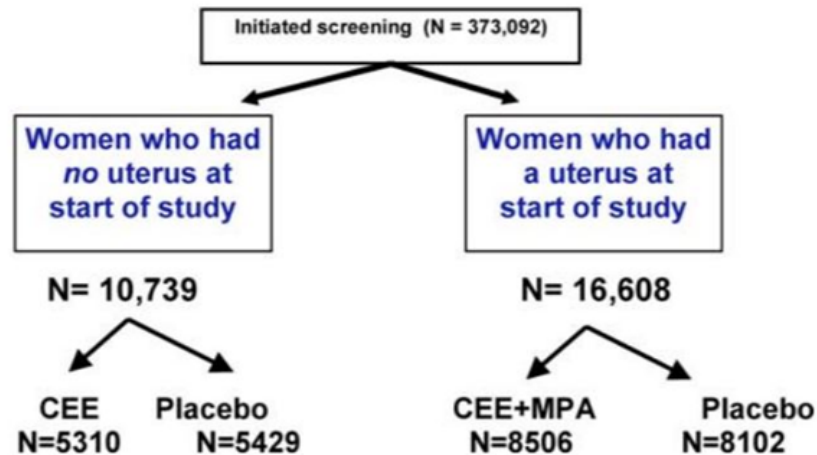


Figure 1. Women's Health Initiative Hormone Trials

CEE, conjugated equine estrogens; MPA, medroxyprogesterone acetate.
DOI: 10.1371/journal.pctr.0010026.g001

Coronary Heart Disease

- For every 10,000 women **in their 50s** on HT for 1 year, **5 extra cases**
- For every 10,000 women **in their 70s** on HT for 1 year, **19 extra cases**

Stroke

- For every 10,000 women, **9 extra cases**

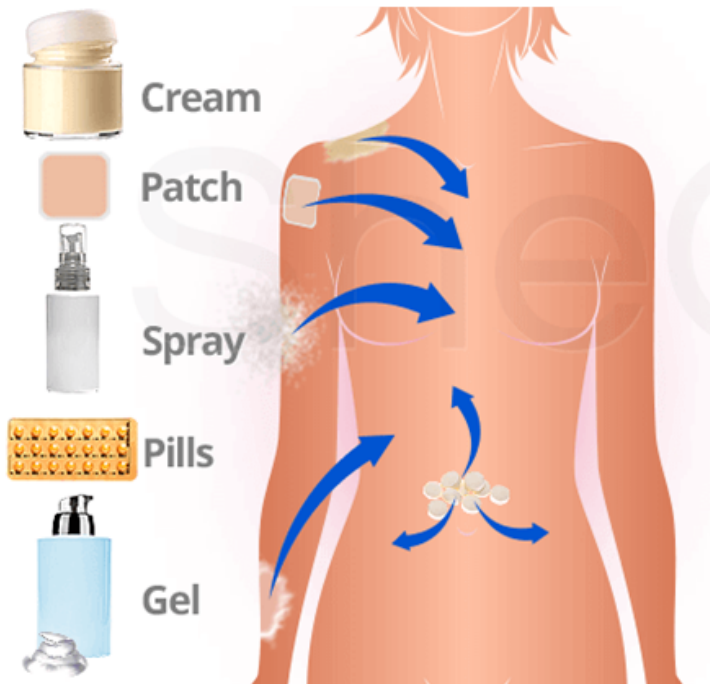
Bod clots

- For every 10,000 women on HT for 1 year, **3 extra cases**

Hormone therapy and cardiovascular disease

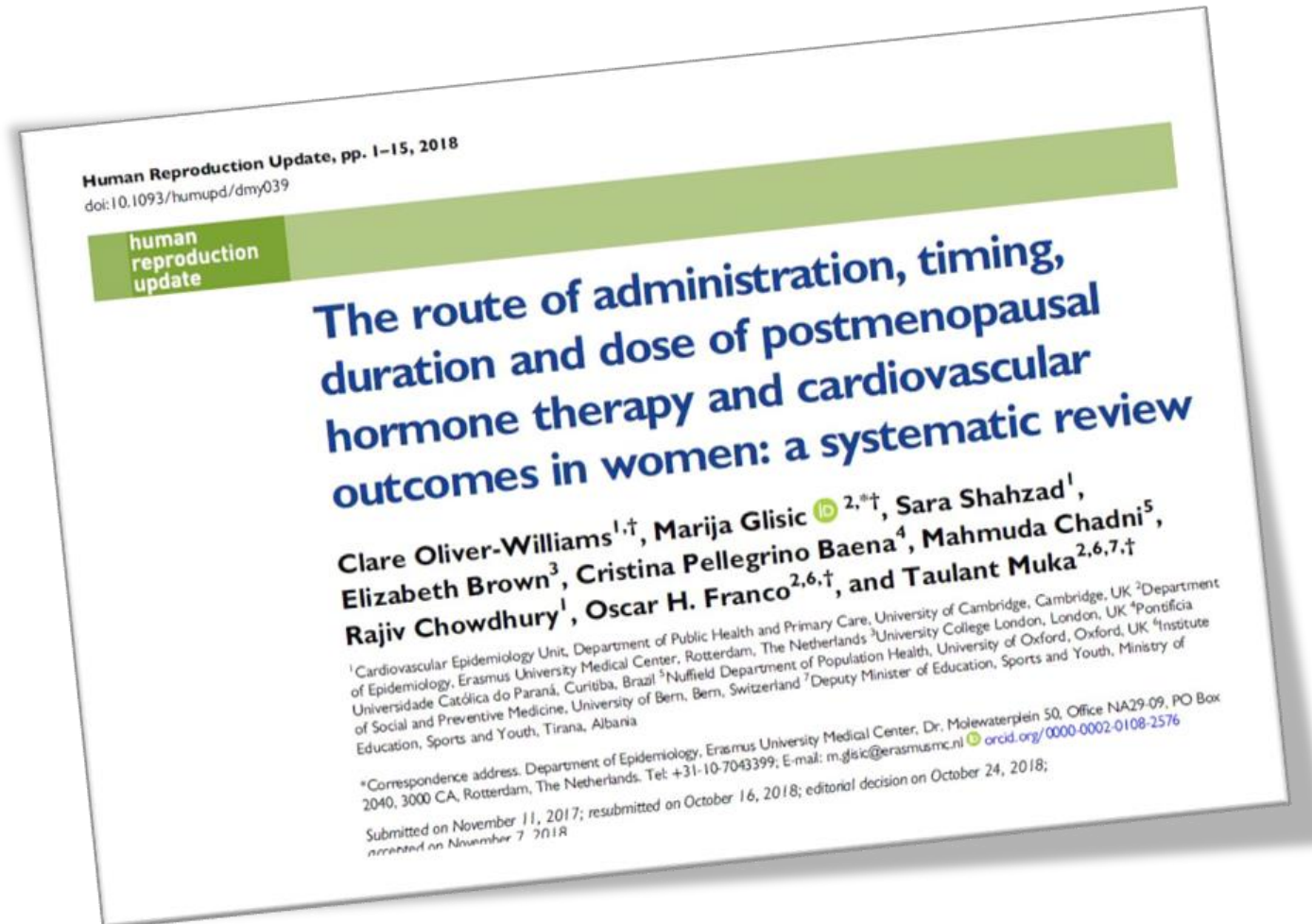
	Combined Trials			CEE Trial			CEE + MPA Trial			P Value for Trend†
	Cases per 100 Person-Years			Cases per 100 Person-Years			Cases per 100 Person-Years			
	Years Since Menopause									
	<10			10-19			≥20			
No. of Cases			No. of Cases			No. of Cases				
Hormone Therapy (n = 3608)	Placebo (n = 3529)	HR (95% CI)*	Hormone Therapy (n = 4483)	Placebo (n = 4494)	HR (95% CI)*	Hormone Therapy (n = 4081)	Placebo (n = 4122)	HR (95% CI)*		
	Combined Trials									
CHD‡	39	51	0.76 (0.50-1.16)	113	103	1.10 (0.84-1.45)	194	158	1.28 (1.03-1.58)	.02
Stroke	41	23	1.77 (1.05-2.98)	100	79	1.23 (0.92-1.66)	142	113	1.26 (0.98-1.62)	.36
Total mortality	53	67	0.76 (0.53-1.09)	142	149	0.98 (0.78-1.24)	267	240	1.14 (0.96-1.36)	.51
Global index§	222	203	1.05 (0.86-1.27)	482	440	1.12 (0.98-1.27)	675	632	1.09 (0.98-1.22)	.82
	Estimated Absolute Excess Risk per 10000 Person-Years			Estimated Absolute Excess Risk per 10000 Person-Years			Estimated Absolute Excess Risk per 10000 Person-Years			

Hormone therapy and cardiovascular disease

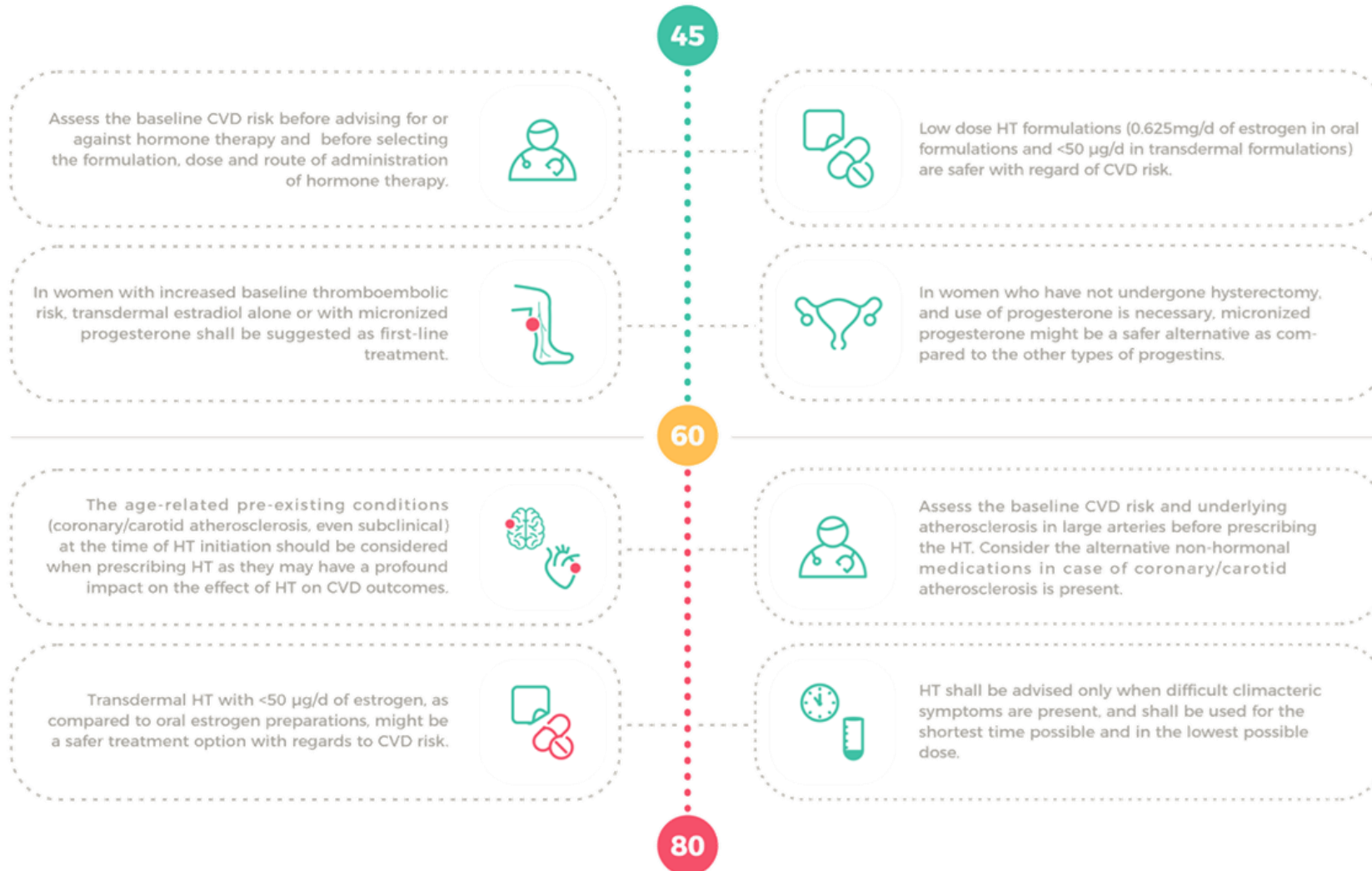


- **Route of administration**
 - The most commonly prescribed is oral HT
- **Formula**
 - Conjugated equine estrogen (CEE), the most common
 - Synthetic conjugated estrogens
 - Micronized 17 β -estradiol and ethinyl estradiol
 - Progestins: medroxyprogesterone, acetate (MPA), norethindrone acetate and native progesterone

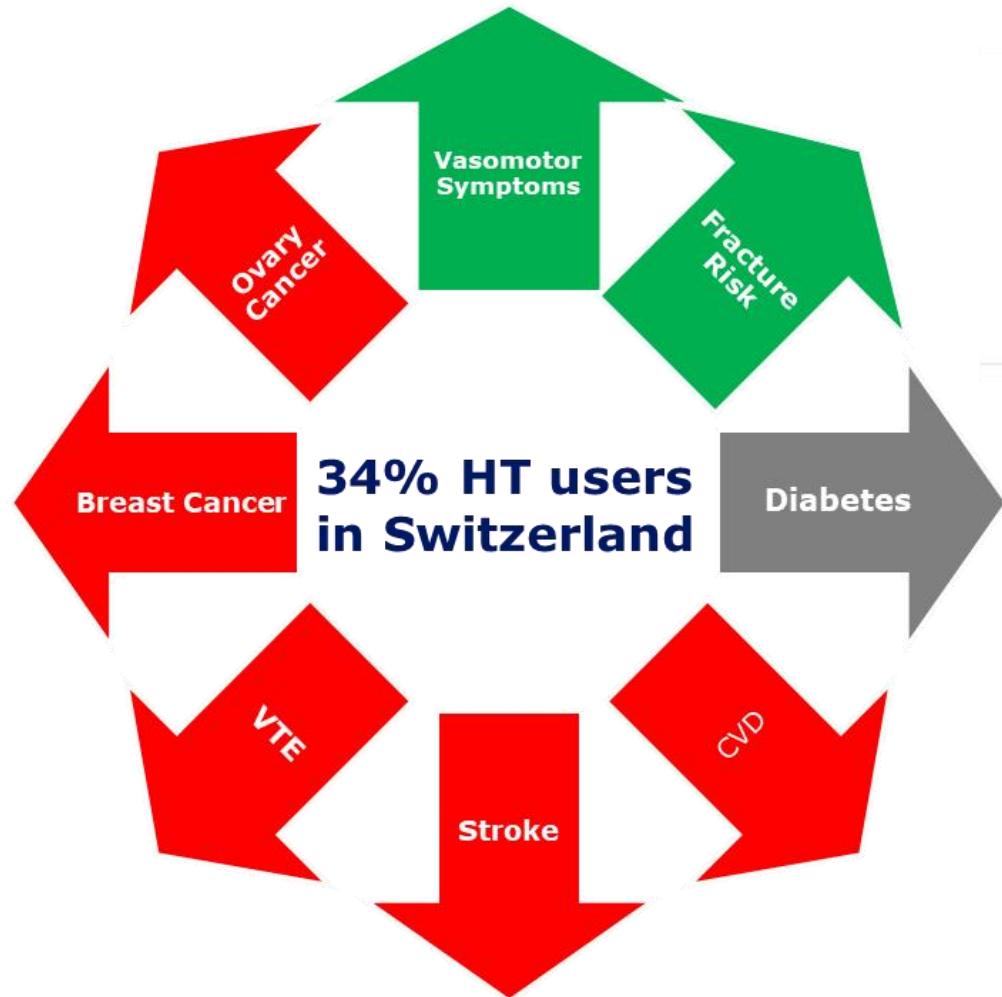
Hormone therapy and cardiovascular disease



Hormone therapy and cardiovascular risk



Hormone therapy: benefits and harms



Four in ten women on hormone replacement therapy can't get their medication amid mass shortages

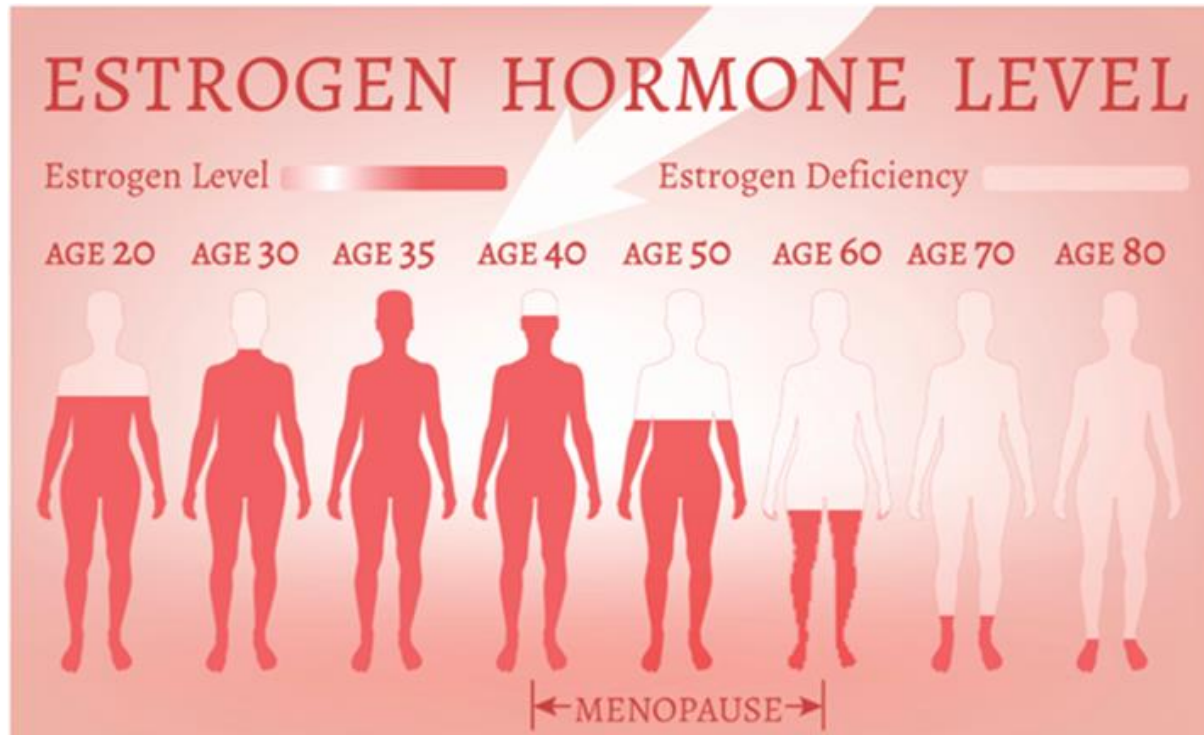
- HRT shortage is forcing some women to go 'cold turkey' on the advice of GPs
- Others are flying to Greece or Spain to get the drugs or rationing the medication
- Survey of 1.500 women found 40 per cent told the medication is not available

HRT shortage in UK expected to continue until next year

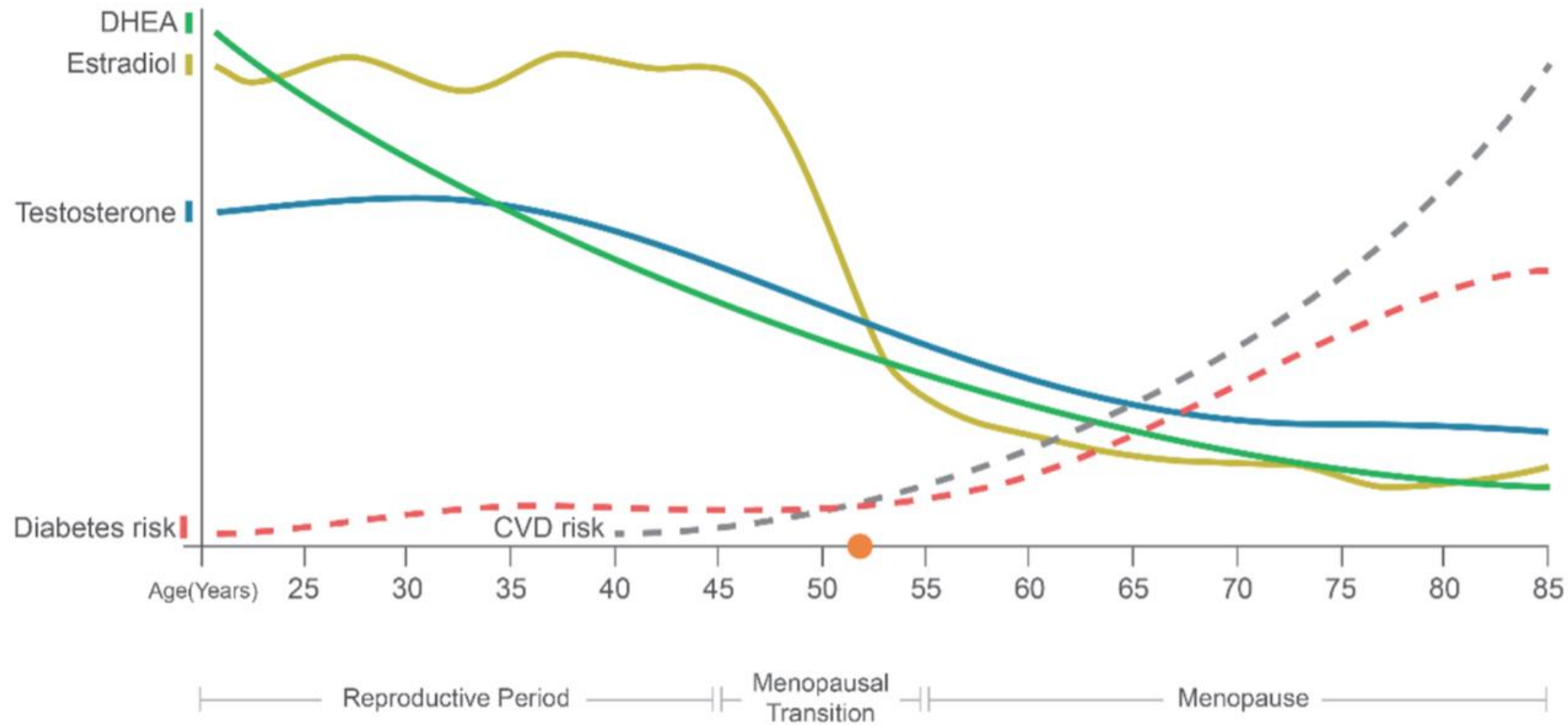
Around half of HRT products have been reported as out of stock in UK pharmacies due to supply issues in China, leading to a shortage.



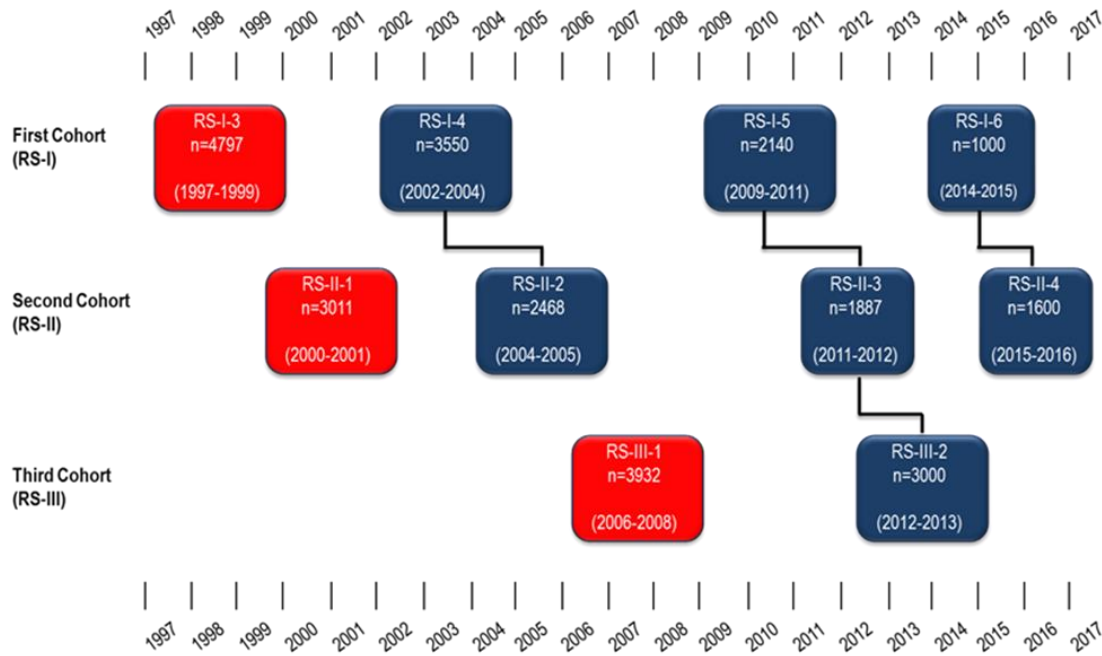
Estrogen hypothesis: the evidence is amenable to alternative explanations



Adverse metabolic changes related to menopause



Sex hormones and risk of type 2 diabetes



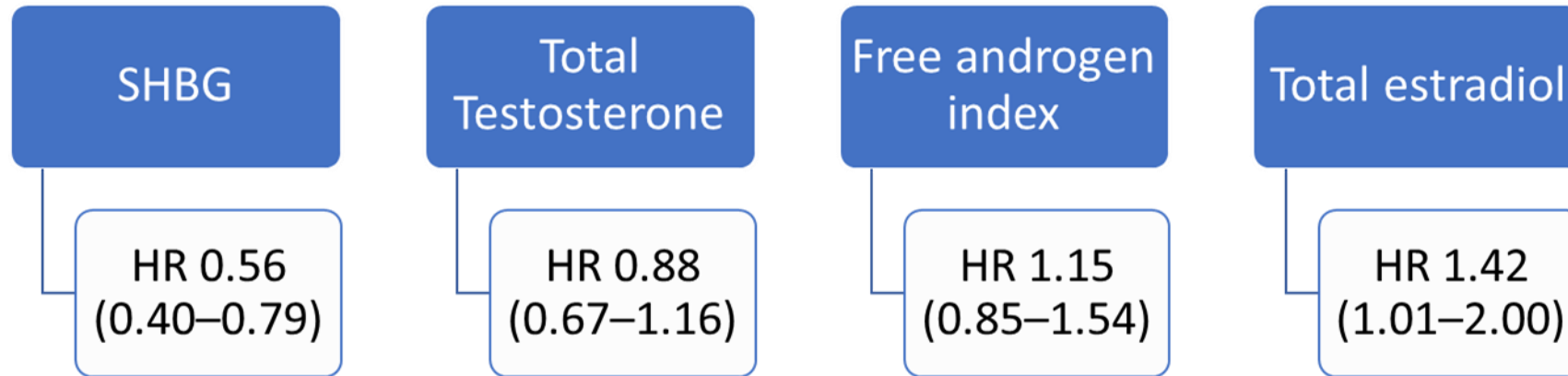
384 women developed diabetes over a median follow-up of 11.1 years

Muka et al. 2017. Diabetes

Table 1—Selected characteristics of study participants, the Rotterdam Study

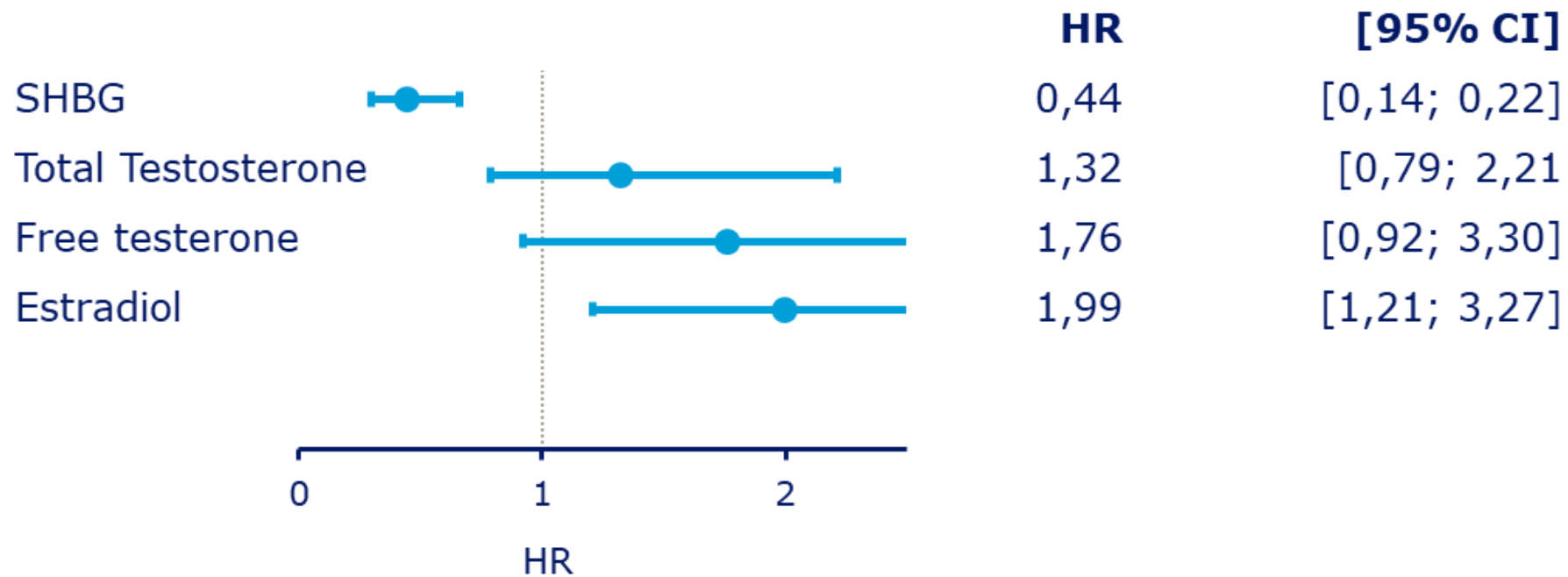
	Women (n = 3,117)	% missing values
Age (years)	69.7 ± 8.7	0
Years since menopause (years)	20.9 ± 10.0	4.4
Age of menopause (years)	48.9 ± 5.2	4.4
Number of pregnancies of at least 6 months	2.3 ± 2	12.4
Natural menopause, n (%)	2,433 (78.1)	0
Current smokers, n (%)	218 (9.2)	1.8
Alcohol intake (g/day)	1.3 (10) ^a	26.5
BMI (kg/m ²)	27.0 ± 4.3	2.3

3rd vs. 1st tertiles of steroid sex hormones and type 2 diabetes

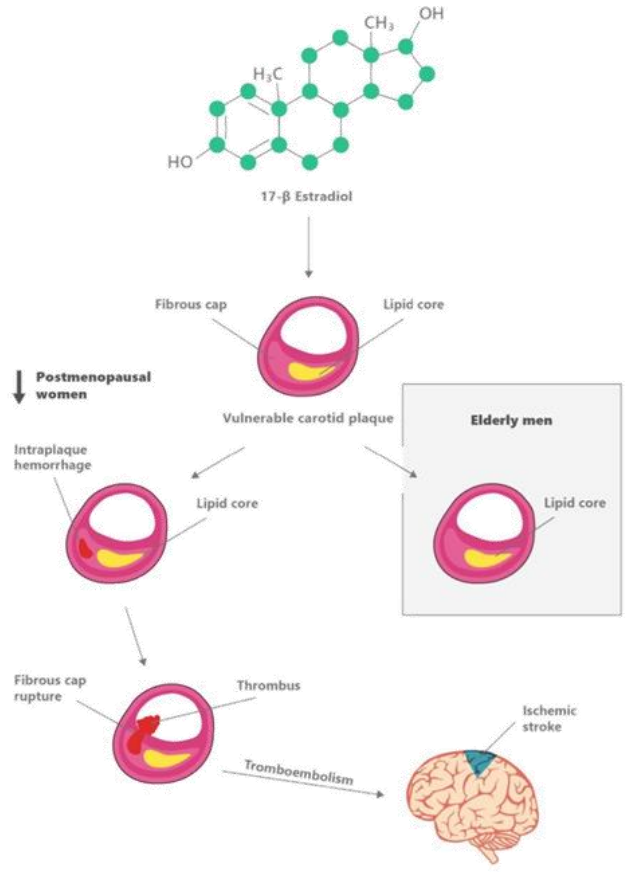


Models adjusted for age, cohort, fasting status, insulin, glucose, and BMI, alcohol intake, smoking status, coronary heart disease, serum total cholesterol, statin use, systolic blood pressure, treatment for hypertension, hormone replacement therapy, age of menopause, CRP, and sex hormones for each other

Sex hormones and risk of type 2 diabetes

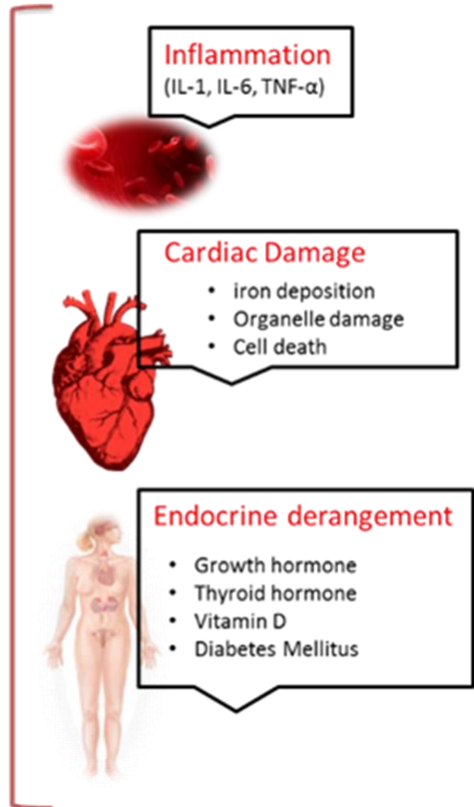
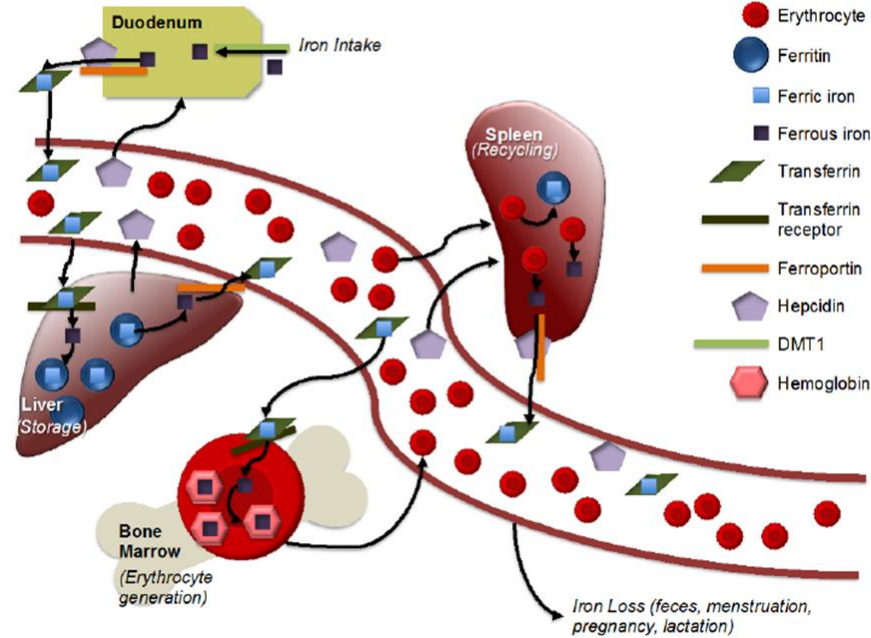
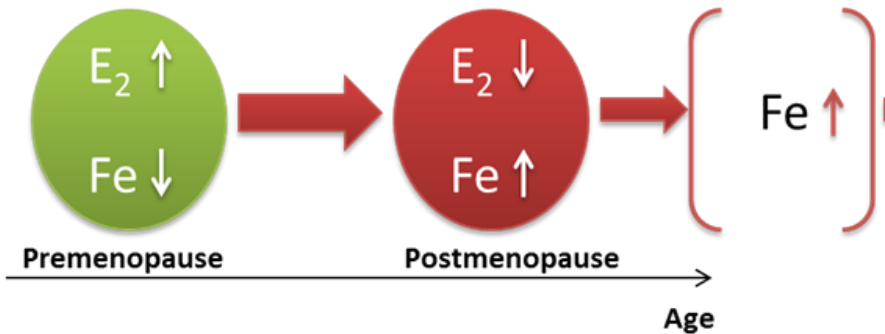
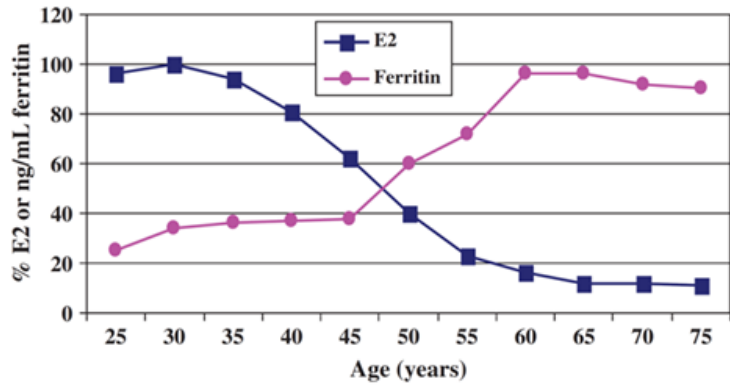


Sex hormones and stroke risk

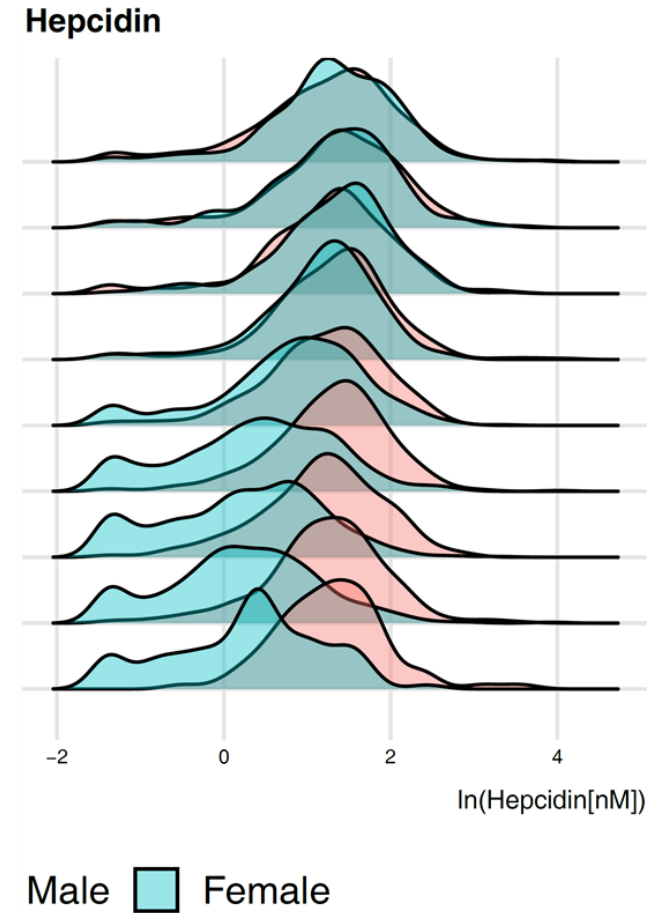
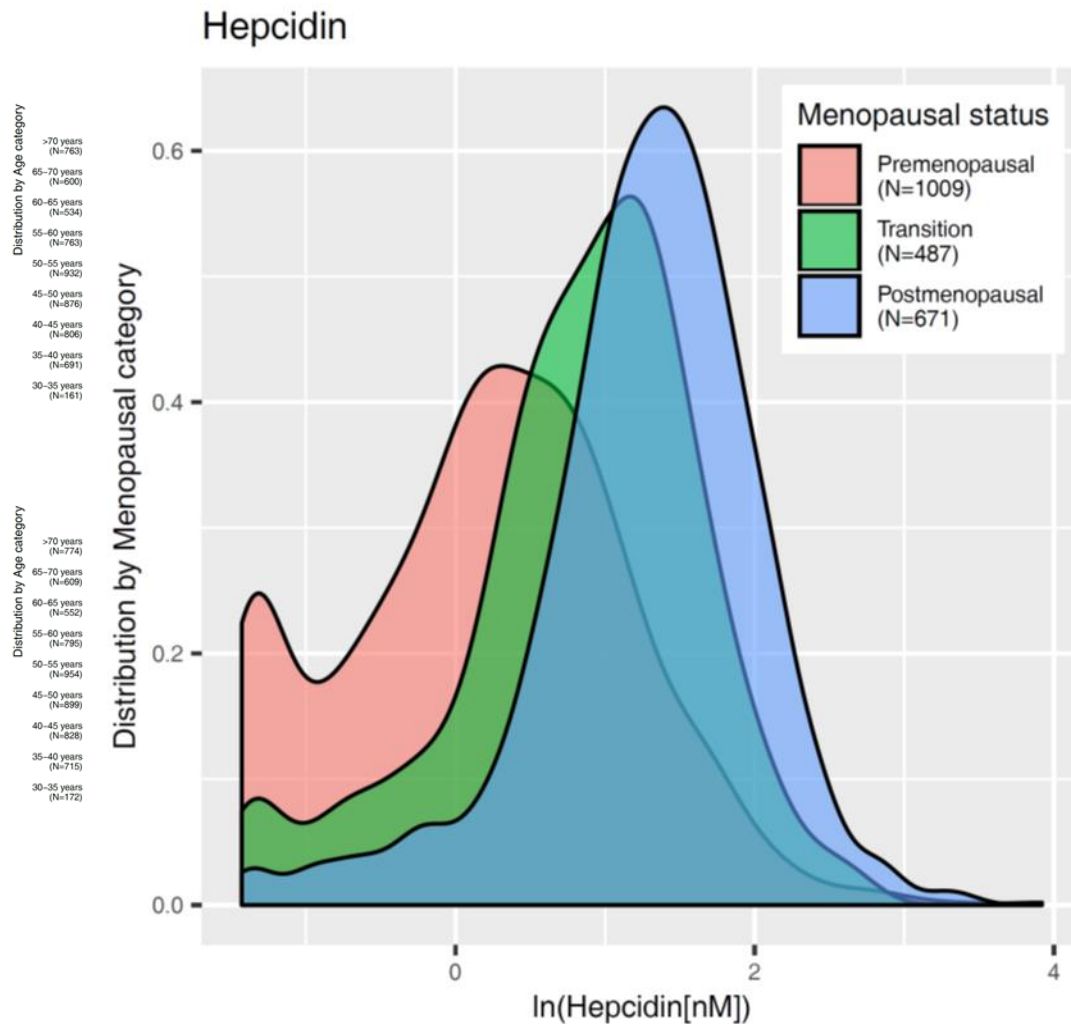
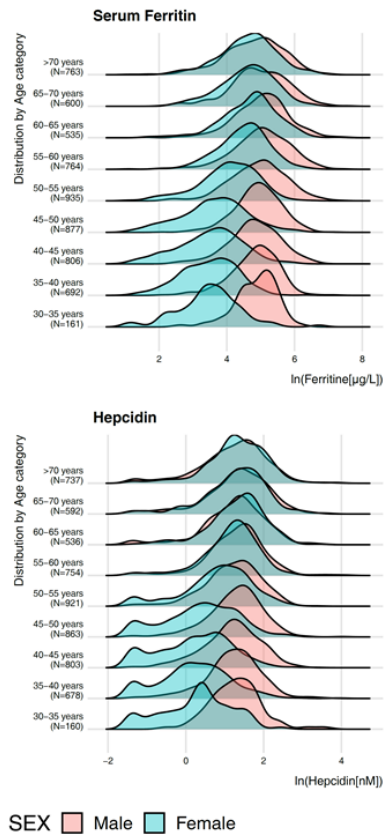


Glisic et al. 2019. Circulation Research

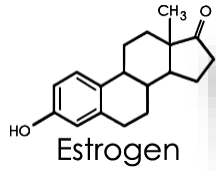
Time to shift from estrogen to iron hypothesis?



Time to shift from estrogen to iron hypothesis?



Estrogen Signaling



ER α



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Estrogen receptor β actions in the female cardiovascular system: A systematic review of animal and human studies

Taulant Muka^{a,*}, Kris G. Vargas^{a,1}, Loes Jaspers^{a,1}, Ke-xin Wen^a, Klodian Dhana^a, Anna Vitezova^a, Jana Nano^a, Adela Brahimaj^a, Veronica Colpani^a, Arjola Bano^a, Bledar Kraja^{a,b,c}, Asija Zaciragic^a, Wichor M. Bramer^d, Gaby M.van Dijk^a, Maryam Kavousi^a, Oscar H. Franco^a

^a Department of Epidemiology, Erasmus MC, Rotterdam, The Netherlands
^b Department of Biomedical Sciences, Faculty of Medicine, University of Medicine, Tirana, Albania
^c University Clinic of Gastrohepatology, University Hospital Center Mother Teresa, Tirana, Albania
^d Medical Library, Erasmus MC, Rotterdam, The Netherlands

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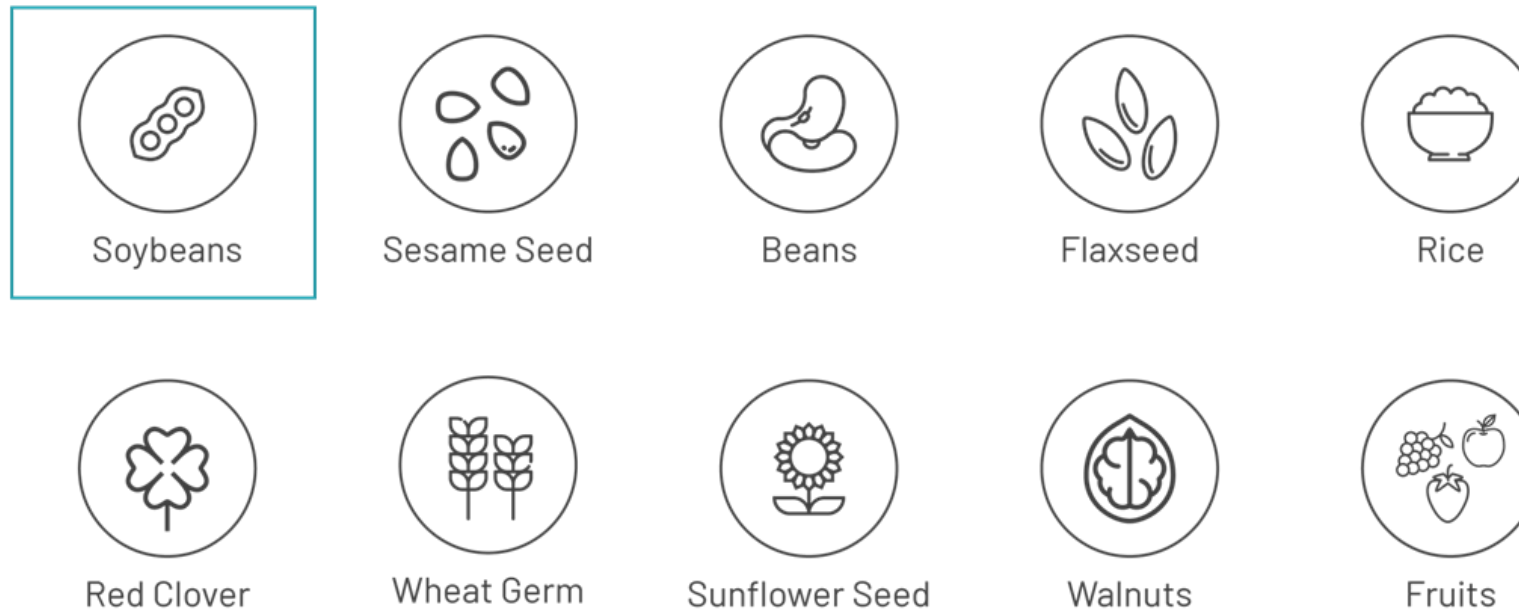
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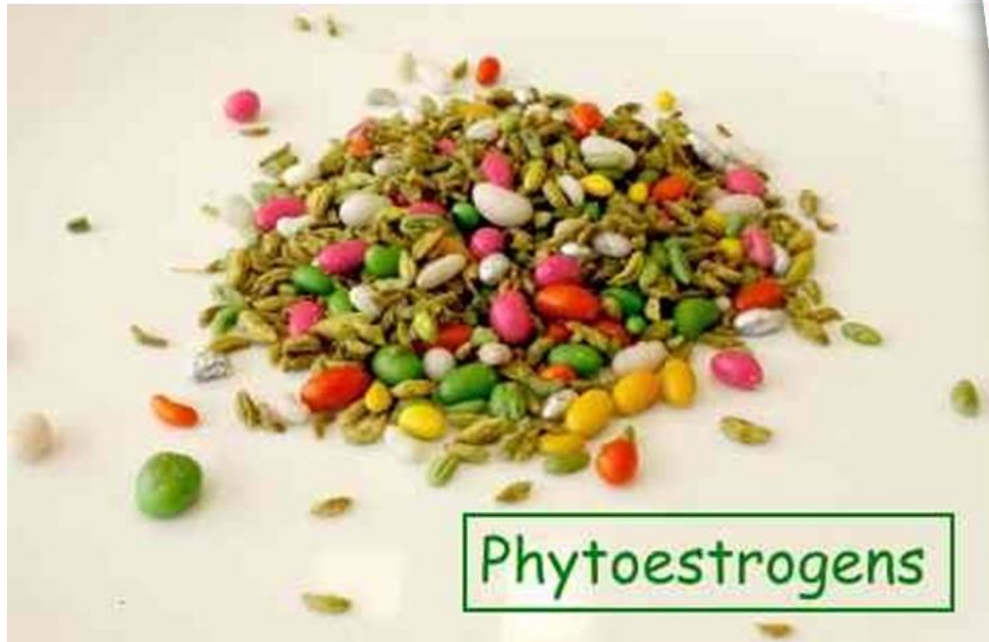
Arnold et al. 2005

Alternative treatment

polyphenols that are structurally similar to endogenous estrogen and have weak estrogenic properties



Alternative treatment



Research

Original Investigation

Use of Plant-Based Therapies and Menopausal Symptoms A Systematic Review and Meta-analysis

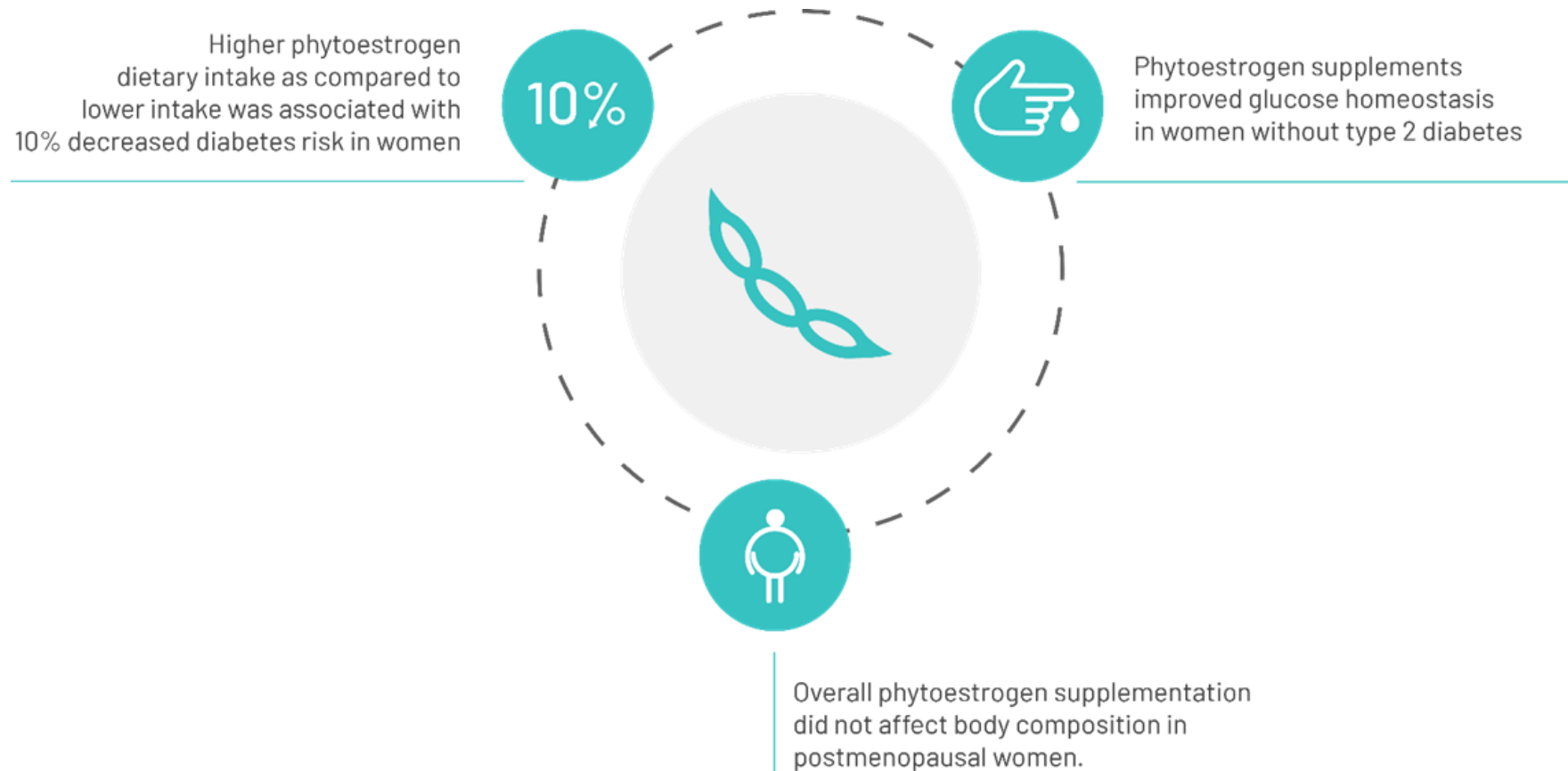
Oscar H. Franco, MD, PhD; Rajiv Chowdhury, MD, PhD; Jenna Troup, MSc; Trudy Voortman, PhD;
Setor Kunutsor, MD, PhD; Maryam Kavousi, MD, PhD; Clare Oliver-Williams, PhD; Taulant Muka, MD, PhD

Supplemental content at jama.com

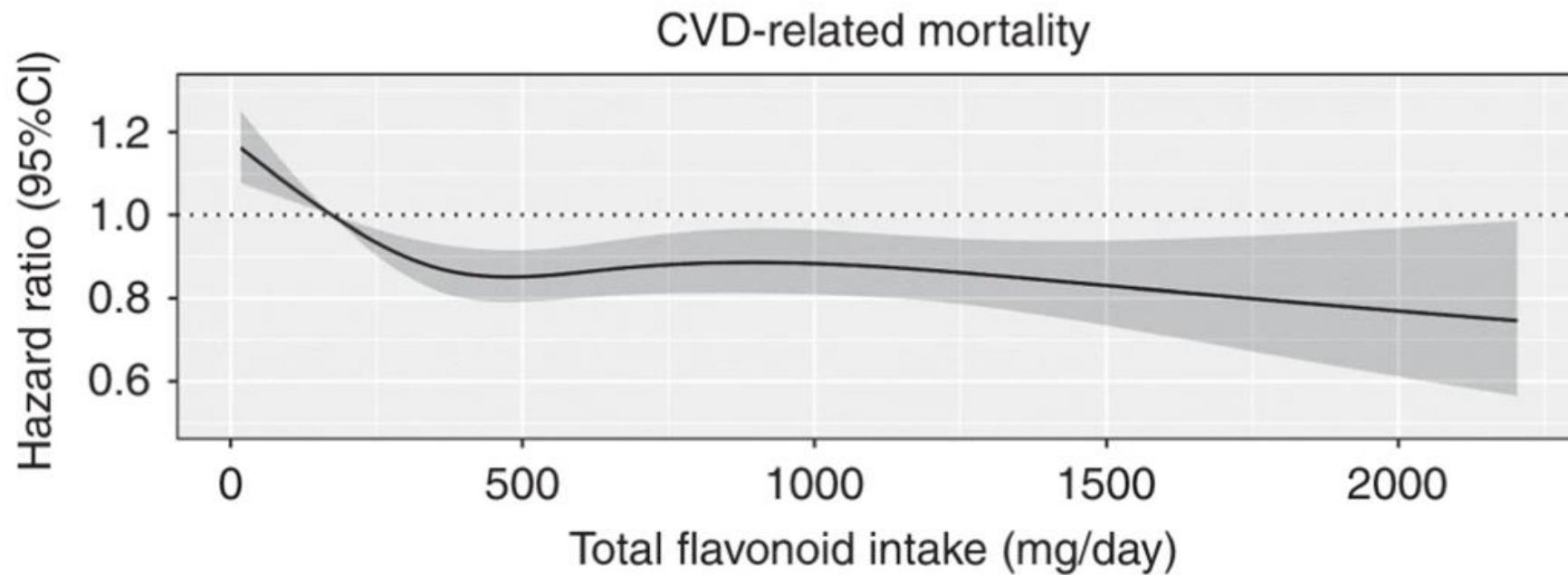
IMPORTANCE Between 40% and 50% of women in Western countries use complementary therapies to manage menopausal symptoms.

OBJECTIVE To determine the association of plant-based therapies with menopausal symptoms, including hot flashes, night sweats, and vaginal dryness.

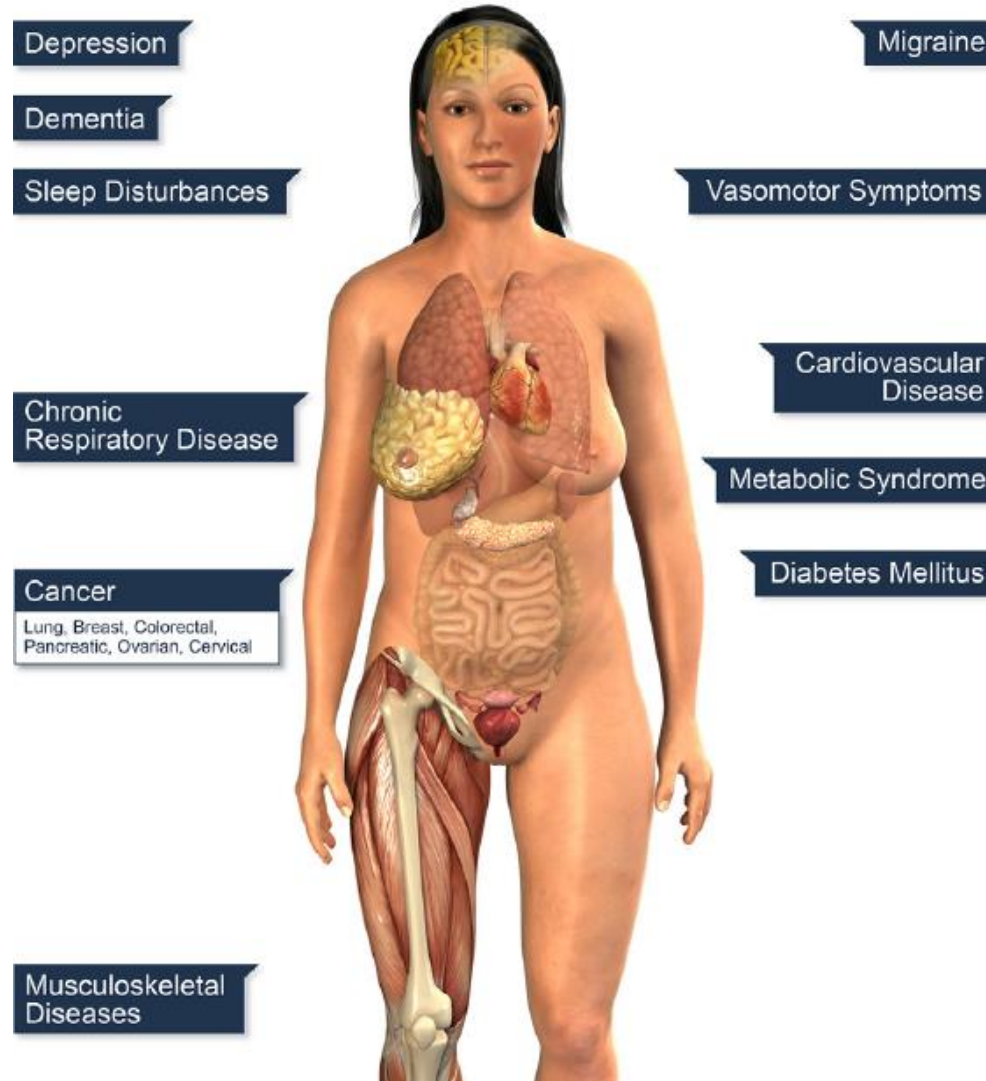
Phytoestrogens and risk of T2D in women



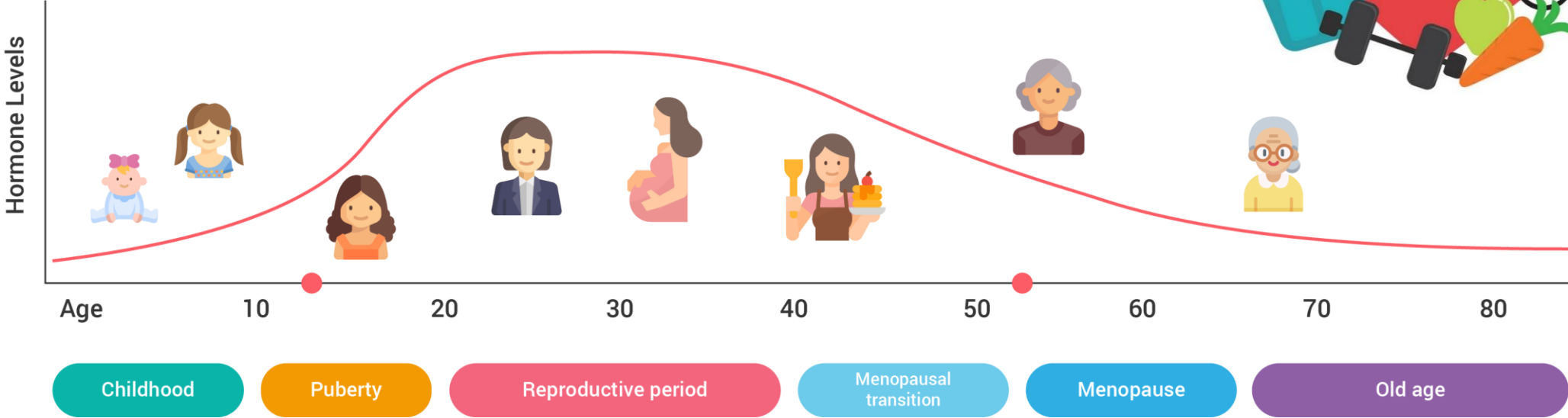
Phytoestrogens, cardiovascular disease and all-cause mortality



Major health issues for menopausal women



Women's life cycle



Cardiometabolic Research Group



Thank you!