



Health Facts with Dr. Max

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Double Duty

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A widely used osteoporosis drug is safer and just as effective in reducing invasive breast cancer risk as tamoxifen, the only other drug approved for that use. After an average of four years of treatment, both raloxifene and tamoxifen cut the risk by about 50%. There were 36% fewer uterine cancers and 29% fewer blood clots among women who took raloxifene (Evista) compared with those on tamoxifen (Nolvadex). Though raloxifene and tamoxifen were equally effective in preventing invasive breast cancer, women taking the osteoporosis drug were not protected against ductal carcinoma in situ (DCIS) or lobular carcinoma in situ (LCIS), non-invasive cancers that do not spread beyond the breast. Nonetheless, the press conference announcing the results gave Evista the edge in showing less side effects and in preventing osteoporosis while reducing risk of invasive breast cancer.

Breast cancer risk can be reduced by avoiding alcohol, tobacco and excess weight. If further protection is indicated, raloxifene might be considered especially if there is a reason to treat or prevent osteoporosis too. If this individualized approach to your care appeals to you, call THE COUNSELING AND GYN GROUP at 413-525-4546 for an appointment. We are located at 281 Maple St., East Longmeadow.

FYI-Women on raloxifene had 21% fewer cataracts than those on tamoxifen. There was still a small risk of blood clots in the legs.