

Drop in breast cancer tied to hormones

by UPI

WASHINGTON - A U.S. report links the first decline in breast cancer cases in 25 years to the sharp drop in hormone use by menopausal women.

An analysis published in The New England Journal of Medicine says about 16,000 fewer cases of breast cancer are being diagnosed each year because of the drop in hormone use after 2002, The Washington Post reported Wednesday.

There were nearly 10 percent fewer breast cancer cases diagnosed in 2003 and 2004 than expected, The New York Times said. It was the first substantial drop in breast cancer incidence in more than a quarter-century.

"An awful lot of breast cancer was caused by doctors' prescriptions," Larry Norton of Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York told the Post.

Some researchers, however, are questioning the findings. "Even if there was a cause-and-effect, you wouldn't expect it to show up for five or 10 years," Hugh S. Taylor of Yale University told the Post.

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