

Tested for Men**Mare's Hormone
Aids Heart Cases**

By JOHN TROAN,

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WASHINGTON, Jan. 26. — A hormone obtained from horses apparently can prolong the lives of men stricken with heart attacks.

A University of Southern California physician says men treated with this hormone "are tending to survive about two to three times as long" as other male heart victims.

Although it is a female sex hormone, derived from pregnant mares, the medicine is given in such small doses it doesn't produce any feminizing effects among the patients, Dr. Jessie Marmorston said.

Good Effects Outweighed.

Female sex hormones have been used in the past to treat men who had heart attacks. But generally they had to be given in such large doses that their good was outweighed by undesirable side effects.

Dr. Marmorston presented her findings to a meeting of the American Federation of Clinical Research in Carmel, Calif., and elaborated on them in a telephone interview.

The doctor said the hormone preparation, named Premarin, has proved to be the only drug—other than blood-thinning anticoagulants—capable of cutting the death rate among men with heart attacks.

Two other female sex hormones, both made artificially, also were used in her study. But the doctor said they failed to prolong lives even though they lowered the amount of fat in the patients' blood.

Raises Cholesterol Question.

On the other hand, the Premarin pills had no effect on blood fats—yet seemed to keep more men alive longer.

This casts doubt on how much good can be accomplished by medicines designed to reduce cholesterol, the chief fat-like substance in the blood to be associated with heart attacks.

In all, 354 men—each of whom had suffered at least one heart seizure—have taken part in the study through two Los Angeles hospitals.

After 39 months, only 8 percent of the men treated with Premarin have died. But among those who received similarly low doses of synthetic female hormones or no medication at all, death claimed 22 to 33 percent.

Since the numbers in some of the longer-treated groups are small, Dr. Marmorston based her conclusions only on patients studied for 18 months.

"Significant" Difference.

During this year and a half, 14 to 19 percent of the non-Premarin patients died. But only 5 percent who got the horse-made hormone succumbed. She said this was a "significant" difference.

Premarin, available only on prescription, is generally used to treat female disorders, including those connected with the "change of life."

The idea for using female sex hormones to treat heart disease is based on the fact women are less susceptible to such attacks until after the "change," when their production of these hormones virtually ends.

Dr. Marmorston's study, now in its fourth year, is being supported by the U.S. government's National Heart Institute and the Lasker Foundation.