

PMS may spell menopause symptoms later—but not hot flashes

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Having premenstrual syndrome (PMS) before menopause does not mean women will be troubled by hot flashes afterward. But they may face more menopause complaints other than hot flashes, such as trouble with memory and concentration, finds a new study published online in *Menopause*, the journal of The North American Menopause Society (NAMS).

Provided by The North American Menopause Society

The research team at the Helsinki University Central Hospital and Folkhälsan Research Institute in Helsinki, Finland, are the first to show a link between PMS and a worse quality of life after menopause. They uncovered the link by asking 120 healthy postmenopausal [women](#) who had not taken hormones to answer standard questionnaires about the [premenstrual symptoms](#) they had had and about their current health. The investigators also had the volunteers keep a diary of their hot flashes, recording how many they had and the severity of each.

Nearly 90% of the women recalled having PMS. For half of these women, the symptoms interfered with work, home or social life, and about 40% of these women rated their PMS as moderate or severe. But the analysis showed that hot flashes and their severity had no significant relationship to PMS. The symptoms were, however, linked with depression, poor sleep, feeling less attractive, and especially with memory and concentration problems after menopause.

Whether these results mean that PMS and [menopause](#) complaints other than hot flashes have a common cause, such as a similar change in regulation of the autonomic nervous system or genes that predispose to both, are topics for future research.

Meanwhile, says NAMS Executive Director Margery Gass, MD, "Women who are troubled by PMS can be reassured that it doesn't mean bothersome [hot flashes](#) are inevitable later."

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