

Despite effectiveness women remain skeptical of hormones at menopause—what's the problem?

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Women today have more options than ever before for treating their menopause symptoms, although hormone therapy still ranks as the most effective treatment for debilitating symptoms such as hot flashes. A new study demonstrates, however, that women remain skeptical regarding the safety of hormone therapy and prefer less proven options. The study results will be presented during The North American Menopause Society (NAMS) Annual Meeting in Philadelphia, October 11-14.

Hot flashes (including night sweats) occur in up to 75% to 80% of all women in the US with some of them considered debilitating and lasting for many years after the end of menstrual cycles. Despite the fact that hormone therapy has proven to be the most [effective treatment](#) for [hot flashes](#) and other bothersome [menopause symptoms](#), women and their healthcare providers still question their safety which has led to a decreased number of prescriptions and usage of hormones. This was one of the first studies to examine women's beliefs and attitudes toward menopause in general and hormone therapy specifically.

Among the many findings, the survey results showed that participants were significantly less willing to use hormones for hot flashes and instead used exercise, diet, herbal supplements, acupuncture, or meditation. This was despite the fact that participants strongly agreed that hormone therapy could effectively reduce hot flashes.

"Our findings suggest that women are less willing to use the most empirically validated treatment for hot flashes than other alternative treatment options," says Dr. Terry Gibbs, lead author of the study from Promedica Physicians in Sylvania, Ohio. "Also, their confidence in successful treatment outcomes was not greater for [hormone therapy](#) than the other options."

"This study tells us that there remains an unmet need to educate women about the safety and effectiveness of [hormone therapy](#) for most symptomatic [women](#). The benefits go beyond the relief of hot flashes and include improvement in night sweats, sleep disruption, prevention of bone loss, and fewer heart events," says Dr. JoAnn Pinkerton, NAMS executive director.

Drs. Gibbs and Pinkerton are available for interviews before the presentation at the Annual Meeting.

Provided by The North American Menopause Society

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