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**The
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Hot Flashes May Be Less Bothersome for Vegans

New analysis demonstrates that a plant-based diet is effective for the management of weight and hot flashes

CLEVELAND, Ohio (May 28, 2025)—Remember your mother telling you to eat your vegetables because they're good for you? Mom was right. Not only is a low-fat vegan diet proven to reduce body weight and hot flashes, but a secondary data analysis shows that vegans get these same great results even if highly processed plant-based foods are consumed. Results of the analysis are published online today in *Menopause*, the journal of The Menopause Society.

Research has shown that a low-fat vegan diet—specifically one supplemented with soybeans—can reduce body weight and hot flashes. Studies have also already shown that diets high in ultraprocessed foods lead to increased calorie intake and weight gain compared with diets emphasizing unprocessed or minimally processed foods. This is because ultraprocessed foods often have a higher energy density, meaning they are more calorie-rich for their size. Ultraprocessed foods are also often high in added sugars, unhealthy fats, and sodium, while being low in fiber and other essential nutrients.

That's why a team of researchers opted to conduct a secondary analysis of previously published data to determine whether the origin of the food (animal vs plant based) affected the relationship between changes in processed food intake and body weight, as well as changes in hot flash severity. Participants were randomly assigned to a low-fat vegan diet supplemented with soybeans or an omnivorous control group. The groups were comparable in terms of the number and severity of hot flashes at baseline.

After 12 weeks, severe hot flashes were reduced by 92% in the vegan group and did not change significantly in the control group. Mean body weight decreased by 3.6 kg in the vegan group and 0.2 kg in the control group. More specifically, the researchers found that these decreases were not affected by the consumption of highly processed versus minimally processed foods. What mattered most was whether the food consumed was animal- or plant-based, thus confirming the researchers' hypothesis that animal- and plant-based foods would affect body weight differently even if they were equally processed. This analysis may have significant implications for specific dietary recommendations for menopausal women.

Results of the secondary analysis are published in the article "Processed foods in the context of a vegan diet, and changes in body weight and severe hot flashes in postmenopausal women: a secondary analysis of a randomized clinical trial."

"This study highlights the potential positive effects of a plant-based diet rich in soy (regardless of the level of processing) in terms of both hot flash and weight management. Given these and the other known benefits in terms of lowering heart disease and cancer risk, women in midlife should consider leaning into a plant-based diet," says Dr. Stephanie Faubion, medical director for The Menopause Society.

For more information about menopause and healthy aging, visit www.menopause.org.

The Menopause Society (formerly The North American Menopause Society) is dedicated to empowering healthcare professionals and providing them with the tools and resources to improve the health of women during the menopause transition and beyond. As the leading authority on menopause since 1989, the nonprofit, multidisciplinary organization serves as the independent, evidence-based resource for healthcare professionals, researchers, the media, and the public and leads the conversation about improving women's health and healthcare experiences. To learn more, visit menopause.org.