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**The
Menopause
Society™**

Leading the Conversation

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Obese Women Have Worse Menopause Symptoms and Get Less Relief from Hormone Therapy

New study suggests that women with obesity were less likely to experience symptomatic relief after either systemic and/or localized hormone therapy

CLEVELAND, Ohio (Sept 27, 2023)—Obesity has already been associated with a number of adverse health conditions and can interfere with a person’s quality of life. A new study suggests that, in addition to these other problems, it may also worsen a woman’s menopause symptoms and limit the amount of relief she gets from hormone therapy (HT). Study results will be presented during the 2023 Annual Meeting of The Menopause Society in Philadelphia, September 27-30.

HT remains the most effective treatment to manage a wide array of menopause symptoms. Little research has been done, however, on the impact of comorbidities on the efficacy of HT during menopause. More specifically, no research is known to exist relative to the effect of obesity on the effectiveness of HT.

A new five-year study involving 119 patients sought to fill some of that information void by investigating the association of obesity and self-reported efficacy of HT in peri- and postmenopausal women. In this study obesity was defined as a body mass index of greater than or equal to 30.

There were no statistically significant differences between the two groups of patients (obese vs. non-obese) relative to age, duration of menopause, or use/acceptance of HT. Women with obesity, however, were more likely to self-identify as Black, report the presence of hot flashes, genitourinary/vulvovaginal symptoms, mood disturbances, and decreased libido.

Based on the results, the researchers concluded that menopausal women with obesity experienced an increase in menopause symptom prevalence and lower efficacy of HT. Dr. Anita Pershad from Eastern Virginia Medical School in Norfolk led the study which will be presented at the 2023 Annual Meeting of The Menopause Society.

“We studied menopausal symptoms in an underrepresented patient population that’s not often included in women’s health studies. This research can help clinicians serving a more diverse racial and socioeconomic patient population that’s severely affected by the social determinants of health to provide better tailored care and counseling to patients seeking treatment for their menopausal symptoms,” says Dr. Pershad.

“This is important for healthcare professionals to consider when counseling their patients on the various options for managing their menopause symptoms,” adds Dr. Stephanie Faubion, medical director for The Menopause Society. “Considering that more than 40% of women over the age of 40 are classified as obese according to the CDC, these results could be meaningful to a large percentage of patients transitioning through menopause.”

Drs. Pershad and Faubion are available for interviews before and after the presentation at the Annual Meeting.

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.