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The
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Shedding Pounds During Midlife Is Difficult, But Not Impossible

Presentation promises to deliver the skinny on weight management during the menopause transition

CLEVELAND, Ohio (Sept 27, 2023)—Unwanted weight gain is a common problem associated with the menopause transition. Not only does it harm a woman’s self-esteem, but it is also associated with the development of heart disease, cancer, and declines in cognition and mental health. Tips for managing weight during midlife will be provided as part of a presentation at the 2023 Annual Meeting of The Menopause Society in Philadelphia September 27-30.

Weight gain in midlife women is the result of changes related to aging, menopause, and lifestyle. As women age, they are likely to expend less energy because of a reduction in physical activity and a decrease in lean mass. As a double whammy, hormone changes characterized by decreased estrogen levels that are part of the menopause transition influence the distribution of body fat, contribute to increased central adiposity, and further exacerbate lean mass loss.

Weight gain and changes in body fat distribution have many negative health ramifications. They are especially hard on the heart and joints and have been shown to worsen other menopause symptoms.

But while weight gain is common in menopause, it is not inevitable. Dr. Maria Daniela Hurtado from the Mayo Clinic will present “The Skinny on Weight Management in Midlife” at this year’s Annual Meeting of The Menopause Society. As part of her presentation, Dr. Hurtado will discuss the value of early counseling and anticipatory guidance on the importance of dietary changes and physical activity to mitigate weight gain during midlife.

“Comprehensive lifestyle interventions remain the backbone of any treatment plan for weight gain prevention or weight loss and should include medical nutrition therapy, exercise and behavioral interventions,” says Dr. Hurtado.

According to Dr. Hurtado, there are special considerations relative to macronutrient dietary content and type of exercise for midlife women. She warns that, while effective, lifestyle modification-induced weight loss is often followed by weight regain due to compensatory changes in appetite and energy expenditure. That’s why there has been an increase in the use of anti-obesity medications and/or surgical interventions in conjunction with lifestyle changes.

“This is an important presentation as it will review a common issue raised by many women at midlife,” says Dr. Stephanie Faubion, medical director for The Menopause Society. “Healthcare professionals can benefit by understanding the various approaches to weight management so they can share the latest findings with their patients.”

Drs. Hurtado 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.