

Transcript Details

This is a transcript of an educational program. Details about the program and additional media formats for the program are accessible by visiting: <https://reachmd.com/programs/advances-in-womens-health/managing-menopause-and-improving-patient-quality-of-life/16169/>

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Managing Menopause and Improving Patient Quality of Life

Announcer:

You're listening to *Advances in Women's Health* on ReachMD. On this episode, we'll hear from Dr. Genevieve Hofmann, who's a women's health nurse practitioner, certified menopause clinician and Assistant Professor of OB/GYN Health at the University of Colorado School of Medicine. She'll be previewing her session at the 26th Annual Nurse Practitioners in Women's Healthcare Conference by discussing ways we can help manage menopause in our patients.

Let's hear from Dr. Hofmann now.

Dr. Hofmann:

I think that over the last year or so there's been really a growing cultural awareness about menopause, and there's a lot of information out there. And there's good information, there's poor information, but I think in general, women are really seeking good information about menopause. And so the menopause and hormone therapy got a really bad rap in the early 2000s with the big WHI study, and there's still a lot of people out there who feel like hormones are not safe, hormones are not for them, that they have contraindications, and some people do, but many people don't and can really safely use menopausal hormone therapy and other therapies that we use to treat their menopause. And we know that over two-thirds of women really go untreated for their menopausal symptoms, and so this talk is really looking at some of the more complex issues around how we manage menopause. I'm hoping to really help other clinicians to understand and have a wholer picture of why treating menopause is really important, both from a medical perspective but also for patients and a quality of life perspective.

Menopause is normal. It is not a disease, but it is very impactful for people in terms of how they feel on a daily basis—so the hot flashing and the night sweats and the not sleeping and the fuzzy, cognitive impairment, executive functioning, mood shifting, certainly the sexual side effects for many people. And so for people who are bothered by those symptoms, there's really effective ways that we can manage it. And I also think it's really important that we talk about normalizing this transition, and everybody's menopausal experience is a little bit different, and there's going to be people that have very few symptoms, and there's going to be people that have really significant symptoms. And then on top of that, you have this significant cardiometabolic change that's happening, so even if somebody feels like their menopausal symptoms are pretty mild or they don't feel that bothered by menopause, they're actually having some physiologic changes that are cardiometabolic. So we are losing muscle mass, and we're gaining visceral fat, that adiposity, that central obesity. We see shifts in blood pressure, shifts in lipids, and a lot of those biomarkers for cardiovascular disease. So this is a really significant time where we can be really impactful to some of this health stuff that's happening. So I think it's just a really important time to educate people about not only the symptoms they're having but also some of the underlying health shifts that are happening that can be really impactful to their longevity.

I really hope that people leave my talk having a better understanding of the evidence because I really believe that when we understand the foundational knowledge and the foundational evidence of the recommendations that we make, we feel really comfortable making those recommendations and being able to answer the questions because women have a lot of questions about menopause and what's safe and what they should be doing. And so I really want to empower clinicians who are taking care of women to be able to answer those questions in a really satisfactory way for both themselves and that they can really partner with patients to make good decisions because the same treatment isn't the best treatment for everybody. So I really hope that people leave just feeling more confident and more comfortable making recommendations, and also recognizing that hormone therapy is really generally safe for most people. I'm hoping that they also have some tools in their toolbox to say, "Well, if you don't want to take hormones or you feel like you're not a good

candidate for that, let's talk about the most effective way to manage it for you that's the healthiest way," and maybe it has some long-term benefit.

Announcer:

That was Dr. Genevieve Hofmann previewing her session on managing menopause, which she'll present at the 26th Annual Nurse Practitioners in Women's Healthcare Conference. To access this and other episodes in our series, visit *Advances in Women's Health* on ReachMD dot com, where you can Be Part of the Knowledge. Thanks for listening!