



Effective Health Care

Estrogen for Depression

Nomination Summary Document

Results of Topic Selection Process & Next Steps

- Estrogen for the treatment of postpartum depression is not feasible for a full systematic review due to the limited data available for a review at this time. No further activity will be undertaken on this topic.
- An in-process AHRQ Effective Health Care (EHC) Program review titled *Menopausal Symptoms: Comparative Effectiveness Review of Therapies* will consider both hormone and non-hormone treatments for menopausal symptoms, including psychological symptoms.
 - To view a description and status of the in-process research review, please go to: <http://www.effectivehealthcare.ahrq.gov/index.cfm/search-for-guides-reviews-and-reports/>
 - To sign up for notification when this and other EHC Program topics are posted, please go to <http://effectivehealthcare.ahrq.gov/index.cfm/join-the-email-list1/>

Topic Description

Nominator: Individual

Nomination Summary: The nominator is interested in the comparative effectiveness of estrogen therapy versus antidepressants for depression in select female populations.

Staff-Generated PICO

Population(s): Women with postpartum-, hysterectomy- (with or without oophorectomy), or postmenopausal-related depression

Intervention(s): Estrogen

Comparator(s): Antidepressants

Outcome(s): Mental, physical, and emotional well-being

Key Questions from Nominator: None

Considerations

- The topic meets EHC Program appropriateness and importance criteria. (For more information, see <http://effectivehealthcare.ahrq.gov/index.cfm/submit-a-suggestion-for-research/how-are-research-topics-chosen/>.)

- Postpartum depression is common and can be a risk factor for adverse maternal, child, and family outcomes. Estrogen for depression is not routinely prescribed, nor is it considered in prominent clinical guidelines on the treatment of depression. Benefits of estrogen therapy for postpartum depression have largely been extrapolated from treatment studies of women with perimenopausal depression. No published studies were identified on the effectiveness of estrogen compared to antidepressant therapy for postpartum depression. Therefore, this topic is not feasible for a full systematic review due to the limited data available for a review at this time.

- An in-process AHRQ EHC Program review titled *Menopausal Symptoms: Comparative Effectiveness Review of Therapies* will consider both hormone and nonhormone treatments for menopausal symptoms, including psychological symptoms. It will also consider hormonal therapies separately for women with and without a uterus. This report will review subgroups for which one medication, preparation, or estrogen dose is more effective or associated with fewer adverse effects. The draft key questions for this review include:
 1. What is the comparative effectiveness of different treatments (including hormone and nonhormone therapies) for reducing symptoms of menopause (vasomotor symptoms, sleep disturbance, psychological symptoms, urogenital atrophy, and sexual) and for improving quality of life?
 2. What are the other benefits and harms/adverse effects of different hormone therapy preparations based on duration of use and initiation relative to onset of menopause? (For women desiring contraception, combined estrogen-progestin and progestin-only contraceptives are included.)
 3. What are the other benefits and harms/adverse effects of different nonhormone therapies?
 4. Are there subgroups of patients based on demographics, other medications, or comorbidities, for which one medication, preparation, or estrogen dose is more effective or associated with fewer adverse effects?