



## Effective Health Care

### Treatment Options for Symptoms of Menopause Nomination Summary Document

#### Results of Topic Selection Process & Next Steps

- The topic, *Treatment Options for Symptoms of Menopause*, was found to be addressed by an ongoing AHRQ comparative effectiveness review, *Menopausal Symptoms: Comparative Effectiveness Review of Therapies*. Given that this review will address the topic, no further action will be taken.

To view a description and status of the 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(s):** Individual

**Nomination Summary:** The nominator is a registered nurse interested in menopause research in order to advise other health professionals. The nominator asserts that many health professionals may not have sufficient knowledge to advise women on treatment options for the symptoms of menopause.

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**Population(s):** Peri- and post-menopausal women

**Intervention(s):** Treatment options for symptoms of menopause including: hormone therapies (e.g., oral, vaginal, or transdermal estrogen alone or combined with progestin), non-hormone prescription drugs (e.g., SSRIs, clonidine, pregabalin), over-the-counter treatments, and complementary and alternative medicines.

**Comparator(s):** Those listed above (i.e., to each other)

**Outcome(s):** Symptom relief, improved quality of life

**Key Questions from Nominator:** The nominator did not provide a key question; however, based on the nomination, the SRC has developed the following key question: What is the comparative effectiveness of treatment options for symptoms of menopause?

#### 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/>.)

- All women will experience menopause in their lifetime. Symptoms of menopause such as hot flashes, insomnia, and urinary incontinence can significantly impair quality of life. In addition, menopause can increase a woman's risk of osteoporosis and heart disease. There are multiple prescription and non-prescription options available to treat symptoms of menopause; however, it is unclear which treatment options are effective or best for certain subgroups of women and how these options compare to each other. Options like hormone therapy may also cause harms such as an increase in the risk of breast cancer.
  
- The topic was found to be addressed by an ongoing AHRQ comparative effectiveness review, *Menopausal Symptoms: Comparative Effectiveness Review of Therapies*. The review will examine the comparative effectiveness of hormone and non-hormone therapies including prescription medication, (e.g., antidepressants, clonidine, methyldopa), non-prescription medication, and complementary and alternative medicine for symptom management in peri- and post-menopausal women. The review does not include women who are menopausal with breast cancer or those receiving tamoxifen. Key questions from this report include:
  - What is the comparative effectiveness of different treatments for reducing symptoms of menopause (vasomotor symptoms, sleep disturbance, psychological symptoms, urogenital atrophy, and sexual dysfunction) and for improving quality of life? Individual agents will be compared to the extent permitted by the evidence.
  
  - What are the effects of hormone therapy preparations on coronary heart disease, stroke, or thromboembolism; cholecystitis; osteoporotic fractures; or endometrial, breast, colorectal, or ovarian cancers? Exposure will be examined according to duration of use and initiation relative to age and onset of menopause.
  
  - What are the effects of non-hormone therapy preparations on coronary heart disease, stroke, or thromboembolism; cholecystitis; osteoporotic fractures; or endometrial, breast, colorectal, or ovarian cancer? Exposure will be examined according to duration of use and initiation relative to age and onset of menopause. What are the significant agent--specific harms/adverse effects of non-hormone therapies?
  
  - Do effectiveness and adverse effects vary among subgroups of patients defined by demographics, symptom severity, other medications, and comorbidities or according to agent, preparation, or dose?
  
- Given that this topic will be addressed by the AHRQ comparative effectiveness review that is already in progress, no further action will be taken.