



National Prescribing Service Limited

## Menopause – perception vs reality

As new evidence has emerged over the last decade there has been debate about the safest and most effective treatment options for managing the symptoms of menopause.

The National Prescribing Service (NPS) says the decision about which treatments to use should be made jointly between the health professional and the patient.

Concerns about the potential adverse effects associated with hormone replacement therapy have led to an increased interest in non-hormonal therapies. While many women often think complementary medicines are safer, the evidence is still inconclusive and there have been reports of adverse effects and interactions between complementary medicines with conventional medicines.

In its latest education program, *Therapeutic choices for menopausal symptoms*, NPS advises that oestrogen with or without progestogen hormone replacement therapy is the most effective treatment for menopausal symptoms, if a decision is made to use drug therapy.

The therapeutic program reinforces the following:

- Discuss a woman's goals and concerns about menopause and her treatment preferences
- Oestrogen with or without progestogen is the most effective treatment for women with menopausal symptoms
- Consider potential benefits and harms and assess cardiovascular risk
- Tailor the dose and duration of therapy according to individual symptoms and existing risks
- Inform women about the limited efficacy and safety data on complementary and alternative medicines

As part of the therapeutic program, NPS provides health professionals with:

- NPS News (64) - *Therapeutic choices for menopausal symptoms*
- Case study (59) - *Optimising quality of life during menopause*
- Prescribing Practice Review (47) - *Therapeutic choices for menopausal symptoms*
- One-on-one educational visiting by NPS facilitators
- Small group discussions led by NPS facilitators

For more information contact NPS on (02) 8217 8700 or email [info@nps.org.au](mailto:info@nps.org.au). For more information on the program contact Michael Copestake on ph: 3390 2466.

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