

## **DEPRESSION, ANXIETY, SLEEP AND MENOPAUSE**

Feeling sad or blue is a common symptom of menopause affecting 19-29% of women. However, studies have shown that clinical depression is not more common during menopause, except for those women who have long-standing depression or anxiety. If you are affected by depression or anxiety, knowing this and discussing a plan with your doctor for your mental fitness, medication and sleep options can help you manage your life through menopause and beyond.

### **WILL HORMONE THERAPY HELP MY MOOD DURING OR AFTER MENOPAUSE?**

Hormone Therapy (HT) might help stabilise mood for some women around the menopause transition.

Unfortunately if you have already been through menopause and no longer experience hot flushes, hormone therapy will not help with those symptoms.

Women with mood disorders are often sensitive to the synthetic progestins which may aggravate your depression. You can discuss your options, such as Duphaston® or natural progesterone with your WHRIA physician.

### **WHAT ABOUT DEPRESSION AND PANIC ATTACKS?**

If depression or panic attacks have been a problem before menopause, then they are often aggravated by the menopause transition. Treatments such as HT will not cure women affected by this, but will improve that part of your problem caused by a lack of oestrogen, allowing a smoother transition.

### **ARE THERE ANY SOLUTIONS FOR POOR SLEEP DURING MENOPAUSE?**

Sleep disturbance is common during menopause. Hot flushes often occur during the night. Because many women are fearful of taking HT, severely affected women are now often delaying treatment for some years. Thus, even when effective anti-flush treatment is given, the sleep pattern may continue to be disturbed because a disrupted sleep pattern has been established. A sleep psychologist can be very helpful. Sometimes simple relaxation therapies can help too, and WHRIA's clinical psychologist can help teach you the tools to achieve this.

#### **More information:**

See our website for more information about

- Mindfulness meditation
- Clinical hypnotherapy
- Herbal Medicines
- Managing hot flushes

### Useful Links:

- <http://www.beyondblue.org.au/index.aspx?>
- <http://www.blackdoginstitute.org.au/>
- <http://www.psychology.org.au/>