

Study: Not just a menopausal symptom -- men have hot flashes, too

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A new study in *Psychophysiology* confirms a surprising fact – men who have undergone chemical castration for conditions such as prostate cancer experience hot flashes similar to those experienced by menopausal women. Using a technique called sternal skin conductance, doctors were able to positively identify hot flashes in males, a positive step toward providing therapy for those patients in need.

"Most people are unaware that men can have hot flashes," says study author Dr. Laura Hanisch. "Even the patients themselves are often unaware that they are having them." Having a test that objectively measures when hot flashes are occurring can help both doctors and patients identify the episodes, and can assist researchers in finding their root cause.

"If we can use sternal skin conductance to monitor the frequency and perception of hot flashes, the data could then be used to develop safe and effective treatments that would be a better alternative than taking hormone treatments or discontinuing cancer-related treatments," says Hanisch.

Hanisch also says that hot flashes going unnoticed may be a sign that people can adapt to them. Therefore, patients could possibly benefit from cognitive behavioral therapy in addition to pharmacological treatments.

Source: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

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