

ADHD drug helps menopausal women with focus, memory deficits, study shows

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(PhysOrg.com) -- At menopause, many women begin to notice a decline in their attention, organization, and short-term memory. These cognitive symptoms can lead to professional and personal challenges and unwarranted fears of early-onset dementia.

[A small study](#) by Penn Medicine and Yale researchers, published in the journal *Menopause*, found that a drug typically given to children and adults with ADHD improved attention and concentration in menopausal women, providing the first potential treatment for menopause-related cognition deficits.

Researchers believe the cognitive issues may be the result of a menopause-related decline in estrogen input to the [prefrontal cortex](#), which interferes with neurotransmission, causing executive function problems.

"Subjective declines in memory, focus and organization are common in mid-life women," said study author C. Neill Epperson, MD, director of the Center for Women's Behavioral Wellness and associate professor in Psychiatry and [Obstetrics and Gynecology](#) at the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine. "We believe that the results of our small [randomized clinical trial](#) provides proof-of-concept that atomoxetine may improve subjective memory, attention and concentration."

Before clinical recommendations can be made, a follow-up clinical trial

needs to validate results. A new follow-up study is now underway at the Penn Medicine's Women's Behavioral Wellness program and will test whether an FDA-approved ADD medication amends these cognitive deficits in a larger group of menopausal women.

Provided by University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine

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