

New study proves link between recent abuse and menopause-related symptoms

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Numerous studies have already documented how abuse of any kind can result in health problems. There are even proven links between adverse childhood experiences and hot flashes. But a new study by Mayo Clinic now demonstrates the impact of recent abuse on a wide array of menopausal symptoms. The study will be presented at the 2015 Annual Meeting of The North American Menopause Society (NAMS) in Las Vegas starting on September 30.

For purposes of the study, abuse was defined as physical, sexual or emotional/verbal and had to have occurred within the past year. Menopausal symptoms evaluated included hot flashes, [sleep disturbances](#), cognitive function, bowel/bladder function, sexual function and general health. A total of 3,740 women completed surveys to self-report the incidence of abuse, as well as menopausal symptom bother (MSB). Of these, 253 (6.8%) experienced one or more forms of abuse in the last year with 245 (96.8%) reporting verbal/emotional abuse, 34 (13.4%) reporting physical abuse and 10 (3.9%) reporting sexual abuse.

No distinction was made relative to age, race/ethnicity or education. It was, however, noted that, of those reporting abuse in the last year, there was a higher percentage classified as work-disabled. In addition, the prevalence of cigarette smoking was higher in those who reported abuse in the last year.

"We found that those reporting abuse in the last year had higher mean total MSB scores and higher scores for each of the identified menopause

symptoms with the exception of [hot flashes](#) and night sweats," says Stephanie Faubion, MD, Director of the Mayo Clinic Office of Women's Health "In particular, we found a strong correlation with verbal and emotional abuse."

It's worth noting that the findings were consistent from multivariable analyses adjusting for all demographic and substance use characteristics.

"This study highlights the need for healthcare providers to find ways to allow and encourage women to report abuse," says Dr. Wulf Utian, NAMS executive director.

Provided by The North American Menopause Society

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