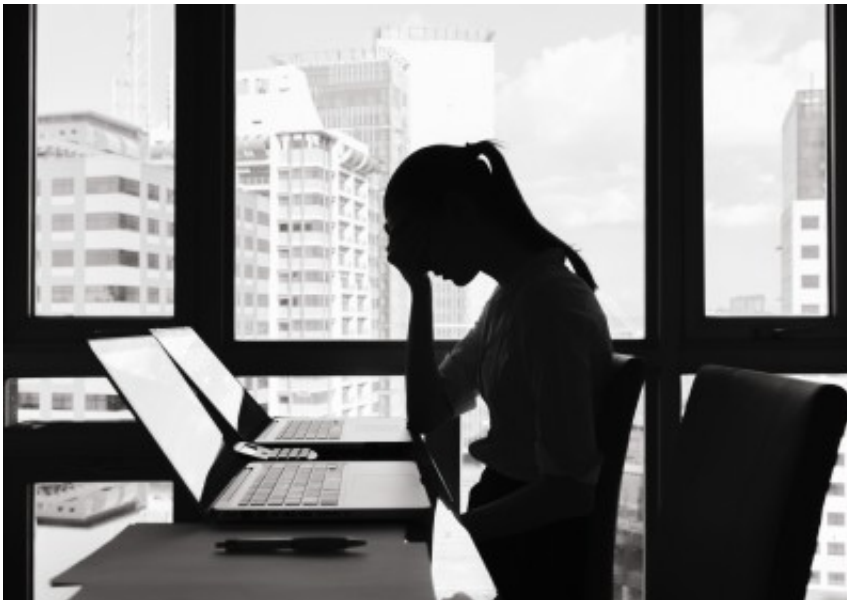


Menopause symptoms are associated with poor self-assessed work ability

April 29 2016



Credit: Monash University

A novel study from researchers at Monash University has found that poorer work ability and women's self-assessed work ability was significantly associated with having menopausal hot flushes and night sweats.

The researchers surveyed 2020 Australian women, aged 40 to 65 years. Study participants completed a questionnaire called the Work Ability Index. Other factors independently associated with poorer work ability

included being un-partnered, obese or overweight, smoking, being a carer and having insecure housing finance, but not with age.

While [hot flushes](#) and night sweats may directly adversely impact work ability through the personal discomfort of having flushes and sweats in the work environment, lead investigator Ms Pragya Gartoulla said the findings were significant given that previous smaller studies have not found an independent association between hot flushes and night sweats and work ability.

"In addition, in a previous publication in the same journal in 2015, we reported that bothersome hot flushes and night sweats are strongly associated with impaired psychological and general wellbeing, which in turn is likely to affect work ability," Ms Gartoulla said.

Menopause is the permanent loss of ovarian function and fertility. Common symptoms of menopause include: hot flushes and night sweats, disrupted sleep; anxiety and disturbed mood; and joint pain. The symptoms of menopause often commence months to years before a woman experiences menopause, and may continue up to 15 or more years.

Women experience menopause at one of their busiest life phases, when many are employed outside the home and have diverse family responsibilities that frequently include caring for parents and extended family.

"We believe this is the first study to report that being un-partnered, having insecure housing finance or a carer is independently associated with poorer self-reported work ability in women at midlife," Ms Gartoulla said.

Professor Susan Davis, principal study investigator said that given that

the proportion of women in this age group in the workforce is likely to increase in the future, there is the potential in the future for an even greater proportion of women whose work ability may be adversely impacted by menopause.

"This is an important finding and health practitioners should take note and gauge the impact of hot flushes and night sweats on a woman's work ability and carefully consider this impact in joint decision-making about the use of [menopausal hormone therapy](#)," said Professor Davis.

"Minimising work conditions that might exacerbate hot flushes, such as overheated work spaces, has the potential to increase women's wellbeing and enhance [work ability](#)."

More information: Pragya Gartoulla et al. Menopausal vasomotor symptoms are associated with poor self-assessed work ability, *Maturitas* (2016). [DOI: 10.1016/j.maturitas.2016.02.003](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.maturitas.2016.02.003)

Provided by Monash University

Citation: Menopause symptoms are associated with poor self-assessed work ability (2016, April 29) retrieved 10 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2016-04-menopause-symptoms-poor-self-assessed-ability.html>

<p>This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.</p>
--