

Moderate-severe hot flashes significantly increase depression risk

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A new study of more than 2,000 perimenopausal and menopausal women showed that moderate-severe vasomotor symptoms (hot flashes or night sweats) were an independent and significant risk factor for moderate-severe depression. Researchers explored the controversial link between hot flashes and depressive symptoms by focusing on more severe forms of both conditions and concluding that there is likely a common underlying cause, as reported in an article published in *Journal of Women's Health*.

Data presented in the article entitled "Moderate-Severe Vasomotor Symptoms Are Associated with Moderate-Severe Depressive Symptoms," demonstrate that among a group of women ages 40-65, those with moderate-severe [hot flashes](#) were significantly more likely to have moderate-severe depression than women with no or mild vasomotor symptoms. Roisin Worsley, MBBS, Robin Bell, PhD, Pragya Gartoulla, Penelope Robinson, and Susan Davis, MBBS, Monash University, Melbourne, Australia, found hot flashes, [depressive symptoms](#), and use of antidepressant medication to be common in the age range of women included in the study. The researchers also examined whether or not moderate-severe depression was associated with a greater likelihood of psychotropic medication use, smoking, or binge drinking at least once a week.

"The results of this study shed further light on therapeutic findings, with both [anti-depressant medication](#) and estrogen therapy having the potential to improve hot flashes and mood," says Susan G. Kornstein, MD, Editor-in-Chief of *Journal of Women's Health*, Executive Director of the Virginia Commonwealth University Institute for Women's Health, Richmond, VA, and President of the Academy of Women's Health.

More information: Roisin Worsley et al, Moderate–Severe Vasomotor Symptoms Are Associated with Moderate–Severe Depressive Symptoms, *Journal of Women's Health* (2017). [DOI:](#)

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