

For those with HIV, symptom burden higher in women

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(HealthDay)—The burden of two of the most common symptoms in

patients living with HIV—fatigue and muscle aches/joint pains—is higher in women, according to a study published online March 5 in *Menopause*.

Rebecca Schnall, Ph.D., M.P.H., R.N., from Columbia University in New York City, and colleagues studied the effect of [menopause](#) on sex differences in HIV symptom burden using survey data from 1,342 [respondents](#) to an [online survey](#) (957 male participants; 385 female participants) and a follow-up, online survey of menstrual bleeding patterns (inferred menopause) in eligible females (242 participants).

The researchers found that for the most troublesome symptoms, depression scores were similar between the sexes ($P > 0.05$); however, after adjusting for covariates, there were higher (worse) burden scores for fatigue ($P = 0.013$) and muscle aches/pains ($P = 0.004$) in females. Among respondents to the female survey, the burden scores were higher in women reporting amenorrhea due to natural menopause or hysterectomy (104 respondents) versus the menstruating group (118 respondents) for muscle aches/pains ($P = 0.05$), fatigue ($P = 0.03$), and difficulty falling asleep ($P = 0.04$), independent of age, HIV duration, and number of HIV-associated, non-AIDS conditions.

"Two of the most common symptoms in people living with HIV—fatigue and muscle aches/joint pains—invoke additional burden in women," the authors write. "Independent of aging, symptom burden may be exacerbated after menopause, supporting a shifting paradigm for HIV care management."

More information: [Abstract/Full Text \(subscription or payment may be required\)](#)

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