MEDIA ALERT

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NAMS Isoflavones Report Findings

CLEVELAND, OH (June 24, 2011)—The jury is still out on many of the potential effects of soy isoflavones on the health of midlife women. So concludes a comprehensive new report of The North American Menopause Society (NAMS)/Utian Translational Science Symposium on Soy and Soy Isoflavones.

The report, to be published in the July 2011 issue of Menopause and now available online, aims to clarify basic and clinical research findings on the risks and benefits of soy isoflavones for peri- and postmenopausal women. Isoflavones, which are plant-derived compounds with estrogen-like biologic activity and chemical structure, are found in high amounts in soybeans and soy products. If and to what extent soy protein, soy isoflavones and their metabolites, including S(−)-equol, have beneficial effects on women’s health has long been unclear.

The report was developed by a working group of clinical and research experts in women’s health and botanicals convened by NAMS October 9-10, 2010, to review the latest evidence-based science on isoflavones as they affect midlife women’s health. The group’s main conclusions include the following:

- Soy-based isoflavones are modestly effective in relieving menopausal symptoms, and supplements providing higher proportions of genistein or increased in S(−)-equol may provide more benefits.
- Soy food consumption is associated with lower risk of breast and endometrial cancer in observational studies.
- The efficacy of isoflavones on bone health has not been proven.
- The clinical picture of whether soy has cardiovascular benefits is still evolving.
- Preliminary findings on the cognitive effects of isoflavone therapy support a “critical window” hypothesis wherein younger postmenopausal women derive more benefit than older women.

The report also identifies several priority areas for further research.

For access to the online article or to arrange interviews with the report’s working group members, please contact Judy Cerne at jcerne@mckinneyad.com or 440-352-2081.


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