

Contact:

The North American Menopause Society

Eileen Petridis

Phone: (216) 696-0229

epetridis@fallscommunications.com

**Early Onset of Menopause and Diabetes May Limit Life Span**

New study evaluates health risks associated with early onset of menopause and diabetes, along with effect on life expectancy

CLEVELAND, Ohio (October 15, 2018)—Only in science fiction novels can scientists predict people's lifespans. However, researchers have advanced the understanding of those risk factors that adversely affect mortality rates. A new study concludes that women who experienced early menopause lived shorter lives and spent fewer years without diabetes than women who experienced normal or late menopause. Study results are published online in *Menopause*, the journal of The North American Menopause Society (NAMS).

It is a well-accepted fact in the medical community that both diabetes and early onset of natural menopause may be associated with early death. Emerging evidence shows an association between age at menopause and diabetes, with studies reporting almost a two-fold increased risk of type 2 diabetes with early onset of menopause. To date, however, there are no other known studies that have quantified (calculated the number of years lived with and without diabetes) the combined association of early menopause and type 2 diabetes with life expectancy.

In this study involving 3,650 postmenopausal women, the difference in life expectancy was compared in women experiencing early, normal, and late menopause, as well as in those with and without diabetes. Compared with late menopause (defined as menopause that occurs at age 55 years and older), the difference in life expectancy for women who experienced early menopause (defined as menopause that occurs at age 44 years or younger) was -3.5 years overall and -4.6 years in women without diabetes. Compared with age at normal menopause (defined as menopause that occurs at 45-54 years of age), the difference in life expectancy for women who experienced early menopause was -3.1 years overall and -3.3 years in women without diabetes.

Results of this study are reported in the article "Age at natural menopause and life expectancy with and without type 2 diabetes." The authors suggest the need for future research to examine the mechanisms behind this association to help tailor prevention and treatment strategies that improve women's health across all age categories of menopause.

"Early age at natural menopause may be linked to earlier mortality," says Dr. JoAnn Pinkerton, NAMS executive director. "Women with early natural menopause were found to have a shorter lifespan, were more likely to be diagnosed with diabetes, and lived fewer years without diabetes than those with menopause occurring after age 45 or even after age 55."

For more information about menopause and healthy aging, visit www.menopause.org.

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Founded in 1989, The North American Menopause Society (NAMS) is North America's leading nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting the health and quality of life of all women during midlife and beyond through an understanding of menopause and healthy aging. Its multidisciplinary membership of 2,000 leaders in the field—

including clinical and basic science experts from medicine, nursing, sociology, psychology, nutrition, anthropology, epidemiology, pharmacy, and education—makes NAMS uniquely qualified to serve as the definitive resource for health professionals and the public for accurate, unbiased information about menopause and healthy aging. To learn more about NAMS, visit www.menopause.org.