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**Physical Activity Key to Helping to Reduce Menopause Symptoms**

*New study suggests benefit of increasing volume and intensity of exercise to combat amplified symptoms of menopause resulting from cancer treatments*

CLEVELAND, Ohio (December 2, 2020)—Women being treated for cancer often experience menopause quite suddenly with common symptoms, such as hot flashes, amplified more than had menopause occurred naturally. A new study suggests that the intensity and volume of physical activity could mitigate some of those symptoms. Study results are published online in *Menopause*, the journal of The North American Menopause Society (NAMS).

Menopause symptoms may arise as the result of radiotherapy to the pelvic field, surgical removal of the ovaries, or systemic chemotherapy. When such procedures occur in premenopausal or perimenopausal women, they often result in sudden and sometimes irreversible menopause that is accompanied by more frequent and severe menopause symptoms. Various cancer-treating endocrine therapies, such as the use of tamoxifen, can also amplify symptoms, especially hot flashes.

A new study involving nearly 300 women sought to investigate the association between self-reported physical activity and menopause symptoms. In addition, the researchers evaluated whether intervention targeting lifestyle behavior could improve changes in physical activity levels and menopause symptoms.

Results suggest that menopause symptoms are less severe in women with medium to high levels of physical activity than in women with low levels of such activity. The intervention, however, was not determined to play a role in increasing physical activity in women being treated for breast, reproductive, or blood cancers. Although this is not the first study to examine the association of physical activity with menopause symptoms, it is the first to look specifically at the volume and intensity of physical activity.

Severe menopause symptoms, including poor mental well-being, are associated with a sedentary lifestyle and low physical activity, even in women experiencing natural menopause. Researchers of the current study additionally found that women being treated for breast cancer, for example, who experience worse menopause symptoms are less likely to engage in health-promoting behaviors.

On the basis of study results, researchers suggest that an increased focus on exercise training should be part of the long-term maintenance program for women after cancer treatment.

Results are published in the article “Physical activity and menopausal symptoms in women who have received menopause-inducing cancer treatments: results from the Women’s Wellness After Cancer Program.”

“This study highlights some of the many known benefits of exercise in women with or without cancer. Although exercise was not associated with less bothersome hot flashes, findings consistent with prior studies, it may help with other menopause symptoms, including mood and sleep disturbances,” says Dr. Stephanie Faubion, NAMS medical director.

For more information about menopause and healthy aging, visit [www.menopause.org](http://www.menopause.org).

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](http://www.menopause.org).