

HORMONE THERAPY IN MENOPAUSE AND CLIMACTERIC: BENEFITS AND RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH TREATMENT

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ABSTRACT

Menopause is characterized by a reduction in the production of female sex hormones, being a clinically identified physiological process. Hormone replacement therapy (HRT) is indicated for women during and after this period, with the aim of relieving symptoms, preventing osteoporosis and reducing the risk of coronary heart disease. The first three postmenopausal years are considered a "window of opportunity" to start HRT, a phase in which the benefits are most expressive. This paper examines the potential risks and benefits of HRT in postmenopausal women, based on an integrative literature review, with searches in the Scielo, PubMed, and Lilacs databases, using the descriptors "menopause", "hormone replacement therapy", and "climacteric". 13 recent publications relevant to the theme were selected. Among the benefits of HRT, the reduction of vasomotor symptoms (such as insomnia and hot flashes) in 77% of patients, the preservation of bone mass, contributing to the prevention of osteoporosis, and the relief of urogenital symptoms stand out. The analysis of the risks and benefits of HRT suggests that, despite the gradual increase in the risk of breast cancer and thromboembolic diseases over the years – doubling every decade – the use of HRT in the period of the therapeutic window may bring more benefits than risks, especially when indicated individually. Therefore, HRT, when used at the appropriate time and with personalized evaluation, is an effective option to improve the quality of life of menopausal women, relieving vasomotor and urogenital symptoms and acting in the prevention of osteoporosis.

Keywords: Menopause, Hormone replacement therapy, Climacteric.

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