

Hormone Replacement Therapy

Introduction

The benefits and risks of HRT have been debated for several decades. Perhaps the most important factor in helping women manage their menopause is to have an individualised approach in combination with educational information and support. NICE defines the menopause as:¹

“A biological stage in a woman’s life that occurs when she stops menstruating and reaches the end of her natural reproductive life. Usually it is defined as having occurred when a woman has not had a period for 12 consecutive months (for women reaching menopause naturally). The changes associated with menopause occur when the ovaries stop maturing eggs and secreting oestrogen and progesterone.”

Three-quarters of women in the UK changed their lives to cope with the menopause and more than half stated that it had a negative impact on their life. Just under half found work more difficult and there was a reluctance to discuss this with employers. Around 30% reported an impact on their social life and 51% said it had affected their sex lives².

This module will look at clinical cases exploring current issues in HRT. The topics were chosen by an inter-professional focus group of practising clinicians. There are four cases covering: premature ovarian insufficiency, the initiation and review of HRT, alternative therapies, and how to manage potential contraindications to HRT.

“All women are different and respond differently both to oestrogen deficiency and in their response to treatments. Decisions have to be made on an individual basis taking into account symptoms, past history, family history, diet, lifestyle and individual preferences and concerns.” British Menopause Society