

Health

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Healthy Alternatives to Hormone Replacement Therapy: Part 4

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I think it is also important to remember that “treating” menopause does not simply mean finding ways to alleviate symptoms like hot flashes and night sweats. It is also important to consider other hidden health issues that can accompany estrogen loss, including osteoporosis and the bone injuries associated with it—such as hip fractures. Coronary heart disease is another concern of peri- and post-menopausal women.

Fortunately, new studies seem to show a positive relationship between a plant-based diet based on the New Four Food Groups and the alleviation of symptoms of reduced estrogen. The studies also show that a plant-based diet may help prevent osteoporosis and coronary heart disease. So, eating your veggies means reduced symptoms and better long-term health.

I challenge doctors and caretakers to be real advocates for women’s health by providing accurate information to help women understand their choices, taking the time to study their personal medical histories, recommending appropriate and cruelty-free treatments, and supporting the choices that women make about their own treatment plans. And I challenge women to do their research and not back down whenever someone insists that the only way to manage menopause is with animal-derived HRT. With so many safe, effective, and humane alternatives available, it is simply not true that in order to manage menopause, we must hurt animals. The healthiest choices are good for all of us—human and nonhuman.

Finally, I must close by saying that it is important to find a doctor you like and trust and who shares your health values. Always consult directly with him or her before embarking on a new menopause-management plan.

This guest post was written by Samuel L. Jacobs, MD Associate Professor, OBGYN, Division of Reproductive Endocrinology and Infertility at UMDNJ-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School at Camden.

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