



**For Women**  
For Health, For Menopause

## **“What could HRT offer me?”**

GP and menopause specialist Dr Jane Davis explains how to respond to patient questions about HRT



## Q: “What could HRT offer me?”

**A:** Ask your patient what their symptoms are, then discuss with them the benefits of HRT, balanced with their individualised risks.

Most menopausal symptoms are due to estrogen deficiency. The medical evidence is clear that estrogen will resolve hot flushes<sup>1</sup>. In addition, replacing the estrogen, in the form of HRT, depleted by the hormonal fluctuations of menopause often helps with common menopausal symptoms such as:

- hot flushes
- night sweats
- difficulty sleeping
- a reduced sex drive (libido)
- problems with memory and concentration
- vaginal dryness and pain, itching or discomfort during sex
- headaches
- mood changes, such as low mood or anxiety
- palpitations
- joint stiffness, aches and pains<sup>2</sup>.

There are other long-term benefits to hormone replacement therapy (HRT) treatment. HRT reduces the risk of osteoporosis<sup>3</sup> and protects the coronary arteries<sup>4</sup> for many women.

For many women, HRT also reverses the vaginal changes that women experience at menopause, such as vaginal dryness. HRT can also be used to resolve urogenital atrophy<sup>5</sup> and here can be delivered either systemically or topically.

If your patient has a uterus and is still menstruating, prescribe progesterone or a synthetic form of progesterone to protect the uterus lining from endometrial hyperplasia<sup>6</sup>. Women who are started on HRT early on, in perimenopause, will experience a regulation of their periods, which is often welcome.

### REFERENCES:

- 1 NICE Guideline (NG23) 2015 <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng23/chapter/Recommendations#individualised-care>
- 2 NHS.UK Menopause symptoms <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/menopause/symptoms/>
- 3 NICE Guideline (NG23) 2015 <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng23/chapter/Recommendations#individualised-care>
- 4 Cochrane et al. Hormone therapy for preventing cardiovascular disease in post-menopausal women (2015), Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews
- 5 NICE Guideline (NG23) 2015 <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng23/chapter/Recommendations#individualised-care>
- 6 <https://cks.nice.org.uk/topics/menopause/prescribing-information/hormone-replacement-therapy-hrt/>

This resource has been produced by primary care medical professionals on behalf of Theramex. Remember this is guidance and to please use your clinical judgement on a case-by-case basis.