This special issue on complementary and integrative therapies for menopause puts together papers published in two journals, Complementary Therapies in Medicine and Maturitas between 2015 and 2018. Because of concerns regarding the safety of estrogen-based menopausal hormone therapy women have turned towards complementary and alternative medicines (CAM). The Australian Longitudinal Study on Women’s Health found that 3 in 4 Australian women used CAM. Estrogen therapy is not advised after breast cancer and some dietary supplements and herbal medicines contain substances with estrogenic properties. It is therefore not surprising that there are many studies on the effect of yoga. It improves psychological, somatic, vasomotor, and urogenital menopausal symptoms. Reassuringly it is not associated with an increased risk of falls.

Dietary interventions are popular especially as vegan report fewer bothersome vasomotor and physical menopausal symptoms than omnivores. A randomised trial adds further evidence for the use of vitamin D supplements. Cardiovascular benefits have been described with honey-based products and milk peptides. In addition, vaginal administration of visnadine, prenylfavanoids and bovine colostrum may benefit vulvovaginal atrophy. Chinese herbal products may help with menopausal symptoms and abnormal perimenopausal bleeding, but further research is required. Safety concerns are highlighted in a systematic review and meta-analysis which found that phytoestrogen supplementation was associated with increased body weight in post-menopausal women with preexisting metabolic disorders. Last, but not least results from the US SWAN study show that religiosity and faith may affect risk of metabolic syndrome in Hispanic women.

To conclude, the widespread use of self-prescribed CAM means that practitioners providing women’s health care should be aware of such use amongst their patients especially as some may interact with prescribed drug therapies.


13. Preliminary results of a single-arm pilot study to assess the safety and efficacy of visnadine, prenylfavanoids and bovine colostrum


17. Religiosity and faith in relation to time to metabolic syndrome for Hispanic women in a multiethnic cohort of women—Findings from the Study of Women’s Health Across the Nation (SWAN) Amanda A. Allshouse, Nanette Santoro, Robin Green, Jason Y.Y. Wong, Dawn M. Upchurch, Genevieve Neal-Perry, Rebecca C. Thurston, Carol A. Derby Maturitas June 2018 Volume 112, Pages 18–23 DOI: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.maturitas.2018.03.008.

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