



SWAN Fact Sheet: Hot Flash Fact Sheet*

Did you know that:

- Most (up to 80%) of women will have some hot flashes or night sweats as they go through menopause and a few women will have very disruptive hot flashes.¹
 - Some women have hot flashes when they are having periods, other women's hot flashes start when their periods stop, other women will have hot flashes both before and after their periods stop.²
 - Hot flashes can be very variable, even in the same woman, in how often they occur and how severe they are.
- Hot flashes differ in severity. Many women have few or mild hot flashes but about 10% of women will have **more than 7 hot flashes a day**.
- Hot flashes can disrupt a woman's life by³:
 - Interfering with sleep
 - Making it harder to concentrate
 - Making one's mood worse
 - Reducing one's energy
 - Causing women to reduce/withdraw from social activities
- Hot flashes often start **before** a woman's periods stop; almost 30% of women will have hot flashes in their 30's^{4,5} when they are still getting regular menstrual periods.
- Frequent hot flashes can last 7 or more years for about half of women.⁶
- Hot flashes may last longer if they started early or if a woman is also experiencing anxiety, stress, or depressive symptoms.^{6,7}
- Hot flashes vary by race and ethnicity:^{6,7}
 - Native American and Black women have the most frequent and most bothersome hot flashes of all groups studied to date⁸.
 - Hispanic/Latinx women have similar rates of hot flashes than White women, but fewer than Black women
 - Chinese and Japanese women have the fewest hot flashes
- Hot flashes begin in the brain: special chemical messengers in the brain send signals to blood vessels to flush, which causes hot flashes.⁹ Blocking these messengers stops hot flashes.
- Hormones are the most effective treatment for hot flashes that occur after menopause, however:
 - Non-hormonal treatments, such as SSRI or SNRI antidepressants, hypnosis, or cognitive behavioral therapy may be helpful for women who cannot or who do not wish to take hormones.¹⁰
 - Treatments that block hot flash chemical messengers in the brain may become available within the year and will provide a new non-hormonal way to treat hot flashes.



For more information, please see:

¹ Gold EB, Colvin A, Avis N, Bromberger J, Greendale GA, Powell L, Sternfeld B, Matthews K. Longitudinal analysis of the association between vasomotor symptoms and race/ethnicity across the menopausal transition: study of women's health across the nation. *Am J Public Health*. 2006 Jul;96(7):1226-35.

² Tepper PG, Brooks MM, Randolph JF Jr, Crawford SL, El Khoudary SR, Gold EB, Lasley BL, Jones B, Joffe H, Hess R, Avis NE, Harlow S, McConnell DS, Bromberger JT, Zheng H, Ruppert K, Thurston RC. Characterizing the trajectories of vasomotor symptoms across the menopausal transition. *Menopause*. 2016 Oct;23(10):1067-74.

³ Avis NE, Colvin A, Bromberger JT, Hess R, Matthews KA, Ory M, Schocken M. Change in health-related quality of life over the menopausal transition in a multiethnic cohort of middle-aged women: Study of Women's Health Across the Nation. *Menopause*. 2009 Sep-Oct;16(5):860-9.

⁴ Reed SD, Lampe JW, Qu C, Copeland WK, Gundersen G, Fuller S, Newton KM. Premenopausal vasomotor symptoms in an ethnically diverse population. *Menopause*. 2014 Feb;21(2):153-8.

⁵ Freeman EW, Sammel MD, Grisso JA, Battistini M, Garcia-Espagna B, Hollander L. Hot flashes in the late reproductive years: risk factors for Africa American and Caucasian women. *J Womens Health Gend Based Med*. 2001 Jan-Feb;10(1):67-76.

⁶ Avis NE, Crawford SL, Greendale G, Bromberger JT, Everson-Rose SA, Gold EB, Hess R, Joffe H, Kravitz HM, Tepper PG, Thurston RC; Study of Women's Health Across the Nation. Duration of menopausal vasomotor symptoms over the menopause transition. *JAMA Intern Med*. 2015 Apr;175(4):531-9.

⁷ Gold EB, Colvin A, Avis N, Bromberger J, Greendale GA, Powell L, Sternfeld B, Matthews K. Longitudinal analysis of the association between vasomotor symptoms and race/ethnicity across the menopausal transition: study of women's health across the nation. *Am J Public Health*. 2006 Jul;96(7):1226-35.

⁸ Thurston RC, Bromberger JT, Joffe H, Avis NE, Hess R, Crandall CJ, Chang Y, Green R, Matthews KA. Beyond frequency: who is most bothered by vasomotor symptoms? *Menopause*. 2008 Sep-Oct;15(5):841-7.

⁹ Rance NE, Dacks PA, Mittelman-Smith MA, Romanovsky AA, Krajewski-Hall SJ. Modulation of body temperature and LH secretion by hypothalamic KNDy (kisspeptin, neurokinin B and dynorphin) neurons: a novel hypothesis on the mechanism of hot flashes. *Front Neuroendocrinol*. 2013 Aug;34(3):211-27.

¹⁰ North American Menopause Society Position Statement. Nonhormonal management of menopause-associated vasomotor symptoms: 2015 position statement of the North American Menopause Society. *Menopause* 2015; 22: 1155-1174.

* SWAN recognizes that race is a social construct and that including race/ethnicity in describing our findings is complicated, with there being reasons for and against doing such. We and others are actively reviewing the best approach to ensure that we provide patients with the best information about their health