

THE EFFECT OF SSRIS ON HOT FLASHES IN WOMEN WITH PERIMENOPAUSAL DEPRESSION

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Objective: Menopause is characterized by a decline in ovarian function resulting in vasomotor symptoms. Vasomotor symptoms include hot flashes and night sweats. The purpose of this study was to examine the effect of SSRIs on hot flashes in perimenopausal women with depression.

Material and methods: Sixty five perimenopausal women participated in this study. The subjects included 41 perimenopausal women with depression and 24 healthy women. The diagnosis of depression was made by a psychiatric interview and with the help of Hamilton Depression Rating Scale 17 (HAM-D 17). Hot flashes were examined with the use of Menopause Rating Scale (MRS) and they were divided as absent, mild, moderate, severe and very severe.

Results: Perimenopausal women were divided in three groups. The first group consisted of normal controls, the second of depressed perimenopausal women who were taking SSRIs and the third of depressed women not taking SSRIs. The control group had fewer hot flashes than the other two groups ($p < 0.0001$). The two groups of depressed women did not show any statistically significant difference in the presence and severity of hot flashes in relation to the use of SSRIs.

Conclusions: It was found that depression is associated with the presence of hot flashes in perimenopausal women. On the other hand the use of SSRIs did not relieve perimenopausal women with depression of hot flashes. Therefore, it seems that hormonal replacement therapy has the first role in the treatment of vasomotor symptoms in perimenopausal women.