Change of Life Doesn’t Change Treatment

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Ladies: Menopause may make you sweat, keep you up nights and have you bursting into tears without warning. But here’s some cool news: It won’t prevent your HIV combo from suppressing the virus.

Researchers had thought that because estrogen seems to help younger women keep viral loads low and CD4 counts high, women past menopause (which depletes the hormone) might respond less heartily to HIV meds. But an analysis of two large HIV treatment studies showed that pre- and post-menopausal women starting their first HIV combo reacted similarly to the meds, judging from CD4 counts and viral loads over nearly two years. While no data exist on second or third combos and menopause, says lead researcher Kristine Patterson, MD, of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, her HIV and menopause research leads her to “firmly believe that whether any woman is pre- or post-menopausal shouldn’t affect viral load.” Keep reading *POZ* for more hot flashes on this subject.

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