# Hot Flashes Are a Bigger Drag on Women With HIV

July 12, 2013

Women living with HIV suffer from more intense hot flashes than those without the virus, with symptoms taking a more significant toll on their quality of life and daily functioning. Researchers from Massachusetts General Hospital gave questionnaires to 33 HIV-positive perimenopausal women experiencing irregular periods who were between the ages of 45 and 48 and compared the results to a similar group of women who did not have HIV. They published their findings in the journal Menopause.

Finding that hot flashes can significantly challenge HIV-positive women's often already tenuous stability, the researchers urged health care providers to evaluate HIV-positive women for the condition and to determine the effect it had on the women's lives. The investigators argued that hot flashes have the potential to compromise women's health, their HIV treatment and their ability to remain off drugs and alcohol.

When compared with HIV-negative women, the women living with HIV had more intense hot flashes, as well as more problems with sleep, depression, irritability and anxiety. Hot flashes were more likely to get in the way of their work, social lives, hobbies, interpersonal relationships, sexuality, enjoyment of life and overall quality of life.

The study did not uncover a reason for the increased intensity and fallout of hot flashes among HIV-positive women; more research is necessary.

To read a release on the study, click here.

To read the study abstract, click here.

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