Efficacy and Tolerability of Compounded Bioidentical Hormone Replacement Therapy

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Abstract

The primary purpose of this six-week survey study of women currently taking compounded bioidentical hormone replacement therapy was to determine if compounded bioidentical hormone replacement therapy relieves symptoms of menopause and is well tolerated. The secondary purpose of this study was to compare the symptom relief and tolerability of compounded bioidentical hormone replacement therapy to previously used commercially available products. All strengths and dosage forms of bi-estrogen and tri-estrogen were included, whether used alone or in combination with progesterone, dehydroepiandrosterone or testosterone.

The survey instrument consisted of nineteen questions and evaluated the outcomes and side effects for commercially available versus compounded bioidentical hormones. A total of 160 surveys was distributed and 78 were completed. Overall, 57.7% of the women surveyed reported fewer side effects and 71.8% of the women had better relief of menopausal symptoms when using bioidentical hormone replacement therapy. The occurrence and severity of menopausal symptoms decreased significantly after beginning bioidentical hormone replacement therapy. Before treatment, moderate-to-severe symptoms of hot flashes, night sweats, sleep problems, dry skin/hair, vaginal dryness, foggy thinking, mood swings and decrease in sex drive were reported in 52% to 70% of the women. After initiating treatment the moderate-to-severe range of symptoms dropped to between 4% and 20%. The most commonly reported side effects with bioidentical hormone replacement therapy were weight gain (37.2%), breast tenderness (19.2%) and bloating (23.1%). Weight gain (56.2%), breast tenderness (54.5%), bloating (40%) and mood swings (36.4%) were most commonly seen with commercially available products. Bioidentical hormone replacement relieved the symptoms of menopause and was well tolerated. PMID: 23924704