



12th World Congress
on the **Menopause**
May 19-23 2008
Madrid, Spain

ASIAN AND LATINAMERICAN WOMEN SUFFER FEWER EPISODES OF HOT FLUSHES THAN NORTHAMERICAN AND EUROPEAN ONES

Asian women suffer fewer episodes of hot flushes and experience a lower risk of breast cancer, but still are significantly afraid of osteoporosis

Literacy rates, financial independence and social roles are some of the many elements that can influence on the concept women have about their own health

With an expected attendance of over 3.000 experts from around the world, Madrid will house the 12th International Congress on the Menopause, between May 19-23 and under the theme “*New challenges in women’s health*”

Madrid, April 28 2008.- There are more than 3.200 million women around the world and 20% of them are 50 years old or even older. Doctor Santiago Palacios, currently director of the *Instituto Palacios de Salud y Medicina de la Mujer*, ex president of the AEEM and president of the Fundación Europea Mujer y Salud, explains that “social, economic and cultural factors related to each and every geographical setting determine how health and quality of life are perceived by women, so that once we can actually have science help us solve medical disorders linked to menopause and elderly ages, we additionally have to learn how to differentiate these factors and know how they affect women in each type of population”.

Among the elements that can influence on the concept women have about their own health, highlights are literacy rates, financial independence and female-related social roles. In the specific case of menopause and mature age, doctor Palacios states that “Asian and South American women suffer fewer episodes of hot flushes than North American and European ones, but these last two groups are usually more concerned about menopause-related symptoms. Asian women, who present a lower risk of developing breast cancer, frequently take their worries to problems associated to osteoporosis”.

New challenges in women’s health is precisely the theme running the 12th World Congress on the Menopause, organised by the International Menopause Society (IMS) and the *Asociación Española para el Estudio de la Menopausia (AEEM)*, which will take place in the Palacio Municipal de Congresos of Madrid between May 19 and 23.

According to doctor Palacios, president of this meeting, “our main objective is to analyse how menopausal women’s health is improving around the world and to assess new therapeutic strategies aimed to keep on improving female quality of life during the upcoming years”.

“In this sense –he adds- hormone therapy, new selective estrogens’ receptor modulators (SERMs) and the treatment of sexual dysfunction among women with surgery-derived or natural menopause will become some of the topics of the Congress”.

Menopause, sexual health and quality of life

One of the fields in which gynaecologists must make a higher effort at counting on patients’ opinion and perception is, undoubtedly, sexuality.

Around 43% of peri-menopausal women suffer from sexual dysfunction, which is one of the most frequent causes of women experiencing a reduction in their sexual satisfaction in their life periods prior to menopause. According to doctor Palacios, “women’s sexuality suffers from very significant changes when menopause arrives and even when it has not yet arrived but is close; while some could think the contrary, this is a very important topic for the mature woman and a good sexual health contributes to improving quality of life”. The origin of female sexual dysfunction can be influenced by different elements: biological factors (such as a reduction in testosterone levels -male hormone linked to the sexual impulse-; chronic diseases or early menopause; the intake of specific medicines; psychological problems (depression, anxiety, family and partner problems, etc.); lifestyle habits (obesity, alcohol, smoking); and finally derived from education (social and cultural inhibition).

When speaking about evidence of the efficacy of androgens replacement therapy as treatment against sexual dysfunction associated to androgen insufficiency in clinically affected women, doctor Palacios explains that “results reveal that this therapy is safe and efficient, specially among women with sexual dysfunction risk factors, women with surgery-derived menopause or those who have undergone some kind of pelvic surgery that can act on hormone production”. Never the less, doctor Palacios adds that the use of this treatment is currently being studied as option for women with natural menopause.

For further information:

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