

Womens health

8.1 Menopausal symptomatology

Menopausal women frequently request more natural approaches than hormonal substitution for menopausal symptoms. Many women express concern about possible teratogenic effects of long-term hormonal substitution therapies.

The working of Isoflavones (phytoestrogens) has been studied extensively in the treatment of menopausal symptoms in women. Isoflavones show a structural resemblance with normal estrogens.[i] They bind selectively to estrogen receptors.[ii] Especially cardiovascular symptoms and osteoporosis are positively influenced.[iii],[iv]

Interestingly, in countries with phytoestrogen-rich diets, like in many Asian countries, several forms of cancer are less common than in our western world.[v]

Also, the intake of Isoflavones improves elevated blood cholesterol and lipid levels.[vi]

Therefore, in the Cologne Model, menopausal women and women post ovariectomy will receive isoflavones in therapeutic doses (usually, a standardized extract of clover and soy isoflavones will be administered).

[i]Setchell KDR, Adlercreutz H: Mammalian ligands and phytoestrogens. Recent studies on their formation, metabolism and biological role in health and disease. In: Rowland I (ed.): Role of the gut flora in toxicity and cancer. Academic Press, London (1988): 315-345

[ii]Shutt DA, Cox RI: Steroid and phytoestrogen binding to sheep uterine receptors in vitro. *Endocrinology* (1972) 52: 299-310

[iii]Stonek F, Lass H, Gruber D, Metka M, Huber JC: Comparative double-blind, cross-over study of efficacy of red clover extract (RCE 40) x placebo in the treatment of menopausal symptoms. University Clinic of Vienna, Department of Gynecological Endocrinology and Reproductive Medicine, AKH, Vienna, Austria (1999)

[iv]Kuiper GGJM, Lemman JG, Carlsson B, Corton JC, Safe SH, van der Saag PT: Interaction of estrogenic chemicals and phytoestrogens with the estrogen receptor B. *Endocrinology* (1998) 139(10): 4252-4263

[v]Adlercreutz H, Gorbach S, Goldin B: Dietary phytoestrogens and the menopause in Japan. *Lancet* (1992) 339: 1233

[vi]Anthony MS, Clarkson TB, Hughes CL, Morgan TM, Burke GL: Soybean isoflavones improve cardiovascular risk factors without affecting the reproductive system of peripubertal rhesus monkeys. *J Nutr* (1996) 126: 43-50