

# Managing her menopause journey— together

A team-based approach is key when navigating the menopause transition. By assessing symptoms, risks, and treatment options, **you and your patient** can work together to develop a plan supporting her health today—and in the years to come.

This resource can be used to help guide a shared decision-making approach for development of a treatment plan. View the full **SHARE** approach recommended by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), [here](#).

## Seek your patient's input<sup>1</sup>

Patients may not be interested in providing input or be aware they can give input in their healthcare decision making. They may need to be invited into the decision-making process. Try the following:

- ☐ Discuss common concerns related to menopause
- ☐ Ask your patient to give input
- ☐ Remind your patient that her input is important

### CONVERSATION STARTER

*I'd like to discuss with you how these treatments differ before we decide on an approach that is best for you.*

## Help guide patients in understanding their treatment options<sup>1</sup>

Letting your patients know there are options available for menopause-related symptoms and guiding them through the management of each option can help your patients feel their views are valued and needed.

- ☐ Assess what your patient already knows about her options
- ☐ Write a list of options and describe them in plain language
- ☐ Clearly communicate the risks and benefits of each option
- ☐ Use the teach-back technique to check for understanding
- ☐ Look for signs of decisional conflict

Potential treatment options for symptoms due to menopause include hormone therapy, non-hormone therapy, and non-prescription therapy.<sup>2,3</sup>

**Governing bodies, such as The Menopause Society ([TMS](#)) and the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists ([ACOG](#)) publish treatment guidelines/position statements to support the HCP in treating menopause-related symptoms.**

### CONVERSATION STARTER

*What have you read about treatments for menopause-related symptoms? Let's go over your options.*

# Assess your patient's concerns about menopause<sup>1</sup>

## CONVERSATION STARTER

*As you think about your options, what's important to you?*

Some concerns your patients may have about menopause could include:

### Symptoms of Menopause<sup>4</sup>

- Changes to periods
- Hot flashes and night sweats
- Vaginal dryness
- Sleep disruptions
- Pain during sex
- Mood changes
- Joint pain
- Cognitive changes

### Menopause-Related Risks<sup>3</sup>

- Osteoporosis
- Heart disease

### Menopause Treatment Concerns

- Medication administration
- Medication cost
- Medication side effects

**Review your patient's medical history, social history, and family history.**

# Reach a decision with your patient<sup>1</sup>

Help your patient move to a decision.

- ☐ Ask your patient if she would like additional information
- ☐ See if your patient needs more time to consider her options or to discuss them
- ☐ Confirm with your patient when she is ready to make a decision
- ☐ Verify next steps to be taken
- ☐ Schedule follow-up appointments

## CONVERSATION STARTER

*Now that we had a chance to discuss your treatment options, which treatment option do you think is right for you?*

# Evaluate your patient's decision<sup>1</sup>

Once a decision has been made, it will be important to follow up with your patient on how she is doing.

- ☐ Plan to review the decision in the future
- ☐ Monitor treatment adherence
- ☐ Assist your patient with managing barriers
- ☐ Revisit the decision to determine if other decisions need to be made

## CONVERSATION STARTER

*If you are not meeting your individual goals, please schedule a follow-up visit so we can plan a different approach.*

**Implementing shared decision making with your patient can enhance adherence to treatment plans.<sup>1</sup>**

**References:** **1.** Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. The SHARE Approach. Essential steps of shared decisionmaking: expanded reference guide with sample conversation starters (04-2014). <https://www.ahrq.gov/sites/default/files/wysiwyg/professionals/education/curriculum-tools/shareddecisionmaking/tools/tool-2/share-tool2.pdf>. Accessed 06-01-2023. **2.** Liu JH. Prescription therapies. In: Crandall CJ, Bachman GA, Faubion SS, et al., eds. Menopause Practice: A Clinician's Guide. 6th ed. Pepper Pike, OH: The North American Menopause Society, 2019:277-317. **3.** Thurston RC. Vasomotor symptoms. In: Crandall CJ, Bachman GA, Faubion SS, et al., eds. Menopause Practice: A Clinician's Guide. 6th ed. Pepper Pike, OH: The North American Menopause Society, 2019:43-55. **4.** Monteleone P, Mascagni G, Giannini A, Genazzani AR, Simoncini T. Symptoms of menopause – global prevalence, physiology and implications. Nat Rev Endocrinol. 2018;14(4):199-215.

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