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Climacteric Symptoms: A Cross-Cultural Comparison

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Objectives: To determine patterns of symptoms across age and reproductive groups.

Design: Cross-sectional survey

Sample: 4517 women aged 20-70 in USA, UK, Germany, France.


Statistical analysis: Stepwise least squares estimate to determine for each symptom of minimal clinical significant severity, the effect of aging and indicators of hormonal change.

Results: Most prevalent symptom in midaged western women, (aches neck, head and shoulders), is similar to that reported as the most prevalent symptom for midaged Japanese women. Symptoms related to markers of menopausal hormonal change: hot flashes, night sweats; poor memory, difficulty sleeping, aches neck, head and shoulders, vaginal dryness and difficulty with sexual arousal. Psychological symptoms declined with age from a maximum prevalence before age 40. Certain physical symptoms increased with age, BMI and country. Physical and mental morbidity affected perception of all symptoms.

Conclusions: The 7 symptoms most linked to menopausal hormonal change should form part of any future menopause symptom list. Physical and mental morbidity affect perception of these symptoms and should be measured.

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Japanese Bio-Physio-Social Medicine as a Force for the Integration of Western and Eastern Medicine

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Japan has been a country where the western and the oriental cultures meet. The author strongly believes that Japan should continue its role of a bridge between the east and the west. This paper describes an overview of psychosomatic internal medicine of Japan and explains the role and the current status of it.