



# spotlight on health

## Hormone Replacement Therapy: Minorities Under Represented In Clinical Trials

(NAPSA)—Each year, approximately 39 million women in the United States experience menopause, which is characterized by no periods or cycles for one year, hot flashes, sleeping problems and vaginal dryness. As women age, these symptoms occur as a result of a decline in the hormone estrogen.

“While extensive research has been conducted to determine the benefits of hormone replacement therapy (HRT), the majority of the studies have included mostly Caucasian women, with fewer than 1% of the women African-American, Black, Hispanic or Latina,” states Dr. Valerie Montgomery Rice, member of the National Medical Association, a group whose mission is to promote the collective interests of physicians and patients of African descent.

A nationwide study has just begun to provide African-American, Black, Hispanic and Latina women and their doctors the opportunity to see how HRT works for them. The study will look at the effects of a “continuous combined” therapy, meaning it provides the hormones estrogen and progestin continuously over a 28-day cycle, much like a birth control pill. The HRT used in the study has been approved since 1999. The study will evaluate the

effectiveness of the once-a-day pill in relieving hot flashes and night sweats, as well as its effects on sleep, mood and memory.

While studies report that African-American, Black, Hispanic and Latina women have higher rates of hot flashes and vaginal dryness than Caucasian women, there are still many fewer African-American, Black, Hispanic and Latina women who take HRT. Researchers hope that by involving African-American, Black, Hispanic and Latina women, the study will help doctors and

patients understand minority women’s menopausal needs and HRT’s role in meeting those needs.

“There is a large group of women suffering from hot flashes and other menopausal symptoms who may be miss-

ing out on an opportunity for effective treatment,” explains Dr. Montgomery Rice. “Women from different cultures have unique medical needs and it is important that these needs are studied and understood by physicians in order to effectively manage menopause.”

It is important to discuss HRT with your doctor to determine if it is the right choice for you. If you or someone you know would like more information about the study or to enroll, please call **866-HRT-STUDY**.

### About Hormone Therapy

- Women have been taking estrogen since the 1930s to treat menopausal symptoms.
- HRT is used to treat the symptoms of menopause, such as hot flashes, night sweats and vaginal dryness.
- HRT is also prescribed to prevent osteoporosis.

