



# WOMEN'S HEALTH

## More Women Turning To Natural Alternatives To Hormone Replacement Therapy

(NAPSA)—Just because it works, doesn't mean it's worth the risk. That's what many women are saying about the use of hormone replacement therapy (HRT) in treating menopausal symptoms.

Due to recent studies, many patients are fearful that HRT might lead to an increased risk of breast or uterine cancer, vascular disease including heart attack, or cause unpleasant side effects such as mood swings, depression, or continued menstrual periods.

Thus, many women are looking for healthier alternatives. The first step in easing menopausal symptoms, according to James Schaller, M.D., F.A.C.O.G., is for women to plan and stick to a "health program," consisting of:

- Regular exercise
- Regular checkups and testing
- Good nutrition

For many women, a health program may not be enough. Women considering an alternative form of HRT may want to note that in the April, 2003 edition of *The Journal of Family Practice*, physicians were encouraged to recommend natural (plant-based) alternatives to HRT.

According to Dr. Schaller there are several plant-based supplements that help ease menopausal symptoms.

- Soy isoflavones are natural plant estrogens that help with hormone balance regulation to protect against high estrogen levels. Several studies show that soy and soy isoflavones help treat hot flashes.

- Gamma-Oryzanol has been officially used for about 40 years for the treatment of menopausal symp-



### **Many doctors suggest natural (plant-based) alternatives to HRT.**

toms including hot flashes, anxiety, irritable bowel, and nausea, and to reverse the post-menopausal elevations of cholesterol and triglycerides. It also can increase the level of good cholesterol.

- Dong quai, very popular in Asia, relieves hot flashes.

- Black cohosh also helps relieve hot flashes.

When used together, these natural plant-based alternatives have the strongest effect on helping menopausal symptoms.

In addition to these nutrients, women of menopausal age and older may want to consider typical nutrients that help with bone loss and deficiencies caused by aging. These include calcium citrate malate and magnesium.

As always, patients should check with their doctor before taking any supplements. For more information on natural hormone replacement therapy supplements or supplements for women, visit [www.vitacost.com](http://www.vitacost.com) or call 1-800-793-2601.