

WOMEN'S HEALTH

Hormones: What Every Woman Should Know

(NAPSA)—For the many women who are confused about menopause-related hormone therapy, there's now somewhere to go for answers. The new report from The North American Menopause Society (NAMS) provides an expert opinion about how the results of clinical trials apply to real-life practice. Here are some of NAMS's recommendations:

- The main reasons for using hormone therapy continue to be treatment of hot flashes and vaginal dryness.

- Hormone therapy can be used to help lower the risk of osteoporosis (weak and brittle bones), but because of the risks associated with hormone therapy, alternative bone-building therapies should also be considered.

- Hormone therapy should not be used to help protect against heart disease.

- Use of hormone therapy should be limited to the lowest effective dose and the shortest duration of time consistent with the benefits and risks for each woman, taking into account issues of quality of life.

- It's important that each woman who is thinking about using hormone therapy knows her own individual risks for diseases. Those risks are then



Before starting hormone therapy, each woman should discuss her individual benefits and risks with her healthcare provider.

compared with the potential benefits to see if hormone therapy is an option.

- Women who use hormones need to have their risks re-evaluated at each visit to their healthcare provider.

The full report is available on the NAMS Web site. NAMS is North America's leading nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting women's health during midlife and beyond through an understanding of menopause. For more information, call 1-800-774-5342 or visit www.menopause.org.