
Treatments for Hot Flashes

LIFESTYLE

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT): the most effective non-medical treatment for hot flashes

Relaxation, meditation, yoga, massage or a leisurely warm bath

Regular exercise to stay fit, lower stress, improve sleep and control weight

Dress in layers, use chilling towels or chilling pillows, wicking pajamas and sheets, and keep the room cool at night

Control your weight: Lower weight associated with less hot flashes, especially in perimenopause and early menopause

Don't smoke

Breathe deep and slow when a hot flash begins – remember those birthing classes?

Avoid triggers like spicy foods, alcohol, hot drinks, caffeine

Consider OTC options such as soy, black cohosh, or others – there is more about this in Module 4 in both the Action Plan and a video.

NON-ESTROGEN PRESCRIPTIONS

Brisdelle – 7.5 mg of paroxetine (an SSRI) – First FDA approved non-estrogen for hot flashes. Possibly unsafe with tamoxifen

Venlafaxine – 37.5 to 75 mg/day (SNRI) Although somewhat effective, it is not FDA approved for hot flashes

Desvenlafaxine – 100 – 150 mg/day (SNRI) Although somewhat effective for hot flashes within 2-4 weeks. Not FDA approved for hot flashes

Eszopiclone – helps nighttime but not daytime hot flashes. Hypnotic medication also reduces anxiety and depression – not FDA approved for hot flashes

Gabapentin – 300 to 900 mg/day. Antiseizure medication not FDA approved for hot flashes. Can cause lightheadedness

Pregabalin – used for fibromyalgia and nerve pain due to diabetes and other nerve pain and for some seizures. Not FDA approved for hot flashes

Clonidine – 0.05 to 0.1 mg twice daily. Antihypertensive medication with some effectiveness for hot flashes. Not FDA approved for them.

Conjugated estrogen + bazedoxifene

Combines the SERM BZA with 0.45 mg Premarin. First FDA approved medication of this type.

ESTROGEN ± PROGESTIN OR PROGESTERONE

Very effective for treatment of hot flashes

PROGESTERONE OR PROGESTINS

Can be used alone to treat hot flashes

EXPERIMENTAL

Stellate Ganglion Block – This is a new treatment with lots of promise. A single local anesthesia injection in the neck blocks hot flashes for up to 6 months. Appears safe and promising