

## Poster Session II

#23

### *Women's Experiences Discontinuing Hormone Therapy For Menopause*

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**Purpose:** The purpose of this study is to explore women's experiences discontinuing hormone therapy (HT) for menopause.

**Background:** Approximately 50% of women who attempt to discontinue HT are beset by troublesome recurrent symptoms and a diminished quality of life (QoL) that may thwart their discontinuation efforts. Unfortunately, there is little information detailing the best way to discontinue HT or how to prepare and guide women through this process. To develop much needed counseling and support interventions, a better understanding is needed of the factors that influence recurrent symptoms, QoL and discontinuation outcome. An in-depth description of women's experiences during HT discontinuation would provide this knowledge.

**Methods:** To achieve the research purpose, this Internet-based study is using a Mixed Methods approach: a dominant Qualitative Descriptive design plus embedded quantitative QoL measurements. Thirty women who have attempted to discontinue HT are being enrolled then stratified by discontinuation status (stopped versus resumed) in order to compare variations in discontinuation experiences, QoL and influencing factors. Both qualitative interviews and quantitative questionnaires are being completed online at a university-based website. Interview data will be analyzed through Qualitative Content Analysis to identify themes related to HT discontinuation. Results of descriptive statistics of the quantitative measures will be integrated with the qualitatively-derived patterns to develop a rich description of women's HT discontinuation experiences, influencing factors and the impact on QoL. Women's experiences will be compared both across-subjects and between strata. Within-subjects comparison of the qualitative and quantitative QoL measures will explore the impact of HT discontinuation on different facets of QoL.

**Results:** This study will develop a rich description of women's experiences discontinuing HT and the factors that may influence recurrent symptoms, QoL and HT discontinuation outcome.

**Conclusions:** Study findings will provide a foundation for nurses to develop counseling and symptom management interventions for women discontinuing HT.