

Self-compassion helps to cope with symptoms of menopause

June 5 2014, by Annie Rahilly



(Medical Xpress)—Menopausal women with high self-compassion may find that hot flushes interfere less with their lives, according a new study.

A research team led by Lydia Brown, Dr Christina Bryant and Professor Fiona Judd from the School of Psychological Sciences at the University of Melbourne has found that women with high self-compassion may be protected from some of the problems that [hot flushes](#) cause.

Hot flushes are sudden feelings of overheating, experienced both day and night, affecting up to 70% of midlife women. They can be severely

interfering to sleep, concentration and mood.

"We have found that women who treat themselves kindly find hot flushes to be up to three times less disruptive to daily life activities than women with low self-compassion," Lydia Brown, a PhD student and lead author of the study said.

"In turn, when hot flushes interfere less with life, there is a lower chance they will contribute to symptoms of depression."

Given that hot flushes have been linked to elevated depressive symptoms, this new research indicates that self-compassion or simply being good to yourself, may be a psychological resilience factor to help women stay healthy and happy during menopause.

While women are good at taking care of others, they don't always care for themselves.

"Women typically have lower self-compassion than men. Our research indicates that midlife women may benefit from including themselves in the circle of compassion."

The cross-sectional study involved 206 Australian middle-aged women who were experiencing an average of four hot flushes a day. While longitudinal research is still needed, this new study indicates that self-compassion training may be an alternative to hormone therapy to help [women](#) cope with hot flushes.

Provided by University of Melbourne

Citation: Self-compassion helps to cope with symptoms of menopause (2014, June 5) retrieved 14 July 2023 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2014-06-self-compassion-cope-symptoms->

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