

Child abuse associated with physiologically detected hot flashes

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Childhood abuse has been shown to lead to an array of health problems later in life. A new study now shows that such abuse may be linked with physiologically detected hot flashes. Study results will be presented during The North American Menopause Society (NAMS) Annual Meeting in Chicago, September 25-28, 2019.

Hot flashes are the focus of many research studies, especially since newer data has indicated that they may last longer than previously thought—some as long as 10+ years. Previous research has shown a relationship between [childhood abuse](#) and hot flashes. However, this prior work has only used self-reported measures of hot flashes. Physiologic measurements of hot flashes are important given difficulties reporting hot flashes, particularly during sleep. Further, the studies have not looked at changes in hot flashes over time, which is important given how long hot flashes can last.

The researchers leveraged a unique study that employed longitudinal physiologic measurements of hot flashes at two time points over five years to show that childhood abuse was associated with more sleep hot flashes, both at a single time point, as well as increases in hot flashes over five years, after adjusting for age, race/ethnicity, education, and BMI.

"Our investigation found that [childhood](#) sexual and [physical abuse](#) were associated with more frequent hot flashes during sleep when measured at a single time point. We also learned that women with a history of emotional abuse showed an increase in hot flashes five years later, whereas their non-abused counterparts showed a decrease in [hot flashes](#) five years later," says Mary Carson, lead author of the study from the Department of Psychology at the University of Pittsburgh.

"Hot flashes can significantly affect a woman's quality of life, so studies like these are important in

helping [healthcare providers](#) understand all of the variables associated with them," says Dr. Stephanie Faubion, NAMS medical director.

Mary Carson and Dr. Faubion are available for interviews before the presentation at the Annual Meeting.

Provided by The North American Menopause Society

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