

Alleviating the Menopausal Journey with Black Cohosh

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I. INTRODUCTION

Menopause may be one of the most intimidating life phase and a natural inevitable change for a woman. By 2030, there will be more than 1.2 billion menopausal women in the world [1]. Approximately four out of five women experience MPS, including MPS brought on by surgery, chemotherapy, or pelvic radiation. A small percentage of women experience this normal ageing process asymptotically. The wellbeing and quality of life of these women is greatly impacted by the severe and disabling symptoms that between 50 and 85% of these women worldwide experience [1-3]. Women frequently have hot flashes during the period of attaining menopause. The episodes normally last between 30 and 10 minutes and might be accompanied by shivering, perspiration, and skin reddening. Other signs include mood swings, sleep issues, and vaginal dryness. Each woman's symptoms are different in intensity. Early menopause is defined as the onset of menopause before the age of 45. Along with symptoms like hot flashes and night sweats, mood swings, arthralgia, and vaginal dryness, menopause has physical side effects include bone loss, an increase in belly fat, and negative changes to a woman's lipid profile.

Black cohosh (*Actaea racemosa*, formerly known as *Cimicifuga racemosa*), a tall perennial herb, first found in the northeastern part of America, has acutely grown in popularity due to its ability to treat vasomotor symptoms of menopause. It contains alkaloids, tannins, and triterpene glycosides. The supplement, however, is derived from the black cohosh root and contains triterpene glycosides, which are believed to be the principal pharmacologically active constituents. The principal triterpene glycosides are xylosides, actein, and cimicifugoside. Native Americans used it, to treat musculoskeletal pain, fever, cough, pneumonia, sluggish labor, and menstrual irregularities [4]. Although the exact mechanisms underlying the effects of Black cohosh have not been extensively studied, the medical benefits are related to these triterpene glycosides. It functions in a serotonergic manner rather than an estrogenic manner, binds to estrogen receptors, and selectively blocking the secretion of luteinizing hormone without affecting follicle-stimulating hormone [5]. Some researchers believe that black cohosh might exert its effects through a brain-related action, such as modulation of serotonergic pathways, or through its potential ability to act as an antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, or selective estrogen receptor modulator. [6,7,8] The American Herbal Products Association recommends that pregnant women not take black cohosh except under the supervision of their healthcare provider because studies have not rigorously evaluated its use during pregnancy. The U.S. Pharmacopeia advises that individuals with liver disorders should also avoid black cohosh [9,10]. Black cohosh is well tolerated and is generally safe. However, some insignificant side effects, such as nausea, vomiting, headaches, and dizziness were reported [11, 12].

Although this has not been well researched, black cohosh is not known to have any clinically significant interactions with medicines.

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