

## Hot flushes

Between five and eight out of every ten men (50% to 80%) taking hormone therapy will get hot flushes. These give a sudden feeling of warmth in the upper body. Hot flushes can vary from a few seconds of feeling overheated to an hour of sweating that can stop you from sleeping or cause discomfort. They may happen suddenly without warning or they may be triggered by stress, a hot drink or a change in the air temperature.

You can help to prevent or reduce hot flushes by cutting back on smoking, alcohol and drinks that contain caffeine, such as tea and coffee. Using light bed sheets and wearing cotton clothes, especially at night, can also make you feel more comfortable.

Recent reports have suggested that eating soya may help to reduce hot flushes. If you would like to include soy in your diet, try natural forms such as soy beans, miso, tempeh, tofu and soy milk.

Oestrogen patches have been found to help in some cases. Tablets such as megestrol acetate and cyproterone acetate also help but they can affect your liver function so this will need to be monitored. A small number of studies have found that acupuncture reduces hot flushes in some men.

Although there is no scientific evidence, some men have found that sage tea helps them to cope with hot flushes. Other complementary medicines that may help include evening primrose oil, red clover and agnus castus. Always tell your specialist team if you are thinking of taking herbal or complementary medicines because some of them cannot be taken alongside other medicines. Your pharmacist can also give you advice on this.

Mild symptoms may not need any treatment and some men find that their hot flushes get better with time. However, if your hot flushes are affecting your everyday life, please speak to a member of your specialist team.