

NPAO Webinar: Menopause Management, October 29th, 2025

Presented by: The Centre for Effective Practice, Academic Detailing Service

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Question:

One contraindication is obviously estrogen dependent cancers...can you speak to pt with dx of triple negative breast cancer whose QoL is greatly affected by her symptoms....I did research that HT could be considered if QoL poor.

Answer:

Thank you for raising this great question! Since this question is beyond my current knowledge base, I reached out to our clinical lead physician for our menopause topic, Dr. Sheila Wijayasinge.

Dr. Wijayasinge is a Menopause-certified academic family physician at St. Michael's Hospital, Medical Director of Primary Care Outreach at Women's College Hospital in Toronto and Health expert on CTV's The Social, Columnist for the Globe and Mail and co-host of the Doc Talk Podcast.

I've included Dr. Wijayasinge's response below, which should provide some helpful insight.

"Yes, estrogen-dependent cancers, like ER- or PR-positive breast cancer, are a clear contraindication to systemic hormone therapy.

But triple-negative breast cancer is different but still caution is used. Guidelines from MS and SOGC say hormone therapy *can* be considered in women with severe, quality-of-life-limiting symptoms, *if* non-hormonal options haven't helped and *with* a really careful discussion with the oncology team.

In those cases, the decision is individualized. You'd want to use the **lowest effective dose for the shortest possible duration**, ideally in someone who's been disease-free for a while and whose oncologist agrees.

That said, we always start with non-hormonal treatments first, things like SSRIs, SNRIs, gabapentin, clonidine, or oxybutynin and the newer agents, which are all guideline-supported and can make a big difference.

So, hormone therapy isn't automatically off the table for triple-negative breast cancer, but it's definitely a *shared decision-making* scenario where the patient is at the centre in consultation with oncology and menopause provider."