Told It Was ‘Just Aging’: After FDA Lifted Hormone Therapy Warnings, Women Still Dismissed by Doctors

RegenCen's State of Menopause Care Report finds nearly two-thirds of women felt dismissed by a provider — and most don't know hormone therapy guidance changed

TRAVERSE CITY, MI, UNITED STATES, September 24, 2026 / EINPresswire.com/ -- In November 2025, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration took the unusual step of stripping decades-old boxed warnings for cardiovascular disease, breast cancer and dementia from many hormone therapy products — one of the most significant shifts in menopause care policy in a generation. Nearly a year later, a new national survey from RegenCen finds that shift has not reached the exam room, or the women it was meant to help.

The State of Menopause Care Report, based on responses from 1,251 women ages 35 and older, found that 63.2% have felt dismissed, minimized or not fully heard by a healthcare provider about their menopause symptoms — 49.3% more than once. Meanwhile, 42.2% remain unaware the FDA's labeling change happened at all, and 36.9% say a provider has never discussed the risks and benefits of hormone therapy with them, full stop.

“My PCP brushed it off as ‘normal aging process.’ It’s extremely frustrating and makes me feel like I’m crazy,” said one survey respondent.

“Unfortunately, the findings did not surprise me. We hear the same frustrations every day from women who feel their symptoms were dismissed, their providers lacked up-to-date knowledge, or they were told it was simply a phase,” said Dr. Gustav Lo, Chief Medical Officer of RegenCen. “What did surprise me was how few women knew about the FDA’s November 2025 labeling change. There has been little public education following that landmark announcement, and without continued attention, its importance is already beginning to fade.”

The report also found that menopause symptoms extend far beyond hot flashes. The most frequently reported symptoms were fatigue or low energy, affecting 69.8% of respondents; sleep problems, 67.8%; brain fog or difficulty concentrating, 64.3%; anxiety, irritability or mood changes, 59.2%; and weight gain or changes in body composition, 57%.

“I no longer feel like myself. I feel like a stranger in my body who has lost their zest for life,” one respondent wrote.

These symptoms were not merely uncomfortable. Among respondents asked how their lives had been affected, 76.3% cited sleep, 68.8% reported effects on mood or mental clarity, 60.8% cited sexual health or intimacy, and 56.6% said symptoms interfered with daily activities. More than one-third reported an impact on their work or careers.

Women experiencing perimenopause reported additional barriers in both awareness and care. Among respondents who identified as perimenopausal or were unsure of their status, 76.4% did not immediately recognize that their symptoms could be connected to hormonal changes.

Nearly one-third—30.5%—said a healthcare provider had told them they were too young to be experiencing hormone-related symptoms.

The survey also points to a persistent lack of preventive-health counseling. Fifty-five percent of respondents said a provider had never discussed the possible long-term considerations and benefits of hormone therapy relating to bone, heart, brain and sexual health. Only 17.8% said these subjects had been discussed in detail.

Treatment experiences varied considerably. Antidepressant or anti-anxiety medication was the most frequently recommended treatment category, reported by 34.2% of respondents—more than any individual hormone therapy option. Another 16.1% said no treatment had been recommended, while 11.2% had been told they were not candidates for hormone therapy.

“I’m positive no man has ever had trouble getting ED meds,” said one respondent. “There would be a national crisis if men felt like this every day.”

“Hormone therapy is intended to restore hormones that decline during menopause, but women still receive confusing and often outdated messages about its risks and benefits,” Dr. Lo said. “Patients deserve to understand why older approaches raised concerns, how today’s treatment methods differ, and why therapy must be carefully individualized and monitored. The greatest challenge is often finding an experienced provider who will listen, explain the options clearly and design the treatment correctly.”

The FDA’s 2025 labeling decision does not mean hormone therapy is appropriate or risk-free for every woman. Rather, it underscores the importance of moving away from a one-size-fits-all perception of risk and toward individualized, evidence-based discussions between women and

qualified healthcare providers.

RegenCen's findings suggest that regulatory progress alone will not close the menopause care and understanding gap. Better education, earlier recognition of symptoms and more complete conversations about treatment risks, benefits and alternatives are essential if the FDA's change is to result in meaningful improvements in women's health.

"Why are we still whispering about menopause?" one respondent asked. "Women can spend more than one-third of their lives in menopause, yet so many of us enter it feeling unprepared and alone.... The more we talk about menopause, the less shame the next generation of women will carry."

The full State of Menopause Care Report, including detailed findings, methodology and limitations, is available at regencen.com/menopause-care-report.

About the Survey
RegenCen conducted an anonymous online survey of women ages 35 and older beginning June 25, 2026. The report includes responses from 1,251 women as of August 4, 2026. Respondents were recruited through RegenCen's existing patient email list and therefore represent a self-selected population that had already demonstrated an interest in menopause-related care. Findings reflect participants' reported experiences and should not be interpreted as clinical or population-wide conclusions.

About RegenCen:
RegenCen provides individualized care focused on hormone health, menopause, longevity and regenerative medicine. Its approach combines patient education, careful evaluation and personalized treatment planning to address immediate symptoms and longer-term health considerations.

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