Non hormonal options

What works if HRT is not suitable or not something you want.

ONE CAVEAT THAT APPLIES TO ALL OF IT

Menopause treatments tend to have a high placebo response, often as great as 50 percent. That means quoted effectiveness figures can look better than the true drug effect. It is exactly the thing that gets left out when someone is selling you something.

OPTION	WHAT THE EVIDENCE SHOWS	WORTH KNOWING
Menopause specific CBT	Effective in trials for hot flushes and night sweats. Benefit maintained at six months	NICE 2024 recommends considering it. Self help and group formats exist
CBT for insomnia	Outperforms sleep medication at long term follow up	Recommended for sleep disturbance in the transition
Paroxetine (low dose)	Best antidepressant evidence for vasomotor symptoms	Avoid with tamoxifen
Citalopram or escitalopram	Perform well in trials	Safer choice if taking tamoxifen
Venlafaxine	Wide reported range of benefit	Safer choice if taking tamoxifen
Gabapentin 900mg daily	Reduces hot flushes in around half of patients	Also improves sleep. Drowsiness and dry mouth
Fezolinetant	Blocks the KNDy neuron signalling directly. More effective than placebo	Needs liver function tests. Check NHS availability
Clonidine	The only formally licensed option in the UK	No longer recommended by NAMS
Supplements	Limited rigorous trial data. No purity regulation	If it worked as advertised it would be in the guidelines

IF YOU TAKE TAMOXIFEN

Paroxetine and fluoxetine should be avoided, because they can make tamoxifen less effective. Say you are taking it at the start of the conversation rather than waiting to be asked.

THE HONEST SUMMARY

None of these are as effective as oestrogen for hot flushes. That is what the guidance says. But less effective is not the same as nothing, and a lot of women get meaningful relief.

NOT MEDICAL ADVICE. Educational content only. Many symptoms have causes other than perimenopause, including thyroid disease, anaemia and diabetes. Please speak to your GP about anything that concerns you. · Module 2 · navigare-vela.com