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International Experts Clarify Hormonal Changes of Menopause

New report will help clinicians predict onset of menopause

Published simultaneously today in four top-tier journals, a new report provides a framework within which physicians and researchers can systematically and consistently identify the different reproductive stages women go through from adolescence to menopause and beyond. The report, named STRAW+10, will help clinicians predict when a woman will enter menopause and guide the selection of treatment options for menopausal symptoms and other related conditions.

A panel of US and international experts met in September 2011, in Washington, DC, to review the latest scientific data on the hormonal changes that mark reproductive aging in women and to reach consensus on defining the reproductive stages in a woman's life from pre-menopause to the late postmenopausal period. STRAW+10 represents an update to the landmark STRAW (Stages of Reproductive Aging Workshop) system put into place ten years ago that paved the way for international studies that have led to a greater understanding of reproductive aging in women.

The new report includes the following revisions:

- Simplified bleeding criteria for the early and late menopausal transition
- Modified criteria for the late reproductive and early post-menopause stages
- Recommended application of this staging system to a wider range of women without limitation by age, ethnicity, body size or lifestyle characteristics

The Straw+10 report was published today in the *Journal of Clinical Endocrinology and Metabolism*, *Climacteric*, *Menopause* and *Fertility and Sterility*.

The symposium was co-sponsored by The National Institute on Aging (NIA), The Office of Research on Women's Health (ORWH), as well as The North American Menopause Society (NAMS), The American Society for Reproductive Medicine (ASRM), The International Menopause Society (IMS), and The Endocrine Society.

Commenting, International Menopause Society President, Dr Tobie De Villiers (Cape Town, South Africa), said:

"10 years ago, the Stages of Reproductive Aging Workshop (STRAW) agreed on a system within which physicians and researchers could identify the different reproductive stages women go through from adolescence to menopause and beyond. In subsequent years, this proved of great value in the clinical and research setting. The IMS is proud to have been involved in an international collaboration of experts that updated these recommendations to incorporate the latest evidence as well as extending the system to a wider range of women without limitation by age,

ethnicity, body size or lifestyle characteristics. It is hoped that the new system will encourage more research in this very important phase of women's life".

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The STRAW+10 report is available for download at:

http://www.imsociety.org/downloads/email_downloads/2012_02_16_1773491/straw10.pdf

With members in 67 countries, and 49 member societies, the International Menopause Society is the main international organisation dealing with the menopause and menopause-related health. The IMS organises the triennial World Congress on the Menopause, with the next congress taking place in Cancun, Mexico in 2014. For more information, see the IMS website, <http://www.imsociety.org/index.php>

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