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## A herbal remedy, Femal, made from pollen extracts, reduces hot flushes and improves quality of life in menopausal women.

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**Aim:** This study aimed, in a randomized, double blind, placebo-controlled, parallel designed trial, to evaluate whether Femal, a herbal remedy made from pollen extracts, alleviates the symptoms of the menopause, especially hot flushes.

**Design:** After an initial run-in phase of one month, 64 menopausal women were randomly given either two Femal tablets a.m., or two identical placebo tablets, for 3 months' treatment. On inclusion, and then at 4-weeks intervals, the patients were asked to evaluate sixteen symptoms of the menopause, on Menopause Rating Scales. Every day during the study, certain menopausal symptoms were recorded in a diary. Blood samples were taken at the beginning and at the end of the study.

**Results:** The treatment groups were identical regarding demographic data, and the initial symptom scores. In the active-treatment group, 65% responded with a reduction in the hot flushes compared with 38% in the placebo group ( $p < 0.006$ ).

The number of hot flushes registered in diaries declined in the active treatment group after 3 months by 27% as compared to the placebo group ( $p < 0.0348$ ).

Menopause Rating Scale evaluation of hot flushes yielded similar results ( $p < 0.0318$ ). Here there was a 26% reduction of hot flushes after 2 and 3 months' treatment, as compared to placebo and on both occasions the inter-group comparison was significantly affected.

An overall evaluation of the trend in 15 other "quality-of-life" parameters, was likewise in favor of the pollen extract ( $p < 0.025$ ). No significant change was observed in routine hematology or hormone profile.

**Conclusion:** The pollen extract Femal significantly reduces hot flushes and certain other menopausal symptoms when compared to placebo.

