

Red Hot Mamas heat up Good Samaritan

The 100 'Red Hot Mamas' who gather at Good Samaritan Hospital, Baltimore, one Wednesday each month know exactly what it's like to feel the heat.

That's why the women find it helpful to come together for the monthly seminar which focuses on issues before, during and after menopause.

The menopause seminars have become such a hot topic that additional sessions have been added to accommodate the women on the waiting list.

"I think there are a lot more women who will be going through menopause, and if we don't talk about it now we will have monsters on our hands," joked Karen Kansler, a registered nurse in the community outreach center, which developed the seminars. "We want answers now and this is something our mothers didn't talk about."

Participant Oretha Watkins was interested in learning about the changes that are happening to her body.

"When I heard about Red Hot Mamas I called right away," she said.

Each seminar touches on a different symptom or issue when dealing with menopause, such as sleeping problems, hot flashes, proper nutrition and exercise, and more. Each session has a keynote speaker, typically a doctor from the hospital, to talk to women about what they can do to get themselves back on track and living a more comfortable life.

"We are talking about the aging woman and what she should expect. Most women don't even talk about this," said Dr. Dee-Dee Shiller, doctor of osteopathy and gynecology. "Some women just want to hear that others are going through it as well."

Ms. Watkins agreed with Dr. Shiller, saying the seminars are informative and show she isn't alone.

"It gives me the push I need to make my life whole again," said Ms. Watkins. "It's important to learn about this at an early age."

Dr. Shiller spoke about hormone replacement therapy and the importance of seeing one's doctor to ask questions and seek treatments.

"I hope they walk away with reassurance and a feeling of community," said Dr. Shiller. "I hope they go home and think about what was said and get help if they need it."

Ms. Kansler said along with the seminar, Good Samaritan offers doctor referrals, massage appointments, gym facilities and exercise classes which can help women handle their menopause symptoms.

To register for Red Hot Mamas call 410-532-4100 or visit www.goodsam-md.org/rhm.