Premature ovarian failure: frequency and risk factors among women attending a network of Menopause Clinics in Italy

Progetto Menopausa Italia Study Group (including Graziottin A.)
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Little is known about the frequency and causes of preterm ovarian failure (spontaneous menopause at age <40 years). A family history increases the risk of early menopause (menopause at age 40-45). Several chromosomal abnormalities have been linked with preterm ovarian failure, indicating genetic factors in preterm ovarian failure. It is also of interest to understand the role of environmental factors and their interactionwith genetic ones.
Early age at menarche, never oral contraceptive use, nulliparity and smoking are all factors associated with age at spontaneous menopause. However, how these factors affect the risk of preterm ovarian failure or early menopause is not known.
Risk factors for preterm ovarian failure and spontaneous menopause at age 40-45 years using data from a large epidemiologic study on menopause conducted in Italy were analysed. This study confirmed the role of smoking, parity, oral contraceptive use and lifelong regular cycles as determinants of age at menopause among Italian women.

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