



Gender-based Healthcare: Addressing the Unique Needs of Different Genders

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DESCRIPTION

Gender-based healthcare refers to the recognition and response to the specific health needs, concerns, and disparities experienced by individuals based on their gender. While healthcare systems have traditionally been designed to serve all patients equally, many gender-related health issues are often overlooked or inadequately addressed. Understanding the impact of gender on health is essential to ensuring that all individuals, regardless of their gender identity, receive the care they need to maintain good health. From biological differences to social determinants, gender plays a critical role in shaping healthcare needs, access, and outcomes. Biological differences between males and females can lead to distinct health risks and medical conditions. For example, women have reproductive health concerns that men do not, including menstruation, pregnancy, and menopause. These aspects of female biology require specialized care and attention from healthcare professionals. Pregnancy-related complications, such as preeclampsia and gestational diabetes, necessitate tailored medical guidance and monitoring. Men, on the other hand, are at higher risk for certain conditions, such as heart disease, which often manifests differently in men than in women. Additionally, men may be less likely to seek medical care or participate in preventive health behaviors due to cultural norms about masculinity, leading to late diagnoses and poorer outcomes. Both men and women experience unique health challenges, but healthcare systems often fail to address these differences adequately. For example, medical research has historically been biased toward male subjects, and many clinical trials have not included a representative sample of women, leading to a lack of gender-specific treatment guidelines. This gap in research and understanding can contribute to misdiagnosis or ineffective treatments, particularly for women and other marginalized genders. Beyond biological differences, gender-related health disparities are also driven by social determinants, such as income, education,

occupation, and access to healthcare. Gender inequality plays a significant role in shaping health outcomes. Women, particularly in low-income or developing countries, often face barriers such as limited access to education, economic dependence, and violence, all of which negatively impact their health. For example, women in many parts of the world are less likely to have access to reproductive health services, including family planning, prenatal care, and safe childbirth options. These barriers contribute to higher maternal mortality rates, unintended pregnancies, and poor reproductive health outcomes. Additionally, gender-based violence, which affects millions of women worldwide, leads to physical and psychological health issues, yet remains underreported and under-addressed by many healthcare systems. Men, too, face gendered health challenges. For example, societal expectations that men should be stoic and self-reliant can discourage them from seeking medical care, leading to delayed diagnoses and higher mortality rates for conditions like prostate cancer or heart disease. Furthermore, men are at higher risk for mental health issues, such as depression and suicide, but are less likely to seek help due to stigma surrounding mental health in many cultures. Access to healthcare services often varies depending on gender. Women may encounter financial, cultural, or logistical barriers to receiving the care they need, especially if they live in patriarchal societies where their healthcare decisions are controlled by male family members. In many cases, women also face discrimination in healthcare settings, where their concerns are dismissed, or they receive less attentive care due to gender biases among providers.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

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