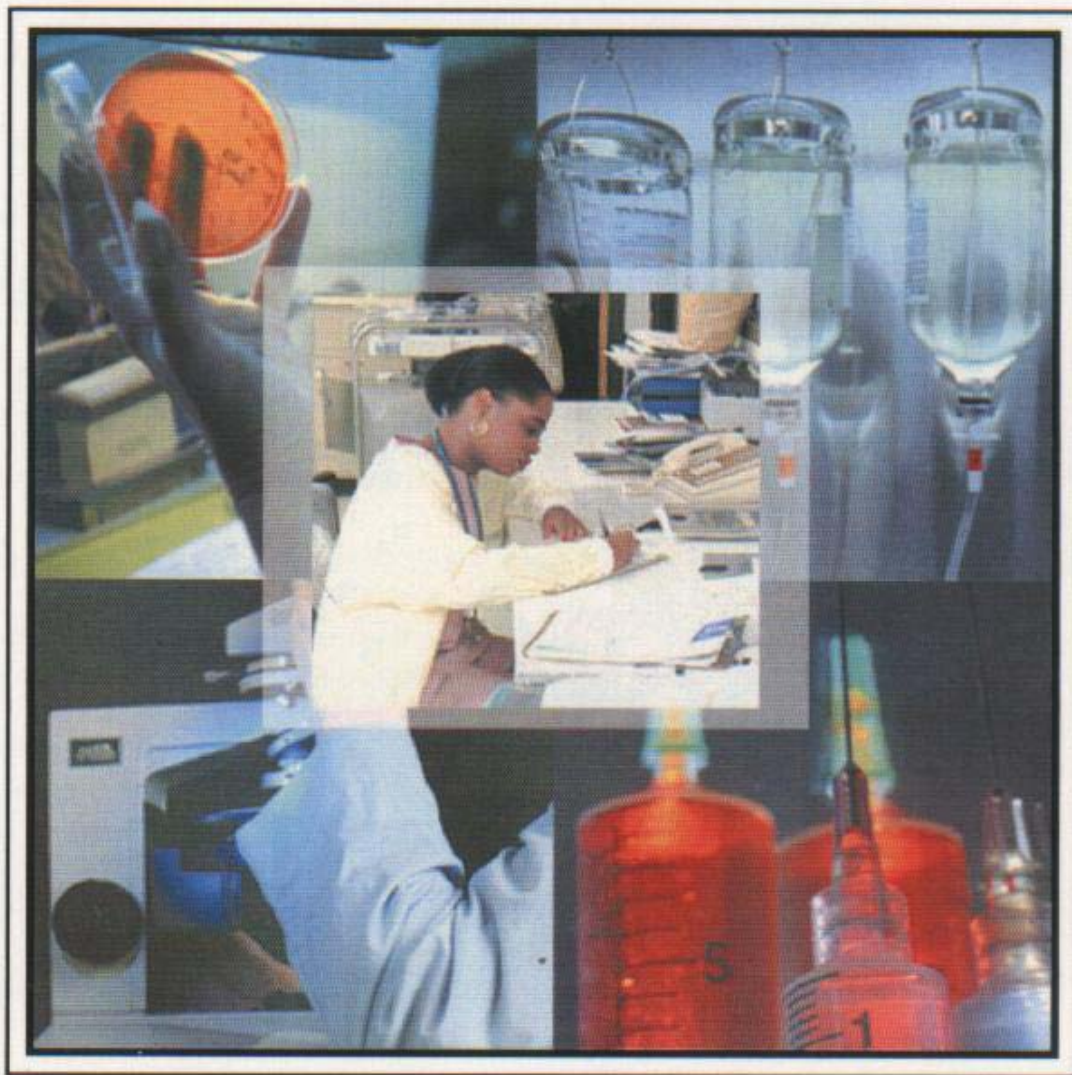


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# Women & Health™



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# Women & Health

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- Reporter Sex and Newspaper Coverage of the Adverse Health  
Effects of Hormone Therapy 1  
*David E. Nelson, MD, MPH*  
*Nancy Signorielli, PhD*

*Women have used hormone therapy (HT) to relieve menopausal symptoms for decades. Major studies published in JAMA in July 2002 demonstrated adverse health effects from hormone therapy, and the National Institutes of Health halted the Women's Health Initiative clinical trial several years early. We conducted a content analysis of 10 U.S. newspapers in July and August 2002 to examine the role of reporter sex on news coverage on HT. We found substantial sex differences in reporting about HT. Female reporters were much more likely than male reporters to include a self-help frame (66.7% vs. 30.8%,  $p = 0.002$ ). Female reporters were also much more likely to use women in the public as sources in HT-related articles (33.9% vs. 10.0%,  $p = 0.039$ ). Reporter sex may play a role in the selection and content of health news articles.*

Keywords. Mass media, estrogen replacement therapy, women's health

- Gender and Heart Disease in Mass Print Media:  
1991, 1996, 2001 17  
*Juane Clarke, PhD*  
*Gudrun van Amerom, BA*  
*Jeannine Binns, MA*

*Using a qualitative content analysis, this paper investigates the portrayal of heart disease among men and women in 75 articles of the 20 highest circulating mass print magazines in 1991, 1996 and 2001 available in Canada and published in the United States and Canada. The majority of articles were directed at men. Whether the article focused on men or women, the depiction of heart disease tended to be*

*gendered. For men, heart disease was described as almost inevitable and as a badge of successful manhood. Its experience and treatment were portrayed as mechanical and aggressive, as well as the result of individual lifestyle choices that could be "fixed" by the individual himself. In comparison, women's heart disease was portrayed as something of which to be ashamed, especially since diagnosis conflicts with the role of "caregiver." Women were described as ignorant, emotional victims. Moreover, women's bodies were portrayed as pathological, especially after menopause. Practical and theoretical implications of the findings are discussed.*

**KEYWORDS.** Qualitative content analysis, gender, heart disease, media portrayal, magazines

**The Ethical Involvement of Women  
in HIV Vaccine Trials in Africa:  
Discussion Paper Developed for the African AIDS  
Vaccine Programme**

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*Douglas R. Wassenaar, PhD  
Nicola W. Barsdorf, MHS*

*HIV disproportionately affects women in developing countries, especially in Southern Africa. Women thus stand to benefit most from a successful HIV vaccine and must participate in trials to test appropriate, gender-specific products. Several HIV vaccine efforts are currently underway in Africa. Participation in HIV vaccine trials requires that participants not only understand the complex nature of trial procedures, but that they also have autonomous decisional capacity to enroll. Given that the risk factors inherent in women's greater vulnerability constitute an intricate mix of biological, economic and social variables, will women's very vulnerability to HIV be an obstacle to ethical participation in vaccine development? This paper addresses some of the challenges underlying the successful recruitment of women into vaccine research and makes research and policy recommendations for the ethical inclusion of women in HIV vaccine trials in Africa.*

**KEYWORDS.** Women, HIV, vaccine trials, Africa, vulnerable, ethics

**The Association Between Inquiry About Emotional Distress  
and Women's Satisfaction with Their Family Physician:  
Findings from a National Survey**

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*Revital Gross, PhD  
Hava Tabenkin, MD  
Shuli Brammli-Greenberg, MA  
Jochanan Benbassat, MD*

*Background: Women appear to be more vulnerable than men to emotional distress (ED). However, ED often goes unrecognized by family physicians.*

**Purpose:** To (1) assess the rate of inquiry about ED by family physicians and (2) explore the association between physician's inquiry about ED and women's satisfaction with care.

**Methods:** Telephone interviews were conducted in 2003 using a structured questionnaire in a representative sample of 991 Israeli women aged 22 years or older, with a response rate of 84%.

**Results:** 33% of women reported ED during the past year but only 15% of women reported having discussed ED with their family physician in the last year. Higher rates of discussion of ED with the physician were found among women who had experienced ED (22.5%), those who had a chronic illness (20.1%) had low income (22.7%), and were Arabic (29.5%) or Russian speakers (26.3%). Multivariate analysis indicated that women who had discussed ED with their physician expressed higher satisfaction with the physician's professional level (OR = 6.85), attitude (OR = 2.45), spending enough time (OR = 2.90), and listening to the patient (OR = 3.19), compared with women who had not discussed ED with their physician.

**Conclusions:** Given the current low rates of inquiry about ED, it appears that developing sensitivity to women's emotional concerns and encouraging physicians to inquire about ED should be given higher priority in medical education at all levels. Furthermore, since inquiry about ED not only improves the appropriateness of care but is also associated with higher satisfaction with the physician, organizations in a competitive health care environment may have a particular interest in promoting this practice.

**KEYWORDS.** Emotional distress, primary care physician, women's health, satisfaction with care

## The Relationship Between Physical Activity and Mental Health in a National Sample of College Females

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Troy B. Adams, PhD

Monique T. Moore, MS

John Dye, ND

*The objective of the present analysis was to examine the relationship between vigorous/moderate or strength training exercise, and mental health in a national sample of college females. Secondary data (n = 22,073) from the National College Health Assessment administered during the Spring 2002 and 2003 semesters were used in a cross-sectional design. Depression, anxiety, suicidal ideation, and perceived health were the dependent variables; and two measures of weekly exercise frequency were the independent variables. Vigorous/moderate exercise was associated with positively associated perceived health and modestly negatively associated with depression. Strength training exercise was positively associated with perceived health and modestly negatively associated with depression, anxiety, and suicidal ideation. These findings support an association between two forms of exercise and several indicators of mental health. Additional longitudinal research is needed prior to endorsing exercise as treatment for mental disorders.*

**KEYWORDS.** Exercise, depression, anxiety, mental health, college students

## Predictors of Body Image During the First Year

### Postpartum: A Prospective Study

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*Sofia Rallis, BBSc (PGD)*

*Helèn Skouteris, PhD*

*Eleanor H. Wertheim, PhD*

*Susan J. Paxton, PhD*

*This longitudinal study investigated body image changes and possible predictors of multiple dimensions of body image in the first year postpartum. Women (N = 79) who had been followed up since early pregnancy (including reporting retrospectively about pre-pregnancy and concurrently about late pregnancy) completed questionnaires at 6 weeks, 6 months, and 12 months postpartum that focussed on body image measures of feeling fat, attractiveness, salience of shape and weight, and strength and fitness. Women experienced greater body dissatisfaction in the postpartum in comparison to pre-pregnancy and late pregnancy, with 6 months postpartum being the time of most body concern. In ratings of perceived current and ideal figure size, women decreased their current size ratings over the postpartum period; however, ratings of ideal figure remained stable over the three time points. The findings also revealed that higher frequency of physical comparison tendencies at 6 weeks postpartum, and depressive symptoms and dieting behaviours at 6 months postpartum were predictors of body image of different types at 12 months post birth.*

**KEYWORDS.** Pregnancy, postpartum, body image, body dissatisfaction, risk factors

## What Do Abused Women Expect from Their Family Physicians?

### A Qualitative Study Among Women in Shelter Homes

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*Wietske Wester*

*Sylvie Lo Fo Wong, MD, PhD*

*Antoine L. M. Lagro-Janssen, MD, PhD*

*Objective: To gain insight into the needs and expectations of abused women in shelter homes, with regard to family physicians.*

*Methods: Twelve women in two shelter homes were interviewed. The interview focused on women's experiences and expectations of family physicians regarding the abuse situation.*

*Results: Eight women did not disclose intimate partner abuse to their family physicians. The main reasons were shame and fear of retaliation. Six women suffered from extreme controlling behavior by their partners, which made it impossible to seek help. Four women were not aware of the relationship between abuse by a partner and physical symptoms. Women mainly wanted a solution for physical problems and were ambivalent about help to tackle their problems with abuse. The majority of the women found the family physician's attitude of great importance and considered it a task of the family physician to provide assistance.*

*Conclusion: Although the family physician did not play an important role in solving the problems for victims of intimate partner abuse living in shelter homes,*

*an open and empathic attitude was of great importance to these women. Women also expressed the need for assistance by their physician and emphasized that it was important to keep asking about partner abuse, even in case of denial.*

**KEYWORDS.** Intimate partner abuse, family physicians, shelter homes, women, qualitative research