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**WOMEN'S UNIQUE
HEALTH NEEDS:
INCREASING ACCESS TO
QUALITY CARE**

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WHAT IS HEALTH?

Health: "wholeness, being whole, sound or well," "whole, uninjured, of good omen

WHO- Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.

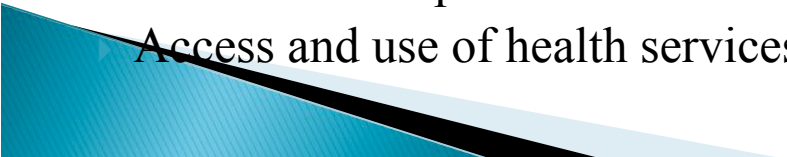
BMJ- Health is also defined as the ability to adapt and self manage in the face of social, physical, and emotional challenges



WHAT IS HEALTH?

- ▶ Health is a resource for everyday life, positive concept emphasizing social and personal resources, as well as physical capacities.

Determinants of health are:

- ▶ Where we live
 - ▶ The state of our environment
 - ▶ Genetics
 - ▶ Our income
 - ▶ Our education level
 - ▶ Our relationship with friends and family
 - ▶ Access and use of health services
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WHAT IS WELLNESS?

- ▶ Wellness "is a state of optimal well-being that is oriented toward maximizing an individual's potential. This is a life-long process of moving towards enhancing your physical, intellectual, emotional, social, spiritual, and environmental well-being."
- ▶ Wellness is defined as "the integration of mind, body and spirit."
- ▶ Optimal wellness allows one to achieve goals and find meaning and purpose for life and living. Wellness combines seven dimensions of well-being into a quality way of living. Overall, wellness is the ability to live life to the fullest and to maximize personal potential in a variety of ways. Wellness involves continually learning and making changes to enhance your state of wellness



THE WOMAN'S UNIQUENESS

- ▶ Women have three very important physiological functions totally absent in men--menstruation, pregnancy, and lactation. Each of these mechanisms influences behavior and feelings significantly.
- ▶ Female hormonal patterns are more complex and varied. For example, a woman's thyroid is larger and more active; it enlarges during menstruation and pregnancy, which makes her more prone to goiter, provides resistance to cold, and is associated with the smooth skin, relatively hairless body, and the thin layer of subcutaneous fat that are important elements in the concept of personal beauty. Women are also more responsive emotionally, laughing and crying more readily.



THE WOMAN'S UNIQUENESS

Women's blood contains more water (20 percent fewer red cells). Since red cells supply oxygen to the body, she tires more easily and is more prone to faint.

Women can withstand high temperatures better than men because their metabolism slows down less


Women have a larger stomach, kidneys, liver, and appendix, and smaller lungs than men.

Females simply have a stronger hold on life than males, even in the uterus.


Women access healthcare more than men




COMMON HEALTH PROBLEMS OF WOMEN

- ▶ Puberty
 - ▶ Pregnancy and Birth control
 - ▶ Cancers– Breast, Uterine, Ovarian, Lung
 - ▶ Infertility
 - ▶ Osteoporosis
 - ▶ Menopause/Amenorrhea
 - ▶ Endometriosis
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COMMON HEALTH PROBLEMS OF WOMEN

- ▶ Ovarian Cysts
 - ▶ Uterine Fibroids
 - ▶ PMS Pre Menstrual Syndrome/ Post Menopausal Syndrome
 - ▶ Infections– Yeast, Bacterial, PIDs, STDS, HIV, HPV
 - ▶ Depression and Emotional Issues
 - ▶ Life style Issues– Smoking, Alcoholism, drug dependency
 - ▶ Other chronic ailments– Hypertension, Diabetes Mellitus, etc
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WHY DO WOMEN NEED HEALTH CARE?

- ▶ Women need quality health care by virtue of barriers created by poverty, cultural differences, race or ethnicity, geography, sexual orientation, gender identity, or other factors that contribute to health care inequities.
 - ▶ Women are typically in need of more health services because of high rates of chronic conditions and unmet reproductive health care needs particularly those in developing nations and underserved communities
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TYPES OF HEALTHCARE


- ▶ Preventive care services,
- ▶ Preconception care,
- ▶ Well–woman care,
- ▶ Family planning,
- ▶ Mental health care,
- ▶ Psychosocial care, and
- ▶ Subspecialty care

These are all critical to women's health outcomes



GOALS OF THE HEALTHCARE SYSTEM FOR WOMEN'S HEALTH

A well functioning health care system should respond in a balanced way to women's needs and expectations by:

- ▶ *improving the health status of individuals, families, and communities*
 - ▶ *defending the women against health threats*
 - ▶ *protecting the women against the financial consequences of ill–health*
 - ▶ *providing equitable access to patient–centered care*
 - ▶ *ensuring women participation in decision making regarding health*
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GOALS OF THE HEALTHCARE SYSTEM FOR WOMEN'S HEALTH

- ▶ It must be easy for women to access and pay for their healthcare, thus improving their health and that of their families.
- ▶ Key to overall wellness : Prevention, Early Detection, and Treatment/Rehabilitation and social support




HEALTH CARE PROGRAMMES


- ▶ Comprehensive lactation support and counseling from trained health care providers
- ▶ Education/counseling for a healthy diet
- ▶ Counseling for tobacco use
- ▶ Counseling for sexually transmitted infections in sexually active women
- ▶ Counseling and screening for human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) in sexually active women
- ▶ Education on contraceptive methods use
- ▶ Mammography and
- ▶ Screening for cervical cancer/ Pap Smears including high-risk human papilloma virus
- ▶ Other basic health checks for organ functions – Liver, Lung, Heart, Guts, sight, stress level, etc




HEALTH CARE PROGRAMMES

- ▶ Screening and counseling for interpersonal and domestic violence
 - ▶ Screening and counseling for obesity
 - ▶ Screening and counseling to reduce alcohol misuse
 - ▶ Screening for depression
 - ▶ Screening for gestational diabetes in pregnant women between 24 weeks and 28 weeks of gestation and at the first prenatal visit for pregnant women identified to be at high risk of diabetes
 - ▶ Screening for gonorrhea and chlamydial infection in certain populations of sexually active women
 - ▶ Well-woman visits, including preconception care and prenatal care, for adult women to obtain recommended preventive services, allowing for additional visits, depending on the women's health status, needs, and other risk factors
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HEALTH WORKFORCE NEEDS

- ▶ A key aspect of a well-designed health system is a well-trained workforce
 - ▶ Women must have access to a multidisciplinary, culturally competent health care provider workforce that includes professional specialty and primary health care providers for women (eg, obstetrician-gynecologists, psychotherapists, Physiotherapists, Pharmacists, etc,) and certified, trained, and qualified allied health care providers.
 - ▶ Accredited education, professional certification, and licensure are essential to ensure skilled health care providers at all levels of care.
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NEW INITIATIVE FOR WOMEN'S HEALTHCARE

- ▶ With the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) expiring in 2015, a new, ambitious framework for improving lives has been launched.
 - ▶ **This is the Universal Health Coverage UHC**
 - ▶ According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the goal of UHC is that all people/ women can obtain the prevention and treatment services they need without suffering financial hardship when paying for them. *How realistic???*
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NEW INITIATIVE FOR WOMEN'S HEALTHCARE

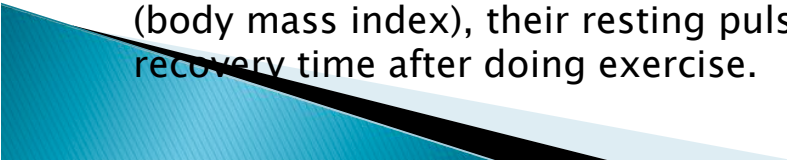
- ▶ UHC removes financial barriers such as user fees at the point of service, reducing burdens on poor people, and especially women, who often have primary responsibility for their families' health care but lesser access to cash.
 - ▶ UHC efforts do not guarantee universal access to every possible health care need, but provides at least a basic set of high-impact primary care interventions to all that are basic proven services to prevent the vast majority of disability and deaths among women and other users
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WAY FORWARD

- ▶ Women's health must be a shared agenda, with active engagement from country political and health leaders; local and international civil society, including advocates for women's health and wellness, including sexual, and reproductive health.
 - ▶ Others are multilateral agencies; global health funders; and all others concerned with women's health and equity.
 - ▶ Support for the UHC principles of equity, access, and affordability must be widespread and implemented at all levels.
 - ▶ The global health community must ensure that women's health priorities are fully represented in National schemes, as well as any post-2015 health framework developed.
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TAKE HOME POINTS

Women health care must incorporate:

- ▶ Physical Health: good body health, which is healthy because of regular physical activity (exercise), good nutrition and adequate rest.
 - ▶ Mental health: includes emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel and act as we cope with life. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices. Mental health is important at every stage of life
 - ▶ Structural health – this refers to sound bones, muscles, organs etc. That the structures in the body are performing the functions they were made for properly. Structural health is associated with a person's height/weight ratio, their BMI (body mass index), their resting pulse rate (heart rate), and recovery time after doing exercise.
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TAKE HOME POINTS

Women health care must incorporate:

- ▶ Chemical Health – good chemical health means that the chemicals in the person's body are correct, that tissues contain the right balance of nutrients, etc., and there are no toxic chemicals.
- ▶ Environmental health addresses all the physical, chemical, and biological factors external to a person, and all the related factors impacting behaviours. It encompasses the assessment and control of those environmental factors that can potentially affect health. It is targeted towards preventing disease and creating health-supportive environments

SOME QUOTES

- ▶ "The secret of health for both mind and body is not to mourn for the past, worry about the future, or anticipate troubles but to live in the present moment wisely and earnestly."
-----Buddha
- ▶ "It is health that is real wealth and not pieces of gold and silver."
-----Mahatma Gandhi

References

- United Nations (2013) Millennium Development Goals Report 2013.
- World Health Organization (2010) Health systems financing: the path to universal coverage. Geneva
- WHO (2009) Women and health: today's evidence tomorrow's agenda. Geneva: WHO.



THANK YOUR
CHOOSING HEALTH,
LIVING WELL AND
FOR LISTENING

