

## Women's Wellbeing as a Catalyst for Social Change

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### Abstract:

Women's health is a multifaceted domain encompassing physical, mental, emotional, and reproductive dimensions. This article explores key health challenges affecting women, including heart disease, reproductive health concerns, cancers, mental health issues, and chronic conditions like osteoporosis. It also emphasizes the importance of preventive care, healthy lifestyle practices, and socio-cultural awareness in improving women's overall well-being. Grounded in World Health Organization definitions and public health frameworks, the discussion highlights the need for gender-specific health education, early diagnosis, and accessible care. The paper concludes by proposing strategies to foster long-term health outcomes for women through community awareness, policy interventions, and proactive lifestyle management

**Keywords:** Women's health, reproductive health, heart disease, mental health, preventive care, lifestyle, holistic wellness, public health, WHO

### 1.Introduction:

A healthy woman is not merely one free of disease but one who is mentally, emotionally, and socially thriving. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), health is "a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity." This holistic understanding is essential when addressing women's health, which spans from menstruation and pregnancy to menopause and beyond. The unique physiological experiences of women necessitate focused medical attention and public health strategies.

### 2.Major Health Concerns Among Women:

#### Heart Disease:

Often misclassified as a male disease, heart disease remains the leading cause of death among women. Symptoms can differ significantly from men's and include shortness of breath, jaw pain, and fatigue. Contributing factors include obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure, and family history.

#### Reproductive Health:

This encompasses maternal health, menstrual disorders like PCOS, and menopause. Poor access to reproductive care, especially in developing regions, leads to high maternal mortality and long-term health complications.

**Cancer:**

Breast and cervical cancers are prevalent in women, with early detection via mammograms and Pap tests being critical. Ovarian and endometrial cancers also warrant attention due to their late detection and aggressive progression.

**Mental Health:**

Women are more prone to anxiety, depression, and stress-related disorders. Factors such as hormonal changes during pregnancy and menopause, social responsibilities, and gender-based violence play significant roles.

**Other Health Issues:**

Urinary Tract Infections (UTIs) – more frequent due to anatomy.

Osteoporosis – greater risk post-menopause due to lower estrogen.

Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) – with more severe complications in women.

Violence and Abuse – has severe physical and psychological health impacts.

Positive and Negative Influences on Women's Health

Women's health is shaped not only by biological factors but also by access to resources, education, and social attitudes. The following are key **positive** and **negative** influences that significantly impact women's physical and emotional well-being.

**3. Positive and Negative Influences on Women's Health:****3.1. Positive Factors:****3.1.1. Access to Sanitary Pads and Health Services:**

Availability of affordable and hygienic menstrual products allows women and girls to manage menstruation safely and with dignity. Access to healthcare services ensures early diagnosis and treatment of reproductive health issues, promoting better long-term outcomes.

**3.1.2. Menstrual Education in Schools:**

Providing accurate information about menstruation in educational settings helps demystify natural biological processes. It fosters awareness, reduces shame, and empowers girls with the knowledge to care for their bodies effectively.

**3.1.3. Flexibility for Menstruating Students:**

School policies that offer flexibility—such as allowing rest periods, accommodating menstrual discomfort, or offering free sanitary products—create an inclusive and supportive environment. This ensures that girls don't miss school during their periods, promoting continuity in education.

**3.2. Negative Factors:****3.2.1. Inadequate Disposal Facilities for Sanitary Products:**

Lack of proper bins or disposal systems in schools and public restrooms can discourage girls from attending school or lead to unhygienic practices. This poses environmental and health risks and can lead to embarrassment or infections.

**3.2.2. Limited Health Literacy on Menstruation:**

Many girls and women grow up without access to accurate information about menstrual health, leading to misconceptions, anxiety, and poor hygiene practices. This can result in untreated issues like infections or irregular cycles going unnoticed.

### **3.2.3. Stigmatization and Lack of Support Systems:**

Cultural taboos and societal stigma surrounding menstruation often cause feelings of shame, isolation, or embarrassment. This prevents open discussion and can limit girls' participation in school, sports, and social activities, negatively affecting their mental health and confidence.

### **3.2.4. Strategies for Enhancing Women's Health:**

1. **Balanced Diet:** Emphasize whole foods, limit processed foods, salt, and sugar.
2. **Regular Physical Activity:** At least 150 minutes of moderate aerobic activity per week.
3. **Adequate Sleep:** Minimum of 7 hours nightly with consistent routines.
4. **Stress Management:** Through meditation, hobbies, and social support.
5. **Routine Health Screenings:** Vaccinations, Pap smears, mammograms, and mental health checks.
6. **Safe Practices:** Safe sex, limited alcohol intake, and no smoking.
7. **Hydration and Supplementation:** Ensure fluid intake and essential vitamins.
8. **Reduced Sedentary Time:** Incorporate movement breaks during screen time.
9. **Social Connectivity:** Maintain emotional well-being through meaningful relationships.

### **4. Indicators of Good Health in Women**

Understanding the signs of good health helps women monitor their well-being and take preventive measures when necessary. The following indicators reflect a well-functioning body and mind:

#### **Regular Bowel Movements:**

Consistent and comfortable bowel activity is a strong indicator of digestive health. It reflects a balanced diet rich in fiber, adequate hydration, and a properly functioning gastrointestinal system.

#### **Stable Weight and Metabolism:**

Maintaining a consistent weight within a healthy range suggests a balanced metabolism and hormonal stability. Unexplained fluctuations may point to underlying health issues such as thyroid problems or insulin resistance.

#### **Healthy Skin, Nails, and Hair:**

Clear, radiant skin, strong nails, and shiny hair are external signs of internal health. They indicate good nutrition, proper hydration, hormonal balance, and absence of nutritional deficiencies or chronic stress.

#### **Mental Clarity and Emotional Resilience:**

The ability to think clearly, focus, and manage emotions well reflects strong mental health.

Resilience—the capacity to cope with stress, adapt to change, and recover from adversity—is essential for long-term psychological well-being.

#### **Energetic, Motivated Daily Life:**

Consistently high energy levels and motivation to engage in daily activities suggest a healthy body, proper sleep, and mental well-being. Persistent fatigue, on the other hand, can be a sign of physical or emotional imbalances.

#### **Reduced Frequency of Illness:**

A strong immune system is demonstrated by rare occurrences of colds, infections, or chronic ailments. This reflects good nutrition, regular physical activity, adequate sleep, and effective stress management.

### 5. Conclusion:

Women's health is central to the well-being of families and communities. It demands a comprehensive approach that integrates medical care, education, social support, and lifestyle management. Addressing both biological and social determinants can empower women to live healthier, longer lives. Policies must advocate for accessible, gender-sensitive health systems that include regular screenings, reproductive care, mental health support, and protection from violence. Empowered with the right knowledge and resources, women can take charge of their health, ultimately contributing to healthier societies.

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