



WOMEN'S WELLBEING – A RISING APPREHENSION IN INDIA

Mrs. U. Suhasini

Msc (Nursing) College of Nursing, Sri Padmavathi Mahila Visva Vidyalyam, Tirupati-517507, A.P, India

ABSTRACT

A world with no women will be a world devoid of creators. No goddesses, no mothers, no emotions, no family, and eventually no society. Women are integral to all aspects of society as the multiple roles that they fulfill in society render them at greater risk of experiencing physical and mental disorders than others in the community. Women abide the burden of responsibility associated with being wives, mothers and careers of others. Progressively more, women are becoming an essential part of the labor force and in one-quarter to one third of households they are the prime source of income. "Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. Women have the special consideration of dealing with pregnancy and childbirth and breastfeeding. Being healthy compile healthy eating habits, regular workouts, and a positive attitude towards life and it is to avoid any disease, prolong life, and live a happy carefree life. But in this hectic living, the chaotic plan, chores, and the whole thing, health takes a backseat in women's life. Major threats to women's health include physical concerns like cardiovascular disease, cancer, osteoporosis, UTI and psychological problems like stress and depression. In India, depression and anxiety in women is twice as much as in men and affects twenty-five per cent of women. And two-thirds of married women in India were victims of domestic violence, and thus more prone to psychological disorders. By practicing a routine like scheduling physical health appointments, nourishing ones body, creating good sleep habits, practicing self care makes women win their everyday battles and stay healthy.

KEYWORDS :

Yatra Naryastu Pujyante Ramante Tatra Devata – Manusmiriti Shloka

Where women are honored, there the deities are pleased; but where they are not honored, no sacred rite yields rewards. God dwells where women worship.

Women are integral to all aspects of society as the multiple roles that they fulfill in society render them at greater risk of experiencing physical and mental disorders than others in the community. Gender is a very important determinant of health and illness. Women and men are not only diverse in their physical appearance but also in the way they communicate, deal in relationships and react to stress.

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

Women have the special consideration of dealing with pregnancy and childbirth and breastfeeding. Being healthy compile healthy eating habits, regular workouts, and a positive attitude towards life and it is to avoid any disease, prolong life, and live a happy carefree life. But in this hectic living, the chaotic plan, chores, and the whole thing, health takes a backseat in women's life.

Biological differences and psychosocial factors make women more vulnerable than men to women's illness.

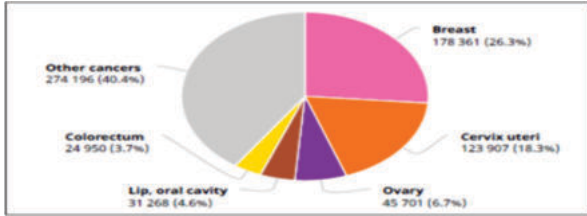
- Women's monthly and life time fluctuations of sex hormones estrogen and progesterone because of menstruation, pregnancy, childbirth and menopause, and weaker blunted hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis response to stress, are the biological factors. These cause women to react more emotionally and become more emotionally exhausted.
- Female hormones estrogen and progesterone affect mood, stress, and cognition. These hormones also affect the risk of developing fear and anxiety, and risk of drug and alcohol use.
- Gender inequality and discrimination, body shame, violence, sexual abuse, and lower self-esteem are a few of the psychosocial factors.

As Indian women continue their attempt to achieve the best in their life and profession, they tend to neglect their health. Although both men and women are affected by various health conditions, some health issues are more common to women.

They are:

- ✓ Cardio Vascular diseases: at the moment, more women are affected by heart disease than breast or cervical cancer. In previous times, cases of heart attacks were exclusive to post-menopausal women. But in today's society, even younger women appear to suffer from them.
- A Lancet report, published in 2021, say that cardiovascular disease is one of the leading causes of death in women. Several International health bodies have pledged to reduce the increasing number of CVD in women by 2030.
- Hectic schedules and excess smoking and drinking, increased use of oral contraceptives, irregular meal times, binging on junk food, and lack of exercise are risk factors modern women's health.
- Do not ignore symptoms like shortness of breath (with or without chest discomfort); pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw, or stomach; breaking out in a cold sweat; nausea or light-headedness.
- In India, heart disease is responsible for approximately 25% of all deaths, and women account for a significant portion of these deaths. According to the Global Burden of Disease Study, heart disease is the leading cause of death among women in India, accounting for almost 18% of all female deaths.
- ✓ **Breast Cancer:** Breast cancer mainly originates in the lining of the milk ducts of breast in women's body. It is the most destructive form of cancer that can spread rapidly to other organs.
- ✓ With being the most common type of cancer in women, breast cancer accounts for 14% of cancers in Indian women. It is reported that with every four minutes, an Indian woman is diagnosed with breast cancer. Breast cancer is on the rise, both in rural and urban India. A 2018 report of Breast Cancer statistics recorded 1,62,468 new registered cases and 87,090 reported deaths.
- ✓ Cancer survival becomes more difficult in higher stages of its growth, and more than 50% of Indian women suffer from stage 3 and 4 of breast cancer. Post cancer survival for women with breast cancer was reported 60% for Indian women, as compared to 80% in the U.S.
- Breast Cancer is seen 14% out of other types of cancers in Indian women. Breast cancer is more frequently diagnosed among female population in developed nations due to their extended life spans.

- The Globocan data 2020 estimates that, in India, breast cancer accounted for 13.5% of all cancers and around 10.6% of all deaths.
- The incidence rates in India begin to increase in the early thirties and peak at ages 50-64 years.
- On the whole, 1 in 29 women is likely to develop breast cancer during her lifetime.



- ✓ **Ovarian and Cervical Cancer:** Most people are not aware of the differences between ovarian and cervical cancer. While cervical cancer originates in the lower uterus, ovarian cancer starts in the fallopian tubes. Where as both conditions cause similar pain, cervical cancer may also cause discharge and pain during intercourse.

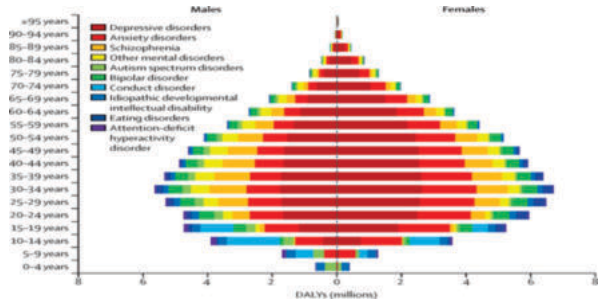
Ovarian cancer was estimated to be the third most common cancer among Indian women and eighth overall as per the Globocan 2018 Fact sheet, constituting 3.44% (36170) of all cancer cases [1]. It is also a leading cause of death from cancer in Indian women, with 3.34% (24015) of all cancer deaths in India in the same year. While 5-year survival from ovarian cancer is 94% when diagnosed in Stage I, only 15% of cases are diagnosed at this stage. Most (62%) of cases are diagnosed in Stages III and IV, when 5-year survival is only 28% [2]. Advanced stage ovarian cancer has a dismal prognosis, with the highest case-fatality ratio amongst all gynaecological cancers globally.

Ovarian cancer is the third most commonly detected cancer amongst Indian women.

- One woman dies of cervical cancer every 8 minutes in India.
- Ovarian and cervical cancers are the most common gynecological cancers affecting women worldwide and in India.
- Cervical cancer is the second most common cancer in India in women accounting for 18.3% of all cancer cases in women
- Every year in India, 122,844 women are diagnosed with cervical cancer and 67,477 die from this disease.
- In 2020, more than two lakh women in India were estimated to have been diagnosed with breast cancer, and more than 76,000 deaths were reported as per the estimates.
- As per the 2020 National Cancer Registry Program Report, the number is expected to rise to more than 2.3 lakh cases in 2025.
- Length of survival after a diagnosis of cervical cancer depends on the cancer stage at the time of detection.
- The survival chance of a person becomes better if the cervical cancer is detected at the precancerous stage through screening and treated at such a stage.
- ✓ **Malnutrition:** India is among the countries with the highest rates of malnourished females in the developing world. This is mainly because women do not give too much importance to their nutritional needs and become more susceptible to contagious diseases like pneumonia and tuberculosis. Poor nutrition can also have adverse effects on maternal health and the health of babies.
- As many as 57% women aged 15-49 were anemic in 2019-21, compared to 53% in 2015-16, while the same for men rose from 22.7% to 25%.
- Among larger states, West Bengal and Kerala reported the highest and lowest prevalence, respectively, of anemic

women.

- ✓ **Osteoporosis:** Osteoporosis means the weakening of bones that makes them break easily. Several factors can cause the condition that mostly affects women's health, such as -- Age, Genetics, Lack of exercise, Low body mass, Smoking, Steroid use, etc.
- In other words, 1 in 3 women over age 50 will experience osteoporotic fractures, as will 1 in 5 men over age 50
- Prevalence of osteoporosis ranging from 8 to 62% in Indian women of different age groups has been reported in several studies.
- ✓ **Women's Mental Health:** Depression and anxiety are affecting more women than men nowadays. Reasons could be numerous like- trauma, grief, love and relationship troubles, genetic, obesity, hormones. Hormonal changes, particularly after pregnancy (postpartum) or around menopause, can trigger the conditions.
- ✓ As of October 2021, women had the highest share of mental health disorders in India, amounting to 39 percent and 30 percent for stress and anxiety health disorder respectively. Comparatively, 33 percent of men had depression as compared to women with 31 percent during the same time period.



Ways to Enrich Women's Health

While women are playing an important role in the socio-economic upliftment in the contemporary era, it is time for them to take charge of their health and wellness. Most women's health issues can be prevented by making simple lifestyle changes and adopting preventive measures.

Get Moving: Exercise has more than one benefit. It can aid digestion while keeping obesity, heart diseases, and even depression at bay. It is also good for bone health. Endeavor for a minimum of 30 minutes of workout sessions at least four days per week. Take up activities you enjoy, like- walking around the park, yoga, dancing, or swimming.

Eat Well: Incorporating healthy, home cooked meals into daily diet. Prepare food with natural homemade masalas to help enhance the nutritional values of the food intake. Women must eat a well balanced food to be strong and to makes one's family stronger.

Stay Well Hydrated: women often pay no attention to the hydration part. Staying hydrated keeps us healthy and also helps in losing weight.

Start your day with a glass of warm water and include turmeric milk or cinnamon milk as your nighttime beverage.

It is the easiest way to include the medicinal properties of turmeric and cinnamon in our daily routine while they aid in getting better sleep.

Say No To The Junk: Sugary drinks and junk foods are full of empty calories, leading to obesity and type 2 diabetes. Avoid junk food and opt for healthy beverages like coconut water, masala tea, or fresh fruit juices.

Take Care Of Your Mental Health: Managing stress is a great way to start caring for women's mental health. Meditation, breathing, talk therapy, exercise, nature therapy are great ways of reducing stress and taking care of mental health. If

one feels low or have self-doubt, one should talk to loved ones or seek professional guidance.

Sleep: Women need at least 7-8 hours of sleep each night to function optimally. But sleep can be challenging for many women, particularly those experiencing pre-menopause, menopause or postpartum symptoms.

Practice Self-Care: Self-care does not have to be complicated or expensive. It can simply mean taking a long hot bath to de-stress, scheduling a 20 minutes naptime in the afternoon, or maybe spending 15 minutes each day reading favorite book. Taking care of self should begin with being happy.

Go For Regular Check-ups: Never skip medical check-ups. Remember, most women's health issues can be prevented with early detection and proactive healthcare measures.

Practice Proper Hygiene Routine: Women are more prone to UTI and allergies due to improper grooming and hygiene habits. Therefore, hygiene practices must be taught to women from an early age.

Samdoshā, Samagnishā, Samadhātumalkriyā;
Prasannatmendriyamanah, Swastha iti abhidhiyate-
(Sushrut Samhita)

'She whose bodily humours are in balance, appetite is good, all tissues of the body and all natural urges are functioning properly and whose body, mind and spirit (self) are jubilant/blissful, is the picture of health.'

REFERENCES

1. Agrawal T, Verma AK Cross sectional study of osteoporosis among women. *Med J Armed Forces India* 69:168-171. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.mjafi.2012.07.024>
2. Babu A, Ikbāl F, Noone M et al (2009) Osteoporosis and osteopenia in India: a few more observations. *Indian J Med Sci* 63:76. <https://doi.org/10.4103/0019-5359.49242>
3. Chaurasia V, Pal S. A Novel Approach for Breast Cancer Detection using Data Mining Techniques.; 2014 *International Journal of Innovative Research in Computer and Communication Engineering.*; 2(1); 2456-65.
4. Dikshit R, Gupta PC, Ramasundarahettige C, et al. Cancer mortality in India: a nationally representative survey.; 2012.; *Lancet.*;379(9828):1807-16. http://www.breastcancerindia.net/bc/statistics/stat_global.htm
5. <https://gco.iarc.fr/>
7. ICO Information Centre on HPV and Cancer (Summary Report 2014.08.22). *Human Papillomavirus and Related Diseases in India*; 2014.
8. Jha P, Jacob B, Gajalakshmi V, Gupta PC, Dhingra N, Kumar R, et al. A nationally representative case-control study of smoking and death in India. *New England Journal of Medicine.* 2008 March; 358(11):1137-1147.
9. Kadam N, Chiplonkar S, Khadilkar A et al (2010) Low bone mass in urban Indian women above 40 years of age: prevalence and risk factors. *Gynecol Endocrinol* 26:909-917. <https://doi.org/10.3109/09513590.2010.487604>
10. Karthikeyan, K.; Cervical cancer in India and HPV vaccination.;2012; *Indian J Med Paediatr Oncol.*; 33(1): 7-12.
11. Mathur P, Sathishkumar K, Chaturvedi M, et al. Cancer Statistics, 2020: Report From National Cancer Registry Programme, India. *JCO Glob Oncol.* 2020 Jul;6:1063-1075.
12. National Cancer Registry Programme. Consolidated report of the population based cancer registries 2012-2016. New Delhi: Indian Council of Medical Research; 2020.
13. NCRP - Consolidated Report of Hospital Based Cancer Registries 2007-2011, National Cancer Registry Programme (Indian Council of Medical Research), Bangalore, 2013
14. Report on causes of deaths in India 2001-2003. Office of the Registrar General of India, Govt. of India, 2010.
15. Sankaranarayanan R, Black RJ, Parkin DM. Cancer survival in developing countries. IARC Scientific Publication No. 145. Lyon: International Agency for Research on Cancer; 1998
16. Shenoi R, Devrukhkar VC, Sharma BK, et al. Demographic and clinical profile of oral squamous cell carcinoma patients: a retrospective study.; 2012; *Indian J Cancer.*;49(1):21-6.
17. Sinha DN, Palipudi KM, Gupta PC, Singhal S, Ramasundarahettige C, Jha P, et al. Smokeless tobacco use: a meta-analysis of risk and attributable mortality estimates for India. *Indian Journal of Cancer.* 2014;51(Suppl 1):S73-S77.
18. Sung H, Ferlay J, Siegel RL, et al. Global Cancer Statistics 2020: GLOBOCAN Estimates of Incidence and Mortality Worldwide for 36 Cancers in 185 Countries. *CA Cancer J Clin.* 2021 May;71(3):209-249.
19. WHO Summary report on HPV & cervical cancer statistics in India (18/03/2008)
20. World Health Organisation. The Global Burden of Disease: 2004 Update. Geneva, WHO, 2009.