

Women's Self-Care Strategies

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The objective of this study is promoting a reflection on the importance of education for self-care in women's health. We want to bring awareness of World Health Organization guidelines on self-care and studies related to health promotion. We emphasize the need for the interdisciplinary development of educational interventions focused on self-care so people have access to safe information and services that enable the development of the ability to choose and autonomy to adopt and incorporate a healthy lifestyle avoiding physical and mental illness. of the female population.

There is a growing number of health professionals who have been addressing the importance of the population knowing and valuing activities with a focus on self-care in order to develop healthy habits, promoting healthy aging and prevent illness.

Knowledge of strategies for self-care can positively influence the choices and decisions of individuals related to health and is. There is now a wide body of scientific evidence that positive lifestyle factors dramatically lower risk factors for chronic disease and promote good health. For example, in the Nurses' Health Study, 80% of all heart disease and over 91% of all diabetes in women could be eliminated if they would adopt a cluster of positive lifestyle practices, including maintenance of a healthy body weight (BMI of 19 - 25 kg/m²), regular physical activity (30 minutes or more on most days), not smoking cigarettes, and following a few simple nutritional practices such as increasing whole grains and consuming more fruits and vegetables [1].

We constantly go through moments when important decisions need to be made in our personal and professional lives and in the way we take care of ourselves. Taking care of physical, emotional and social well-being involves having access to reliable information to make more assertive decisions. In this context, knowing better what self-care can enhance the power of choices and decisions of individuals.

Enabling access to education for self-care and self-knowledge is a powerful strategy to promote women's well-being and prevent physical and mental illness. According to the World Health Organization itself, self-care is related to the ability of individuals, families and communities to promote health, prevent disease, maintain health and deal with diseases and disabilities with or without the support of a health professional. the WHO itself emphasizes that there is much more to the exercise of self-care to be considered, such as, for example, taking care of the hygiene of the home, the work and personal environment, the nutritional quality of the food that is consumed, social connivance, the conditions in which one lives, the lifestyle one chooses to adopt and the correct treatment guided by the doctor, among others. An important fact is that socioeconomic factors that include income level and cultural beliefs influence self-care actions [2].

The American Academy of Family Practice and the American College of Preventive Medicine now offer education tracks for individuals interested in adding lifestyle medicine as a key component of their medical practices.

The WHO issued a new guideline on self-care interventions aimed at putting the individual first in the management of their health. This new guideline points to evidence-based recommendations on specific self-care interventions that can help ensure quality health and well-being and promote and protect human rights [3].

There is a need to inform and promote educational health care awareness to female population so that women can make more assertive decisions about their own health, but for that a multidisciplinary team needs to be trained and attentive in organizing activities focused on the dissemination of knowledge, implementation of daily self-care practices, mainly among needy and marginalized populations that have difficulties accessing formal education and health systems. Self-care needs to be part of each one’s lifestyle and becomes a continuous care process.

In the physiological part of women, there are several urinary, fecal and sexual disorders and we study in an area of expertise known as Urogynecology. We verified in a study some keywords that are much sought after in social media and have aroused interest [4]. In the IUGA International urogynecology association, we have also created a doctor-patient group to allow better access to understanding and communication regarding intimate and urogynecological health.

One of the bases of the pyramid which maintains a healthy lifestyle and helps to avoid or delay risk factors for the development of diseases includes encouraging the practice of physical activity.

TABLE 1.3 Health benefits of regular physical activity
<p>Health Benefits Associated with Regular Physical Activity Children and Adolescents</p> <p>Strong evidence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved cardiorespiratory and muscular fitness • Improved bone health • Improved cardiovascular and metabolic health biomarkers • Favorable body composition <p>Moderate evidence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced symptoms of depression
<p>Adults and Older Adults</p> <p>Strong evidence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower risk of early death • Lower risk of coronary heart disease • Lower risk of stroke • Lower risk of high blood pressure • Lower risk of adverse blood lipid profile • Lower risk of type 2 diabetes • Lower risk of metabolic syndrome • Lower risk of colon cancer • Lower risk of breast cancer • Prevention of weight gain • Weight loss, particularly when combined with reduced calorie intake • Improved cardiorespiratory and muscular fitness • Prevention of falls • Reduced depression • Better cognitive function (for older adults) <p>Moderate to strong evidence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better functional health (for older adults) • Reduced abdominal obesity <p>Moderate evidence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower risk of hip fracture • Lower risk of lung cancer • Lower risk of endometrial cancer • Weight maintenance after weight loss • Increased bone density • Improved sleep quality

Source: 2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans.

Health promotion is a process that could involve empowering the community to act actively to improve their quality of life and health. The organization and implementation of strategies focused on health promotion requires coordinated action between various parties involved, such as: government, health sector, social and economic sector, voluntary and non-governmental organizations, local authorities, industry and the media [5].

Conclusion

There is great potential to expand quality patient-centered care for women's health through self-care strategies. We believe that health professionals, in addition to attending and caring for women, should help them to promote health before presenting symptoms and place women as managers of their own health.

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