Expanded Sex & Gender Timeline
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Legislative

• 1990 – The Congressional Caucus on Women’s Issues introduces the Women’s Health Equity Act, which contains 20 separate bills that seek to improve women’s health outcomes and advance scientific research. Although the bill does not pass, it prompts the NIH to create the Office of Research on Women’s Health (ORWH) that same year.
• 1994 – The United Nations International Conference on Population and Development is held in Cairo. The conference affirms the role of women’s education and empowerment in improving health outcomes and quality of life.
• 2010 – The Women’s Health Office Act (WHOA) becomes law. This act makes permanent the Offices of Women’s Health in 5 federal agencies, including the CDC and the FDA.

Clinical

• 1996 – DHHS allocates funding for National Centers of Excellence in Women’s Health across the country. These centers are established to provide comprehensive health care for women and enhance the role of women as providers in academic medicine.
• 2001 – A report released by the U.S. Government Accountability Office reveals that 8 of the 10 drugs withdrawn from the market since 1997 are more likely to cause adverse effects in women than in men.
• 2001 – The Institute of Medicine (IOM) releases a report entitled, “Exploring the Biological Contributions to Human Health: Does Sex Matter?” It concludes that sex differences affect human health throughout the lifespan.
• 2002 – The Women’s Health Initiative’s large-scale study on hormone replacement therapy is halted 3 years early after participants on estrogen and progestin therapy are found to have an increased risk of heart attack, blood clots, stroke, and breast cancer as compared to placebo.
• 2005 – A large-scale randomized trial of low-dose aspirin use in women finds that aspirin decreases the risk of ischemic stroke in women, while having little to no effect on the risk of heart attack in women under age 65.¹
• 2007 – National Centers of Excellence are defunded.
• 2012 – A study published in Neuroscience shows that ApoEε4, a common genetic risk factor for Alzheimer’s Disease, has been found to cause changes in brain activity and cerebral spinal fluid in healthy adult women but not in men.²
• 2013 – The recommended dosage for sleep medications containing Zolpidem is changed by the FDA after studies show that the previously recommended dose may be too high, particularly in women. Women are found to metabolize the drug more slowly, putting them at greater risk for next-day impairment.

Educational
• 1915 – The American Medical Women’s Association (AMWA) is founded to address the unequal representation of women in medicine.
• 1970 – Our Bodies, Ourselves is published by The Boston Women’s Health Book Collective.
• 1990 – The first issue of the Women’s Health Issues Journal is published.
• 1992 – The first issue of the Journal of Women’s Health is published.
• 1993 – The Advanced Curriculum on Women’s Health is created by AMWA.
• 1995 – The Council on Graduate Medical Education calls for expanded education in women’s health.
• 1995 - AMWA creates an Education Project on Coronary Heart Disease in Women, a continuing medical education program that enlists 30 AMWA master faculty to lecture to primary care physicians in their local communities about the risk factors, symptoms, and diagnostic testing for heart disease in women. The program succeeds in reaching more than 16,000 health care providers and is credited with increasing national awareness of heart disease in women.
• 1996 – NAWHME publishes Women’s Health in the Curriculum: A resource guide for faculty.
• 1996 – The American College of Women’s Health Physicians is founded with the goal of advancing the art and science of women’s health.
• 1998 – Dr. Lila Wallis publishes her comprehensive work, the Textbook of Women’s Health.
• 2000 – Women’s Health Core Competencies are created by the Association of Professors of Gynecology and Obstetrics (APGO) to address the gaps in medical school curricula on women’s health.
• 2000 – The journal Academic Medicine publishes a special issue on sex, gender, and women’s health in medical education. (November)
• 2004 – Dr. Marianne Legato’s ground-breaking book, Principles of Gender-Specific Medicine, is published.
• 2005 – The Scientific Group on Methodologies for the Safety Evaluation of Chemicals (SGOMSEC) held a workshop on Gender Differences and Human and Ecological Risk. The group concludes that sex differences are essential to the study of toxicology.
• 2011 – The Sex & Gender Women’s Health Collaborative (SGWHC) is established.
• 2012 – The volume Sex and Gender Aspects in Clinical Medicine is published. (edited by Sabine Oertelt-Prigione and Vera Regitz-Zagrosek)
• 2012 – Handbook of Clinical Gender Medicine is published. (edited by Karin Schenck-Gustafsson, Paula R. DeCola, Donald W. Pfaff, David S. Pisetsky)
• 2012 – Sex and Gender Differences in Pharmacology is published. (edited by Vera Regitz-Zagrosek)

Research
• 1946 - AMWA begins publishing the Journal of the American Medical Women’s Association (JAMWA). Many articles pertaining to gender and medicine have been published during the tenure of this journal.
1977 - The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) bars women of child-bearing potential from participating in most early phase clinical research.

1985 - A U.S. Public Health Service task force finds that the exclusion of women from clinical research has a negative impact on women’s health.

1990 – The Society for Women’s Health Research (SWHR) is founded.

1993 – The Clinical Equity Provision within the NIH Revitalization Act requires that women be considered as participants in all human subjects research.

2000 – The NIH creates the BIRCWH career development program for junior faculty interested in women’s health and sex differences research.

2006 – The Foundation for Gender-Specific Medicine is founded by Dr. Marianne Legato.

2006 – The Organization for the Study of Sex Differences (OSSD) is founded by member scientists of the Society for Women’s Health Research.

2007 - The NIH Office of Research on Women’s Health creates the Advancing Novel Science in Women’s Health Research (ANSWHR) grant.

2010 – An IOM report finds that despite increasing progress in women’s health research, there are still significant gaps, including in the reporting and analysis of research data by sex.

2011 – The FDA releases a draft guidance on the role of sex difference in determining the safety and effectiveness of medical devices. They recommend not only increased enrollment of women in clinical trials of medical devices but also greater analysis and reporting of study results based on sex.

2013 – The FDA publishes a report on the inclusion and analysis of demographic subgroups (including sex, age, race, and ethnicity) in applications for drugs, biologics, and medical devices that were submitted for approval in 2011.

2014 – As part of Section 907 of the FDA Safety and Innovation Act, an action plan is outlined that prioritizes more robust collection of subgroup data and the inclusion of demographic subgroups in clinical trials.

2015 – The NIH officially recognizes sex as a biological variable that must be accounted for in research studies on vertebrate animals and humans.

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