



SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S HEALTH RESEARCH

Changing the Face of Medicine

Who is the Society for Women's Health Research?

The **Society for Women's Health Research (SWHR)** is a Washington, D.C., based non-profit organization whose mission is to improve the health of all women through research, education and advocacy. Founded in 1990, SWHR brought to national attention the need for the appropriate inclusion of women in major medical research studies and the need for more information about conditions affecting women exclusively, predominantly, or differently than men.

SWHR advocates for greater public and private funding for women's health research and the study of sex differences that affect the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of disease. The 2001 Institute of Medicine report, *Exploring the Biological Contributions to Human Health: Does Sex Matter?*, reinforced the Society's efforts, validating what it had emphasized for years: **biological sex differences between women and men exist in a broad range of diseases, disorders and health conditions.**

SWHR also promotes the appropriate inclusion of women in medical research studies; promotes the analysis of research data for sex differences; and informs women, health care providers, and policy makers about contemporary women's health issues through media outreach and periodic briefings, conferences and special events.

Resources for Journalists:

- ◆ Background information and interviews on sex differences across the health spectrum.
- ◆ Free biweekly news service articles for reprint.
- ◆ Periodic national surveys on women's and health care providers' opinions.
- ◆ Public education materials on women's health topics.
- ◆ National Women's Health Week materials (May 11-17).
- ◆ Patient advocacy experts for interviews.
- ◆ Political commentary on women's health and national research priorities.
- ◆ "The Savvy Woman Patient: How and Why Sex Differences Impact Your Health," a Society guidebook on health differences between women and men. Media copies are available.
- ◆ Annual media awards program.



The Society for Women's Health Research maintains three programmatic areas – scientific programs, public policy, and public education – to accomplish its mission.

Scientific Programs

- ◆ The scientific programs department works with researchers and clinicians in the public and private sector to promote and support the field of sex-based biology.
- ◆ The scientific programs department manages SWHR's Isis Fund for Sex Based Biology, a series of networks to foster interdisciplinary basic and clinical research on sex and gender differences.
- ◆ SWHR established the Organization for the Study of Sex Differences (OSSD) in 2006. OSSD is a scientific membership society that advances the study of sex differences and their implications for health.

Public Policy

- ◆ The public policy department directs SWHR's advocacy efforts to ensure that women's health issues remain a priority on the national agenda.
- ◆ SWHR holds frequent briefings for members of Congress and their staffs on important health issues that are impacted by congressional policies and funding decisions. SWHR also testifies before congressional committees and provides comment on legislation and regulatory proposals related to women's health and research.
- ◆ Supporting its advocacy work, SWHR maintains the Women's Health Research Coalition (WHRC), an advocacy network of leaders at academic medical, health and scientific institutions and other supportive organizations united to encourage coordination and funding for women's health research.

Public Education

- ◆ The communications department manages SWHR's outreach and education efforts for the general public, including the media.
- ◆ SWHR's public education campaigns cover a wide range of topics from lung cancer to clinical trials participation to health literacy. The campaigns use varying methods to reach the public, including media outreach, Web sites, print materials, and public service announcements.
- ◆ Since 2003, SWHR has annually presented the "Excellence in Women's Health Research Journalism Awards" to honor journalists who excel in providing the public with valuable health research information. The awards aim to encourage media coverage of medical research findings that is accurate and appropriately represented.

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