
Postgraduate Certificate in Women's Health Coaching

Women's Health Fundamentals

Women's Health Fundamentals Glossary

A

- **Abortion:** The deliberate termination of a pregnancy, typically before the fetus is viable. This can be done through medication or a medical procedure.
- **Antenatal Care:** Medical care provided during pregnancy to monitor the health of the mother and fetus, and to address any potential complications.
- **Atrophic Vaginitis:** Also known as vaginal atrophy, a condition characterized by thinning, drying, and inflammation of the vaginal walls due to a decrease in estrogen levels, commonly experienced during menopause.
- **Autoimmune Diseases:** Conditions in which the immune system mistakenly attacks healthy cells in the body, such as lupus, rheumatoid arthritis, or multiple sclerosis.

B

- **Birth Control:** Also known as contraception, methods used to prevent pregnancy, including hormonal pills, intrauterine devices (IUDs), condoms, and sterilization.
- **Breast Cancer:** A type of cancer that forms in the cells of the breasts, often detected through self-examinations, mammograms, or other imaging tests.
- **Body Mass Index (BMI):** A measurement calculated using a person's height and weight to determine if they are underweight, normal weight, overweight, or obese.

C

- **Cervical Cancer:** Cancer that occurs in the cells of the cervix, typically detected through Pap smears and HPV testing.
- **Chronic Pelvic Pain:** Persistent pain in the pelvic region lasting more than six months, often caused by conditions like endometriosis, fibroids, or pelvic inflammatory disease.
- **Contraception:** See Birth Control.

D

- Depression: A mood disorder characterized by persistent feelings of sadness, hopelessness, and loss of interest in daily activities.
- Diabetes: A chronic condition that affects how the body metabolizes sugar, leading to high blood sugar levels, which can have serious health implications if not managed properly.
- Dysmenorrhea: Painful menstrual periods, often accompanied by cramps, back pain, and other symptoms.

E

- Endometriosis: A condition in which tissue similar to the lining of the uterus grows outside the uterus, causing pain, inflammation, and potential infertility.
- Estrogen: The primary female sex hormone responsible for the development of secondary sexual characteristics and regulating the menstrual cycle.
- Exercise: Physical activity performed to improve overall health, fitness, and well-being, with benefits including weight management, stress reduction, and cardiovascular health.

F

- Fertility: The ability to conceive a child, influenced by factors such as age, health, and lifestyle choices.
- Fibroids: Noncancerous growths that develop in the uterus, often causing symptoms like heavy menstrual bleeding, pelvic pain, and frequent urination.
- Folic Acid: A B vitamin essential for cell growth and development, particularly important for pregnant women to prevent birth defects.

G

- Genital Herpes: A sexually transmitted infection caused by the herpes simplex virus, characterized by painful sores on the genital area.
- Gynecologist: A medical doctor specializing in women's reproductive health, including the female reproductive system, pregnancy, childbirth, and menopause.
- Gender: The socially constructed roles, behaviors, activities, and attributes that a particular society considers appropriate for men and women.

H

- Human Papillomavirus (HPV): A common sexually transmitted infection that can lead to genital warts, cervical cancer, and other cancers.

- Healthy Eating: Consuming a balanced diet that provides essential nutrients, vitamins, and minerals to support overall health and well-being.

- Hormones: Chemical messengers produced by the endocrine glands that regulate various bodily functions, including metabolism, growth, and reproduction.

I

- Infertility: The inability to conceive a child after one year of regular, unprotected intercourse, affecting both men and women for various reasons.

- Incontinence: The involuntary leakage of urine, often caused by weakened pelvic floor muscles, childbirth, or medical conditions.

- Irregular Menstruation: Changes in the menstrual cycle length, flow, or frequency, which can be influenced by hormonal imbalances, stress, or underlying health conditions.

J

- Joint Pain: Discomfort, aches, or inflammation in the joints, which can be caused by conditions like arthritis, injuries, or overuse.

- Job Stress: Emotional strain due to work-related demands, pressures, or conflicts, which can affect mental and physical health if not managed effectively.

- Juvenile Rheumatoid Arthritis: A type of arthritis that affects children under the age of 16, causing joint pain, swelling, and stiffness.

K

- Kegel Exercises: Pelvic floor exercises designed to strengthen the muscles that support the bladder, uterus, and bowel, helping to improve urinary control and sexual function.

- Knowledge: Information, facts, and skills acquired through education, training, or experience, essential for making informed decisions about health and well-being.

- Kidney Stones: Hard mineral deposits that form in the kidneys, causing severe pain, urinary issues, and potential complications if left untreated.

L

- Lactation: The process of producing and secreting milk from the mammary glands to feed a newborn baby, influenced by hormones like prolactin and oxytocin.

- Lifestyle Choices: Decisions and behaviors related to diet, exercise, sleep, stress management, and substance use that impact overall health and quality of life.

- Low Libido: A decreased interest in sexual activity, often influenced by physical, emotional, or hormonal factors.

M

- Menopause: The natural process in which a woman's menstrual cycles cease, typically occurring in her late 40s or early 50s, accompanied by hormonal changes and symptoms like hot flashes and mood swings.

- Menstrual Cycle: The monthly series of hormonal changes that prepare the uterus for pregnancy, involving menstruation, ovulation, and the shedding of the uterine lining.

- Mammogram: A screening test using X-rays to detect breast cancer in its early stages, recommended for women over 40 years old.

N

- Nutrition: The process of consuming and utilizing food to provide energy, nutrients, and support for growth, repair, and overall health.

- Neck Pain: Discomfort, stiffness, or tension in the neck area, often caused by poor posture, muscle strain, or underlying medical conditions.

- Non-Invasive Procedures: Medical treatments or tests that do not require incisions or penetration of the skin, such as ultrasounds, blood tests, or physical exams.

O

- Osteoporosis: A condition characterized by weak, brittle bones that are more susceptible to fractures, commonly affecting older women after menopause.

- Ovarian Cancer: Cancer that forms in the cells of the ovaries, often diagnosed at a later stage due to nonspecific symptoms and lack of early detection tests.

- Obesity: Excessive accumulation of body fat that increases the risk of various health conditions, including heart disease, diabetes, and certain cancers.

P

- Pap Smear: A screening test to detect abnormal cells in the cervix that may indicate cervical cancer or precancerous conditions, recommended for women over 21 years old.

- Pelvic Inflammatory Disease (PID): An infection of the female reproductive organs, often caused by sexually transmitted bacteria, leading to pelvic pain, infertility, and other complications.

- Postpartum Depression: A type of depression that occurs after childbirth, characterized by feelings of sadness, anxiety, and exhaustion.

Q

- Quality of Life: The overall well-being and satisfaction experienced by an individual in various aspects of life, including physical health, mental health, relationships, and environment.

- Quitting Smoking: Cessation of tobacco use, which can improve overall health, reduce the risk of diseases, and increase life expectancy.

- Questioning: The process of exploring, reflecting on, or challenging one's beliefs, values, or identity to gain deeper understanding and clarity.

R

- Reproductive Health: The state of physical, mental, and social well-being related to the reproductive system, including access to healthcare services, education, and resources.

- Rheumatoid Arthritis: An autoimmune disorder that causes joint inflammation, pain, and swelling, potentially leading to joint damage and deformity.

- Regular Exercise: Physical activity performed consistently to maintain fitness, strength, flexibility, and overall health benefits.

S

- Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs): Infections transmitted through sexual contact, including chlamydia, gonorrhea, syphilis, herpes, and HIV.

- Self-Care: Practices and activities that individuals engage in to promote physical, emotional, and mental well-being, such as exercise, relaxation, and healthy eating.

- Stress Management: Techniques and strategies used to cope with or reduce stress levels, including mindfulness, meditation, exercise, and relaxation.

T

- Thyroid Disorders: Conditions affecting the thyroid gland, which produces hormones that regulate metabolism, energy levels, and other bodily functions.
- Toxic Relationships: Interpersonal relationships characterized by manipulation, abuse, or emotional harm, which can negatively impact mental and emotional health.
- Testicular Cancer: Cancer that develops in the testicles, often detected through self-examinations, imaging tests, or blood markers.

U

- Urinary Tract Infections (UTIs): Infections affecting the urinary system, often caused by bacteria entering the urethra, leading to painful urination, frequent urges, and other symptoms.
- Uterine Fibroids: See Fibroids.
- Uterine Prolapse: A condition in which the uterus descends into the vaginal canal due to weakened pelvic floor muscles, often associated with childbirth and aging.

V

- Vaginal Health: The maintenance of vaginal hygiene, pH balance, and moisture levels to prevent infections, discomfort, and other issues.
- Violence Against Women: Any act of gender-based violence that results in physical, sexual, or psychological harm or suffering to women, including domestic violence, sexual assault, and harassment.
- Vitamin D Deficiency: Inadequate levels of vitamin D in the body, which can lead to weakened bones, muscle pain, fatigue, and increased risk of certain diseases.

W

- Weight Management: The practice of maintaining a healthy weight through balanced diet, regular exercise, and lifestyle modifications to prevent obesity and related health conditions.
- Well-Woman Visit: An annual check-up or preventive care appointment for women to assess overall health, discuss concerns, and receive screenings or vaccinations.
- Women's Health Coaching: A specialized form of coaching focused on empowering women to make informed decisions about their health, wellness, and lifestyle choices.

X

- Xenoestrogens: Synthetic chemicals that mimic estrogen in the body, found in plastics, pesticides, and

personal care products, potentially disrupting hormonal balance.

- X-Ray: A type of imaging test using electromagnetic radiation to visualize internal structures, bones, or tissues for diagnostic purposes.

- Xenophobia: Prejudice, discrimination, or fear of individuals from other countries or cultures, which can impact social interactions, policies, and human rights.

Y

- Yoga: A mind-body practice that combines physical postures, breathing techniques, and meditation to promote relaxation, flexibility, strength, and overall well-being.

- Yeast Infections: Fungal infections caused by an overgrowth of Candida yeast in the vaginal area, leading to itching, burning, and abnormal discharge.

- Young Adulthood: The stage of life between adolescence and middle age, characterized by exploration, independence, and personal development.

Z

- Zika Virus: A mosquito-borne virus that can cause birth defects in pregnant women's babies, including microcephaly, and other neurological complications.

- Zinc Deficiency: Inadequate levels of zinc in the body, which can impair immune function, wound healing, and growth and development.