

DOES GENDER
MATTER IN
SUBSTANCE ABUSE
TREATMENT?

ANGRIA BASSETT

TREATMENT COORDINATOR

NELSON BASCOME CENTER

Sex and Gender Differences in Substance Use Disorder Treatment

WOMEN

- Women are more likely to seek treatment for dependence on sedatives anti-anxiety and sleep medications.
- Substance use dependence may progress differently for women than for men
- Women often have a faster progression and shorter history of using certain substances such as cocaine,¹⁵⁵ opioids,⁴² marijuana,^{42,43,156} or alcohol.^{42,157,158}
- Women typically enter substance use disorder treatment with more severe medical, behavioral, psychological, and social problems.
- The effects of maternal exposures on birth outcomes have been extensively examined

MEN

More **men** than women in treatment

More **men** than women seek TX for Heroin dependence but # women is increasing (Cicero et al (2014).

More research evidence about **men's** drug use and treatment effectiveness than women

Few research on the effect of paternal drug use on conception and pregnancy outcomes

WOMEN IN RESEARCH

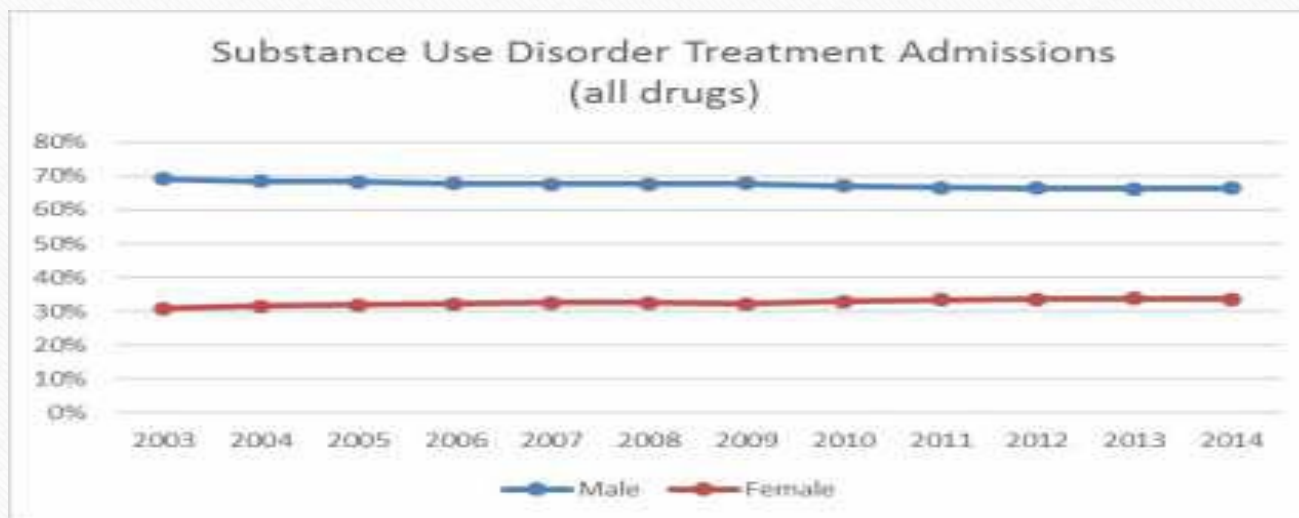
- Women often use drugs differently
- Respond to drugs differently
- Can have unique obstacles to effective treatment (simple as not being able to find child care).
- Being prescribed treatment that has not been adequately tested on women.
- More diagnosed Mental Illness and Reports more Trauma and Intimate partner abuse
- Extensive research regarding drug use by pregnant women and the effects on their children before and after birth.
- Race and Ethnicity: Women of color may face unique issues with regard to drug use and treatment needs. More likely than women of other racial and ethnic groups to be victims of rape, physical violence, and stalking by an intimate partner in their lifetime. These issues are risk factors for substance use and should be addressed during treatment.
- Most research on effects of substances on the unborn, ONLY study women.

Substance Use Disorder Treatment Admissions (all drugs)

Substance Use Disorders Admissions

2003-2014

- MALES –BLUE
- FEMALES-RED



TREATMENT BARRIERS FOR FEMALES -

Many women who are pregnant or have young children do not seek treatment or drop out of treatment early because they are unable to take care of their children; they may also fear that authorities will remove their children from their care.

Pregnancy and Prenatal care may be a barrier to treatment seeking because of legal implications

However, Prenatal Care can identify drug use and lead to treatment referrals;

BUT Are Pregnant Women Being Adequately and Consistently Screened?

Estimates suggest that about 5 percent of pregnant women use one or more addictive substances.

NIDA. 2022

Risks of Stillbirth from Substance Use in Pregnancy

-
- Tobacco use—1.8 to 2.8 times greater risk of stillbirth, with the highest risk found among the heaviest smokers
 - Marijuana use—2.3 times greater risk of stillbirth
 - Evidence of any stimulant, marijuana, or prescription pain reliever use—2.2 times greater risk of stillbirth
 - Passive exposure to tobacco—2.1 times greater risk of stillbirth

Source: Tobacco, drug use in pregnancy, 2013

Risks of Sudden Infant Death (SIDS)

- Children born to mothers who both drank and smoked beyond the first trimester of pregnancy have a twelvefold increased risk for sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) compared to those unexposed or only exposed in the first trimester of pregnancy.
- [New information from the NIH Safe Passage Study](#) calls for stronger public health messaging regarding the dangers of drinking and smoking during pregnancy.

IDENTITY NO LONGER SIMPLY:

MALE; FEMALE; BOY; GIRL, HUSBAND, WIFE, ETC

There are many abbreviations to express identity , a testament to the ever-growing expansion of the complete canvas of how human beings can identify themselves and express their attraction to each other..

LGBTQIAPK-What does this mean?

Lesbian: women who have emotional and/or sexual attraction to other women

Gay: men who have emotional and/or sexual attraction to other men

Bisexual: a person who is emotionally and/or sexually attracted to both men and women

Transgender: a person whose personal and gender identity does not correspond to the gender they were assigned at birth.

LGBTQIAPK-Cont

- **Queer or questioning:** The term *queer* has been traditionally used as a slur against same-sex people, but some have reclaimed the term as an issue of pride; others prefer the Q to mean “questioning,” people who are unsure of their sexual orientation and/or their gender identity, and who are in the process of exploring and discerning their respective sexuality/identity.
- **Intersex:** a person born with reproductive or sexual anatomy that does not fit the typical understanding of that particular gender (Their physical, hormonal, and even chromosomal characteristics are neither all-male, nor all-female.)
- **Asexual:** a person who does not feel sexual attraction toward people of any gender, though emotional attraction is still possible.

LGBTQIAPK-Cont

Pansexual: a person who feels attraction without regard to gender identity. (The term *bisexual* is used for people who experience attraction to the established binary genders of male and female.)

Kink: from the word *kinky*, used for those who find comfort in expressing their sexuality in alternative and countercultural ways

STRUCTURING GENDER RESPONSIVE TREATMENT – ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS [BOTH]

COMPREHENSIVE SCREENING , ASSESSMENT AND
APPROPRIATE REFERRAL-PLACEMENT

RELATIONSHIP BUILDING ON REFERRAL-TRANSPARENCY
AND TRUST

TRAUMA INFORMED CARE

PERSON CENTERED CARE

SMOKING CESSATION

WITHDRAWAL MANAGEMENT-MOTHER AND INFANT

POST ACUTE WITHDRAWAL EDUCATION AND MANAGEMENT

ASSESSMENT, DIAGNOSIS AND MANAGEMENT OF
COOCCURING DISORDERS

REFERRALS AND FOLLOWUP –ADJUNCT SERVICES

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

STRUCTURING GENDER RESPONSIVE TREATMENT – ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS [BOTH] CONTINUED

IDENTITY-WHO AM I AS A MALE, FEMALE , Non BINARY etc USE OF PRONOUNS

LGBTQ+ and TRANSGENDER AND TRANSITIONING SUPPORT / VALIDATION

SPIRITUALITY FROM CLIENT'S PERSPECTIVE

FINANCES-EMPLOYABILITY, DEBT MANAGEMENT, JOB TRAINING, VOLUNTEERISM

FAMILY AND SIGNIFICANT OTHER SCREENING AND SUPPORT

SAFETY-EMOTIONAL AND PHYSIOLOGICAL

GENDER SPECIFIC HEALTH SCREENING AND MANAGEMENT

PREGNANCY –PRE AND POST NATAL SUPPORT

MANAGEMENT AND SUPPORT FOR MOTHERS AND BABIES / INFANTS IN TREATMENT

PATERNITY TESTING AND SAFE ENGAGEMENT OF FATHERS

LEGAL SUPPORT-DUI/DTC/ PAROLE/ PROBATION

MEDICATION MANAGEMENT...

GENDER IDENTITY VS SEXUAL ORIENTATION

LGBTQ vs General Population



Members of the LGBTQ community are more than **twice as likely (39% vs 17%)** to abuse drugs and alcohol than those who identify as heterosexual. When looking at LGBTQ adolescents, that number climbs to **90% more likely** to abuse drugs.¹



¹ <https://www.drugabuse.gov/related-topics/substance-use-suds-in-lgbt-populations>



- WHY ARE LGBTQ+ PERSONS 2 X AS LIKELY TO USE DRUGS THAN THE GENERAL POPULATION?
- FEAR, SHAME
- REJECTION
- RELIGIOUS BELIEFS
- LACK OF FAMILY SUPPORT...

TREATMENT MUST ADDRESS THE SHAME AND STIGMA



FACING DISCRIMINATION

Those who identify within the LGBTQ community face different challenges than those who do not.

- Workplace discrimination
- Violence
- Internalized homophobia
- Judgment/disapproval from family members
- Judgment within the LGBTQ community



GENDER SPECIFIC TREATMENT

MALES

- GENDER IDENTITY AND SEXUAL ORIENTATION - LGBTQ+
- SAFETY-EMOTIONAL/PHYSICAL
- RELATIONSHIPS
- SEXUAL AND OTHER TRAUMA-PTSD
- EMPLOYMENT / PREPARATION
- MENTAL HEALTH- COPING, MOOD, UNDIAGNOSED COMORBIDITIES, SUICIDALITY
- PHYSICAL HEALTH- RESPIRATORY; GI,-LIVER AND PANCREAS; SCREENINGS –PROSTATE, URINARY ISSUES, STI, GI-COLONOSCOPY-DENTAL-INFECTIONS AND NUTRITION-CHRONIC DISEASE MANAGEMENT-DIABETES, HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE ...

FEMALES

- TRAUMA-INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE AND CHILDHOOD SEXUAL ABUSE;USE OF ACES
- LGBTQ+-RELATIONSHIPS
- SAFETY-EMOTIONAL/PHYSICAL
- MENTAL HEALTH- UNDIAGNOSED COMORBIDITIES, STABILIZATION OF KNOWN COMORBIDITIES; EATING DISORDERS, SLEEP DISORDERS NUTRITION-CHRONIC DISEASE MANAGEMENT-DIABETES, HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE
- PHYSICAL HEALTH- SYSTEMS; RESPIRATORY; GI,-LIVER AND PANCREAS; DENTAL
- GYNACOLOGICAL-STI, PAP SMEARS, MAMOGRAMS; PREGNANCY AND MENSUATION STABILIZATION, PRE/MENOPAUSAL ISSUES

GENDER RELATED ISSUES IMMINENT

- LGBTQ+ -INTENTIONAL ABOUT INCLUSION +TRAINING OF STAFF
- INCLUSION OF WOMEN OR WOMEN SPECIFIC RESEARCH
- TRANSGENDER- ASSESSMENT AND PLACEMENT IN RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT
- ADDRESS STIGMA AND BIAS FROM BEING OTHERED
- MANAGEMENT OF THE TRANSITIONING PROCESS
- PATERNAL DRUG USE EFFECTS ON CHILDREN

THANK YOU

THANK YOU

THANK YOU

REFERENCES

Carla A. Green, Ph.D., M.P.H. Gender and Use of Substance Abuse Treatment Services;

<https://pubs.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/arh291/55-62.htm>

Sex and Gender Differences in Substance Use;

Substance Use in Women Research Report; <https://nida.nih.gov/>

Effects of preconceptional paternal drug exposure on birth outcomes: cohort study of 340 000 pregnancies using Norwegian population-based databases; Engeland, A., Bjørge, T., Daltveit, A. K., Skurtveit, S., Vangen, S., Vollset, S. E., & Furu, K. (2013). Effects of preconceptional paternal drug exposure on birth outcomes: cohort study of 340 000 pregnancies using Norwegian population-based databases. *British Journal of Clinical Pharmacology*, 75(4), 1134-1141.

<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2125.2012.04426.x>

[Francesco Traccis](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7291924/), [Roberto Frau](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7291924/), and [Miriam Melis](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7291924/)*; Gender Differences in the Outcome of Offspring Prenatally Exposed to Drugs of Abuse;

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7291924/>

Cynthia R Daniels (1997) Between Fathers and Foetuses: The social constructions of male reproduction and the politics of foetal harm:

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/3175246>

NIDA. 2022, May 4. Substance Use While Pregnant and Breastfeeding. Retrieved from <https://nida.nih.gov/publications/research-reports/substance-use-in-women/substance-use-while-pregnant-breastfeeding> on 2022, October 30