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## Clinical Research Doesn't Do Enough to Study Sex and Gender Differences, Analysis Finds



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Potential gender differences in clinical management are under-researched. A systematic analysis of the incorporation of sex and gender into research design, published in the open access journal BMC Medicine, has found that, although there has been a progressive improvement since the 90s, there exists a striking under-representation of research about gender differences in patient management.

Sabine Oertelt-Prigione, from the Institute of Gender in Medicine, Berlin, worked with a team of researchers to study almost 9000 research articles, looking for evidence of sex and gender-specific design and analysis. She said, "Research on clinical management, that is- diagnostic approaches, referral practices, invasive and non-invasive therapy choices- is essential in understanding, shaping and improving our everyday clinical practice. Lack of knowledge about gender differences and inadequacies in health care provision have led to significant and potentially fatal imbalances in outcomes." Oertelt-Prigione and her colleagues found that there has been an increase in sex and gender-specific analysis over time, with publications markedly rising since the 1990s.

Speaking about the results, Oertelt-Prigione said, "Despite the progressive increase in the literature, the gap in the area of clinical management needs to be addressed and possibly closed in the future."

The above story is reprinted (with editorial adaptations by ScienceDaily staff) from materials provided by BioMed Central, via EurekAlert!, a service of AAAS.

Journal Reference: Sabine Oertelt-Prigione, Roza Parol, Stephan Krohn, Robert Preißner and Vera Regitz-Zagrosek. Analysis of sex and gender-specific research reveals a common increase in publications and marked differences between disciplines. BMC Medicine, 2010; (in press)

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