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Women's health and cultural diversity: What does it mean?

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By 2013, Western countries received roughly 130 million immigrants, with women consisting of more than half the immigrant population. This demographic change highlights the importance of cultural sensitivity and its role in clinical practice.

The impact of cultural diversity in the delivery of quality health care is undeniable. Sociocultural differences, e.g., ethnicity, race, and language proficiency, are just a few factors to consider. Furthermore, these differences directly influence a woman's perspective, behavior, belief, and value in current multicultural societies. A true understanding of a woman's cultural differences is required to establish effective clinician-patient communication and to improve quality of care.

Through applied and innovative understanding, it is possible to continue the integration of diversity in women's health management and establish standards of care for this vulnerable population. Standards to consider may include availability of personalized care, cultural respect, informed consent in medical decision-making and medical procedures, understanding of sexual orientation, use of interpretive services, and regard for all birth rituals and faith-based concerns.

The purpose of this presentation is to:

- Define cultural diversity in women's health
- Identify obstacles in cross-cultural care
- Introduce sensitive models to care for women from other cultures