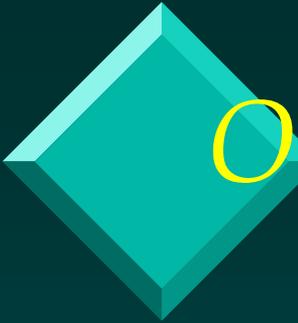


Women and Alcohol

NIAAA Social Work Education

Module 10B

(revised 03/04)



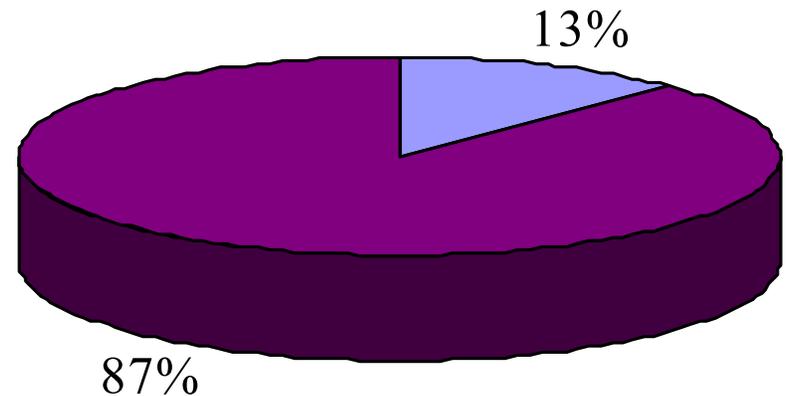
Outline

- A. Background Issues*
- B. Gender comparisons*
- C. Treatment discrepancies*
- D. Screening and assessment*
- E. Treatment options*

Background Issues

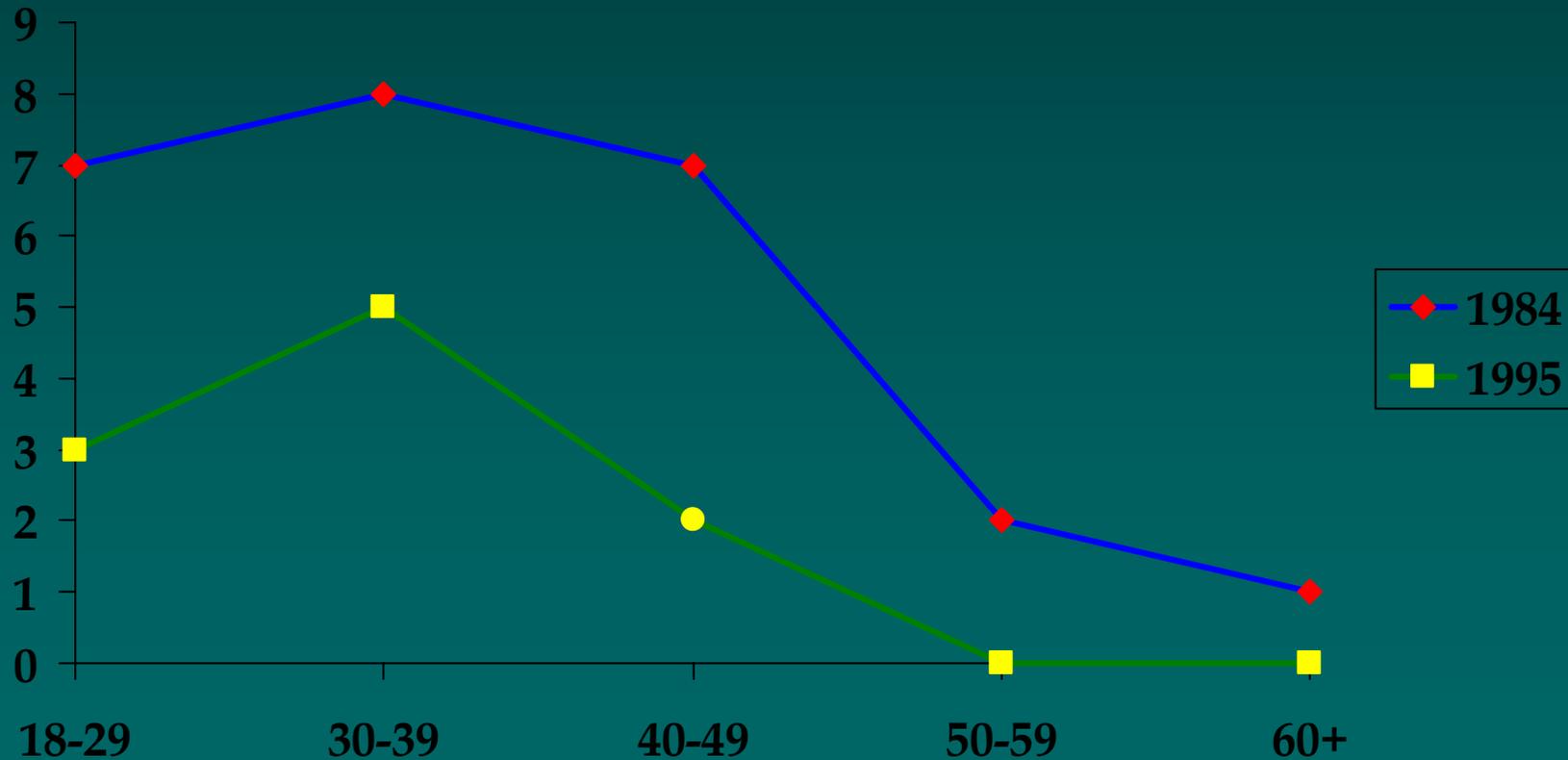
- *Alcohol use problems are significant among women, despite the greater frequency among men*
- *Frequent, heavy drinking in women:*
 - *7 or more drinks in one week, or...*
 - *5 or more drinks on one occasion*

12.6% of Women Report Frequent Heavy Drinking



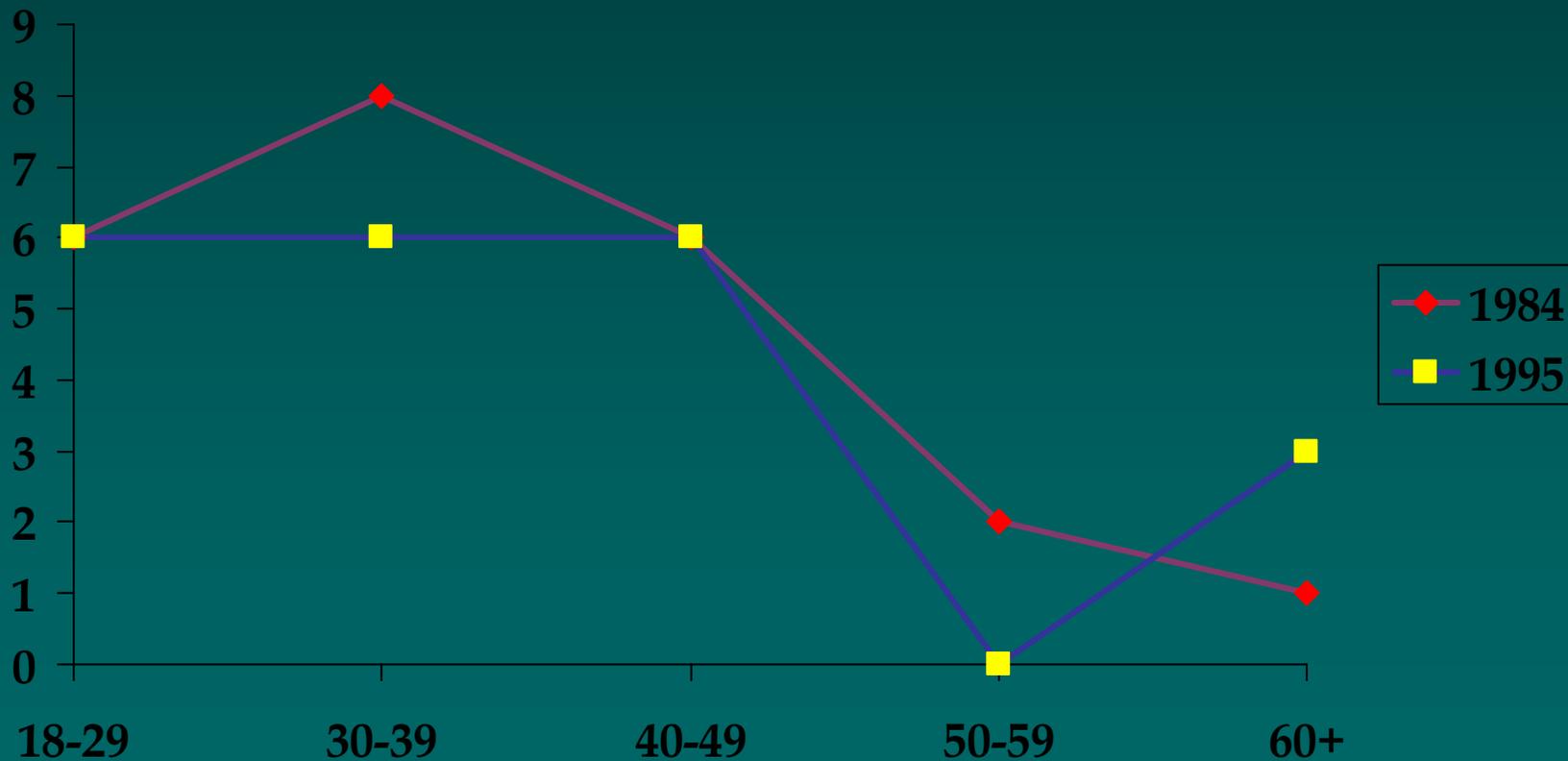
Background (cont.)

Frequent Heavy Drinking by Age: White Women 1984-1995



Background (cont.)

Frequent Heavy Drinking by Age: Black Women 1984-1995



Background (continued)

Between 2.7 and 4.5 million women over age 12 in U.S. are alcohol abusers or alcoholics (Blumenthal, 1998; Straussner & Attia, 2002)

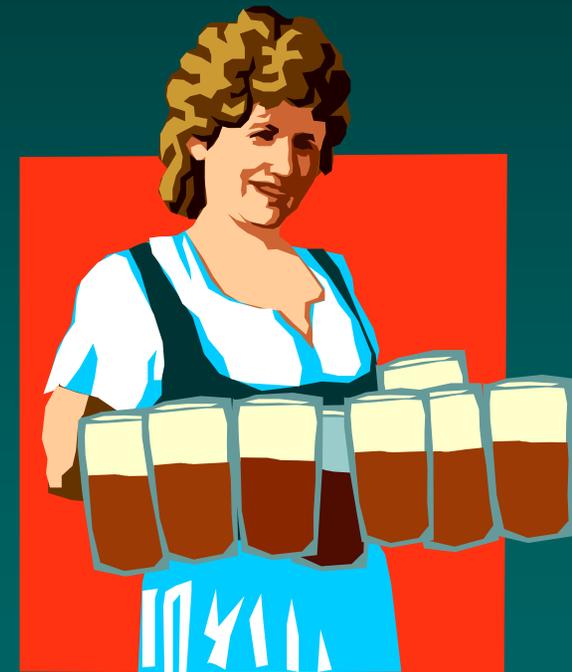
(Blumenthal, 1998; Straussner & Attia, 2002)



Background (continued)

Heavy alcohol consumption affects:

- *Brain, CNS, mental functions*
- *Heart health*
- *Liver (cirrhosis), GI system (ulcers, pancreatitis)*
- *Risk of some cancers (e.g., throat, bladder, breast?)*
- *Weight, nutrition, absorption*
- *Reproductive health*
- *Injury (falls, accidents)*



Physiology & Health (cont.)

*Alcohol and HIV/AIDS among women:
Women are more likely to engage in
risky sexual behavior when intoxicated
(Testa & Collins, 1997)*

*Alcohol affects women's perceptions of
risk from partners (Murphy, Monahan, &
Miller, 1998; Testa, Livingston, &
Collins, 2000)*

*Sexual coercion & unwanted sexual
activity are statistically related to
women's alcohol abuse*



Gender Comparisons

“Telescoping Effect”



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Women progress to dependence more quickly and experience more physical sequelae with fewer years of drinking.

Gender Comparisons (continued)

For women...

Less alcohol required for intoxication

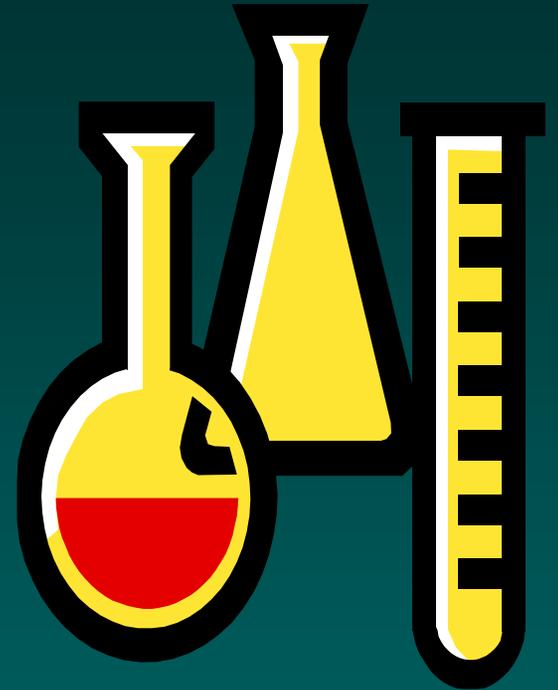
Differential body mass

Different absorption rates

Different stomach enzymes

Different body fat to water ratio

Differences in amounts of dehydrogenase
(metabolism)



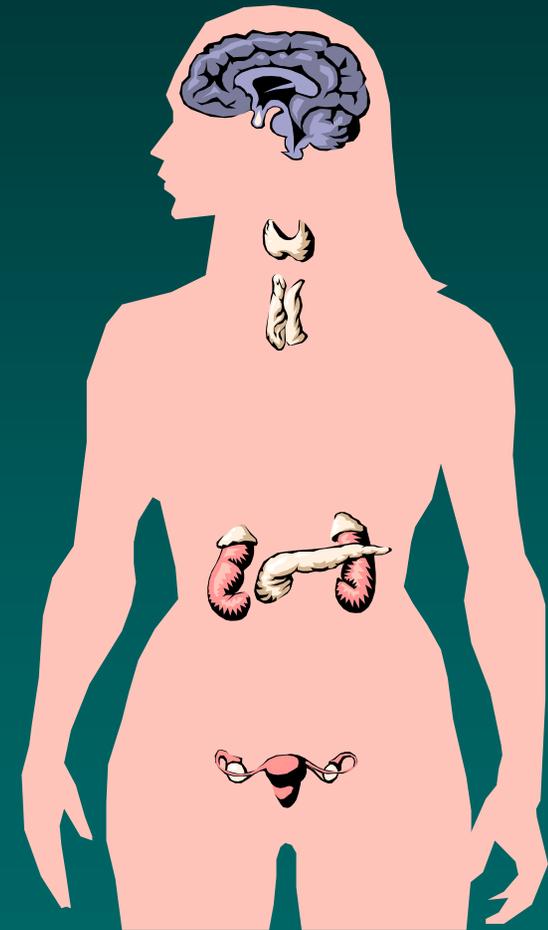
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Gender Comparisons (continued)

For women...

- Different degree of impact on organ systems (e.g., liver, cognitive function)
- Risks to fetal development
- Compromised parenting capabilities

(C O)

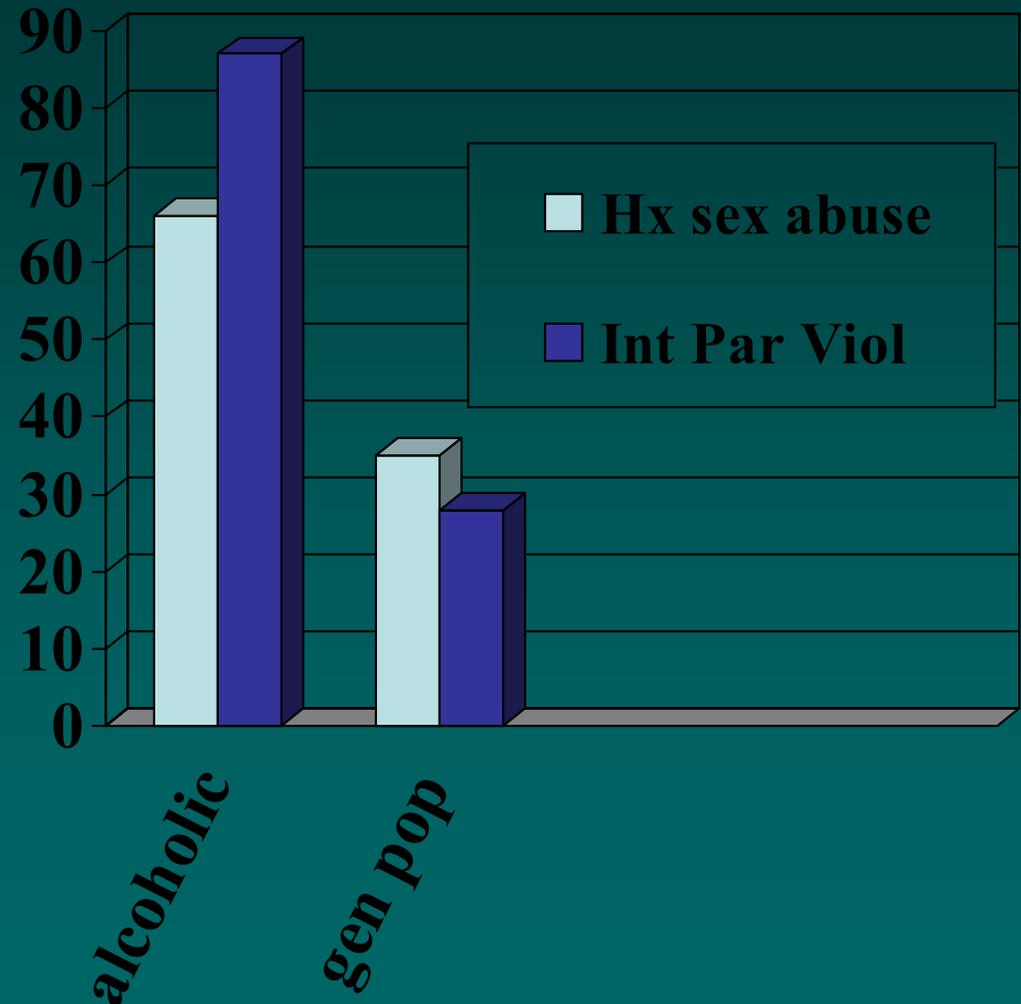


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Gender Comparisons (continued)

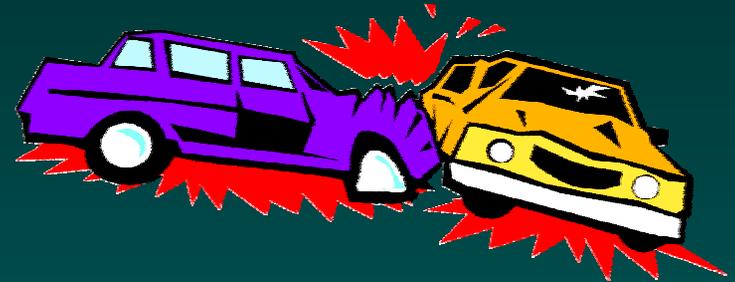
- Differences in socio-environmental risk factors
- Family of origin alcoholism, history of loss, childhood physical and/or sexual abuse

Percent Reporting



Gender Comparisons (continued)

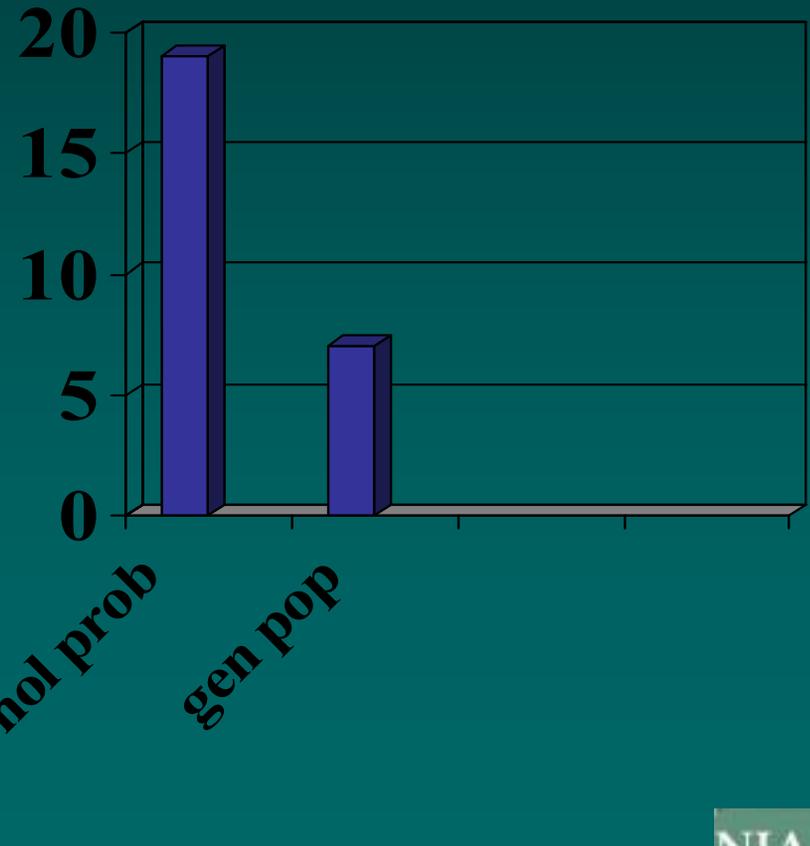
- Alcohol-related fatal crashes increased since 1982 for girls aged 15-20, while dropping for boys (Center for Behavioral Health, 2002)
- Women's alcohol problems are significant because of the numbers of women involved, and their social roles and contexts which are affected (Smyth & Miller, 1997)



Treatment Discrepancies

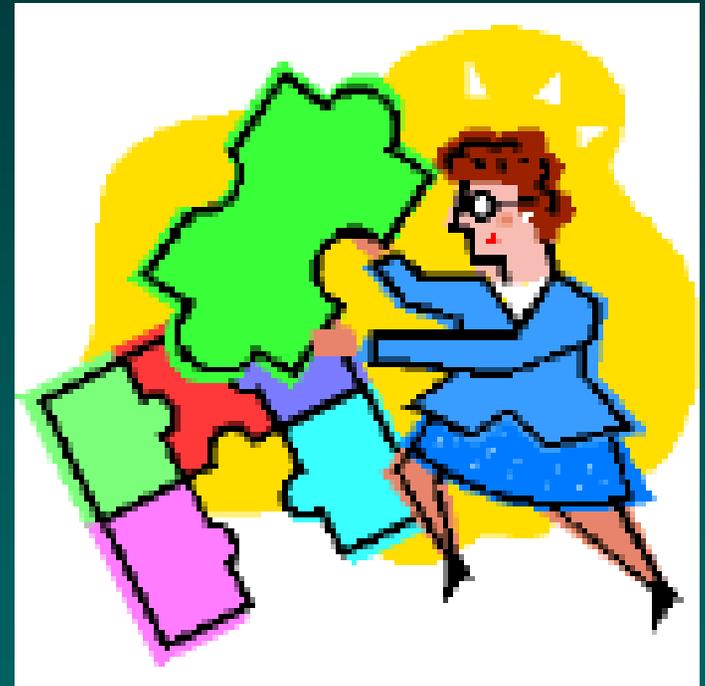
- Low social support for treatment
- Role-related barriers (e.g., childcare)
- Alcoholic partners
- Co-morbidity (anxiety, depression, suicide attempts, victimization)
- Other barriers: stigma, self-esteem, guilt, social withdrawal

% psych disorders among women



Treatment Discrepancies (cont.)

- Poor “fit” between women’s needs and program
- Vulnerable to legal and child welfare systems



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Screening and Assessment

Screening

- TWEAK score of 3 or more indicates heavy or problem drinking
- Should lead to further assessment of alcohol use and women's issues
- Some women prefer a same-gendered interviewer

Assessment Issues

- *Intimate partner violence (current)*
- *Child maltreatment*
- *Current or past sexual and/or physical abuse*
- *Past and current psychiatric disorders and mental health needs*



Assessment (continued)

- Family of origin alcoholism
- Parenting concerns in current family system
- Partner/spouse drinking and/or drug abuse
- Need for legal services (child custody, divorce, family violence, criminal justice system issues, etc.)
- *Barriers to successful treatment outcomes:*
 - *lack of social support*
 - *social resistance to seeking*
 - *help child care concerns*
 - *no resources/low income)*



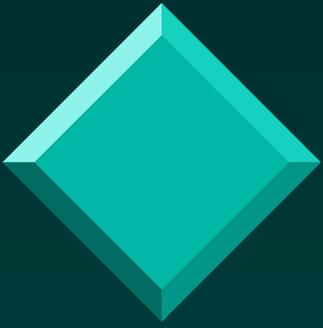
Treatment Options

- Individual counseling
- Group counseling
- Family counseling
 - Whole family
 - Couples counseling
 - Children counseling
 - Substance abuse prevention



Treatment Options (continued)

- Assertiveness training
- Coping skills development
- Trauma treatment
- Coping with partner's drinking
- Support groups
 - Women for Sobriety
 - Women-only AA meetings
- Parenting groups
- Women-only treatment contexts



Appendices: Additional Slides

Summary

- Many women experience guilt, shame, and feelings of inadequacy as women and mothers
- Treat women with empathy, compassion, sensitivity, and respect
- Focus on women's self-perceptions and life experiences
- Take a strengths approach to assessment and treatment
- Consider the interplay of biological, social, psychological, and environmental factors



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Historical Background

Prior to the Civil War, women drug addicts outnumbered men who abused substances – 60-75% of opium-morphine addicts were women

(Blumenthal, 1998 cites Cartwright, 1982)



Historical Background (cont.)

“The history of women’s use and abuse of alcohol in the United States is intertwined with the political movements of temperance, prohibition, and suffrage and with the ever-changing role of women in political and family life.”

(Straussner & Attia, 2002, p. 4)



Historical Background (cont.)



*Yours for Health
Lydia E. Pinkham*

Historical Background (cont.)

LYDIA E. PINKHAM'S VEGETABLE COMPOUND

IS A POSITIVE CURE

For all those painful Complaints and Weaknesses
so common to our best female population.

It will cure entirely the worst form of Female Complaints, all Ovarian troubles, Inflammation and Ulceration, Falling and Displacements, and the consequent Spinal Weakness, and is particularly adapted to the Change of Life.

It will dissolve and expel tumors from the uterus in an early stage of development. The tendency to cancerous humors there is checked very speedily by its use.

It removes faintness, flatulency, destroys all craving for stimulants, and relieves weakness of the stomach. It cures Bloating, Headaches, Nervous Prostration, General Debility, Sleeplessness, Depression and Indigestion.

That feeling of bearing down, causing pain, weight and backache, is always permanently cured by its use.

It will at all times and under all circumstances act in harmony with the laws that govern the female system.

For the cure of Kidney Complaints of either sex this Compound is unsurpassed.

LYDIA E. PINKHAM'S VEGETABLE COMPOUND is prepared at 233 and 235 Western Avenue, Lynn, Mass. Price \$1. Six bottles for \$5. Sent by mail in the form of pills, also in the form of lozenges, on receipt of price, \$1 per box for either. Mrs. Pinkham freely answers all letters of inquiry. Send for pamphlet. Address as above.

No family should be without *LYDIA E. PINKHAM'S LIVER PILLS*. They cure constipation, biliousness, and torpidity of the liver. 25c. per box. — FOR SALE BY

S. A. SEXTON,

Hopewell, N.J.

Historical Background (cont.)



Historical Background (cont.)

Women's Minor Ills come from one cause

Chronic constipation is the plague of their lives, but thousands keep healthy with Dr. Caldwell's Syrup Pepsin

WOMEN are so accustomed to finding themselves constipated that they are apt to make matters worse by indifference. Unfortunately many seem to think that it is wiser to give the appearance of health with constipation, or slide a bowditch with an opiate, than to remove the real cause by taking a good laxative.

The old habit, of course, is not to be discouraged, but any woman who takes such a mild remedy as Dr. Caldwell's Syrup Pepsin will recognize that she does not gradually be disordered and that there will be no mark of weakening of the system.

As is generally known, Syrup Pepsin is a gentle purgative composed of Egyptian dates with pepsin and stomach-acting ingredients. A powerful mild check on the impeded current and makes you feel well by morning.

You should take a dose when you feel the slightest symptoms of constipation, such as biliousness, flatulency, headache, loss of appetite, redness of face, bad breath, dull eyes, acid taste, and a gray tongue and coat. Many do not wait for these symptoms, but take Syrup Pepsin regularly once a week. For Sale at J. W. Allen, 127 Cedar Ave., Camden, N. J., and Mrs. L. H. Edwards, Philadelphia, Pa., and all druggists and health stores.



Health can be restored to Dr. Caldwell's Syrup Pepsin. The other members of the family also use it, for it does not irritate and soothes, it is perfectly safe, pure, and reliable.

More than ten million bottles of Dr. Caldwell's Syrup Pepsin are sold annually, the largest sale in the world. It has been the habit of using among railroad men, sea voyagers, and "lucky workmen," which makes it a real and long-acting purgative. The thousands of people who have tried it will find a better, purer, and without doubt of equal value. A bottle can be had for one dollar and the strength and the life of a man or woman.

Free Sample Bottle Coupon

Fill out coupon and mail right away to Dr. Caldwell's Syrup Pepsin Co., 127 Cedar Ave., Camden, N. J., and you will receive a free sample bottle of Dr. Caldwell's Syrup Pepsin and a free sample bottle of Dr. Caldwell's Syrup Pepsin and a free sample bottle of Dr. Caldwell's Syrup Pepsin.

DR. CALDWELL'S
SYRUP PEP SIN
The Family Laxative