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GENDER

photo by Nina Yerkaeva,
Kazakhstan



and

HEALTH

new era in healthcare

DEVIDING MEDICINE INTO 'MALE' AND 'FEMALE'

This suggestion was voiced at the European Union conference on women's health, held in Vienna in April

It is known that there is a range of diseases that are more likely to appear depending on gender. According to the European statistics, men are more likely to have cancer, while women suffer from depressions more often. Women are more likely to have skin TB, rheumatic arthritis and sclerosis. Heart attacks are less severe among women, sometimes they appear without pain, and may feel like simple cold. But the main problem is that medicines act in different ways, when taken by men and women.

Austrian healthcare minister delivered a report at the conference stating the necessity to hold large-scale medical gender research. The minister illustrated her speech with many facts that demonstrated the neces-

sity to introduce different approaches when treating patients of different genders.

This necessity has been discussed by specialists for long time already. At the scientific conference of American Heart Association, held in 2005, American doctors proved that aspirine helps to protect men from heart attack, but not insulin; while for women, it is effective for both diseases. For men, aspirine also decreases the possibility of cancer; the same medicine is unable to protect women from cancer. The medicines slowing down development of AIDS act more slowly in women's body, rather than in men's.

In Vienna, the problem of gender medicine and pharmacy discussion included both scientific and social aspects. It is now possible that new era in healthcare and pharmacy starts in Europe. Austrian healthcare minister suggested to review the results of medicines' studies.

The minister noted that her proposal on the development of gender medicine was approved by all the countries of the European Union. Although, according to her, two years ago, the importance of this idea was not understood properly. But now the opinion of European scientists has changed; perhaps, it was caused by number of findings in the field of gender medicine, that appeared recently.

Source: NewsInfo website
<http://www.newsinfo.ru/news/2006/04/news1311873.php>



*This father will never forget his son's birthday
Photo by Jan Andersen, Denmark*

Alma Bekturganova-Andersen,
Denmark/Kazakhstan

fathers' delivery

WHIM, FASHION OR NECESSITY?

Fathers aspire towards attending their children's birth. It has already become common for the countries of Northern and Central Europe. But what do 'our' people think about it?

Lilia N., 36, originally from Kyrgyzstan:
BRINGS YOU CLOSER TO EACH OTHER

I gave birth to both kids together with my husband Sven. Initially, I was strictly against this idea, during the delivery I did not care about anything else, except for my baby, and afterwards I was very glad that he was with me. When it was time for us to go to the hospital to have the second baby, I had no doubts: I wanted my husband to be with me there.

At first, when he said he'd go with me, I was shocked: I will be suffering, while my husband would only observe it!

But now, I don't know who suffered more. I remember his face suffering, when I was feeling pain. He was petting me on the hand. He spoke with me, trying to make me relax. And I remember his face with tears on it, when he saw our daughter. He was unable to say anything from the beginning. He was very proud of me, telling everybody how brave I was. I am sure that moments like this strengthen a family, bringing us closer to each other. And now I agree with my husband completely: a family needs to be together, in joy and inuffer.

Besides psychological aspects, there is a very practical aspect as well. In a neighboring room, there was a woman, who had post-delivery complications. She was unable to get up. And her husband was taking care of both, the baby and the baby's mother.

Vitaly D., 39:
LESSON OF RESPONSIBILITY

My two daughters were born in Kazakhstan, back then I did not even consider a possibility to attend delivery. My son, who is now 3 months old, was born here, in France. We did not even discuss the possibility for me to stay at the hospital with my wife; I took her to the hospital and prepared to go back home. And a nurse asked me: Does monsieur want to go with his wife? And I said "yes." I think that men's participation is a lesson of responsibility; responsibility for your family, for your wife, and your children. I felt so sorry for my wife, I wanted her to share some of her pain with me. When I was asked about how long did the delivery take, I did not know what to answer, as it felt forever for me. It is impossible to forget that excitement. When everything was over, I felt that I was the one who had that baby, so tired I was. Neither me, nor my wife ever felt regrets because of our decision.

I think it is very important, when husband sees how new life appears. It is difficult for me to suggest that all men should attend delivery. All have different psychology, and it may be very difficult for some men. But I was very glad to be together with my wife. It brought us even closer than previously.

**Anna N., 41, originally from Uzbekistan:
 I DID NOT WANT HIM TO SEE, HE WAS
 TOO EMOTIONAL**

My older son is 18, little one is 4. I had him here, in Denmark. Of course, my husband was with me. It is very important, when a father attends delivery. It makes him have different attitude towards a baby and his mother. Back in the Soviet Union, we were used to the situation, where mothers are those who take care of their babies, while fathers notice their kids only when they turn at least 6. Here everything starts from the moment of birth. It can be even said that father is the one who sees the baby first. But of course, everything is very individual. I would not like it if my first husband would attend delivery. He was too emotional, I think he would be unable to handle it. But he loved his son very much, sharing all the responsibilities on baby care with me. But this kind of father is an exception, unfortunately. It is very rare that in my home country fathers take care of babies. My husband died in Tashkent.

In contrast, almost all Danish fathers know how to take care of babies, and the society here supports this. My husband took a two weeks vacation. Many Danish couples share responsibilities in the following way: mother stays at home for the first 6 months, while father takes vacations for the next six months.

My biggest shock in Denmark was not that my husband attended the delivery, but that he was wearing an ordinary clothes there. Here, nobody makes you to change your clothes in the delivery room, and none of the babies catch dangerous infections, as doctors of the post-Soviet countries fear. Perhaps, this is because of realistic and well-balanced attitude towards delivery. Here, delivery is viewed as a natural process, not a kind of illness. At a regular delivery, there is only midwife who does not have higher education degrees. Local midwives (jordmor in Danish, which means 'Earth mother') study in special schools for five

years. Only women are allowed to be a midwife, thus there is certain gender discrimination in Denmark in this field.

Delivery section in Denmark looks like in my homeland. There are pre-delivery, delivery and post-delivery rooms there. But the rules in a hospital are not like we are used to. Any person can enter woman's room, family members can stay with mother and baby as long as they wish. And it is very common that mother and baby leave the hospital after four or five hours since the delivery.

During the delivery, a woman can get painkiller, but Danish are likely to refuse from it. Instead, doctors sometimes offer them alcohol, wine, vodka or whisky. These beverages are kept in the refrigerator in the pre-delivery room.



*You can get tired carrying the space inside of you. Take a rest, think, relax.
 Photo by Umida Akhmedova, Uzbekistan*

Svetlana BEISOVA,
Kazakhstan

continuing topic

PRACTICING, NOT ADVISING

but the result is very exciting

We've been preparing seriously for the coming childbirth. Seriously does not mean financially, but physiologically. Have knowing about joint birth, (when husband presents during the period of the child's birth), my daughter started prepare the ground for the conversation with her husband. It is delicate theme in our region with the oriental mentality and our traditions. And my daughter's husband is Uzbek by nationality.

But to my great pleasure they got agreement. But on the way to the joint birth there were unexpected obstacles:

- the mother in law was categorically against, feeling sorry for her son. When I tried to convince her, she was afraid that joint birth could influence her son's masculine potential in future. And she was afraid of Uzbek relatives' opinion.

There was another obstacle in the face of the doctor in the hospital when we were waiting for the baby's birth. The doctor was against of the joint birth because he was sure that it would confuse the woman and she will not be concentrated at the process. When I asked if they had practice joint birth in their hospital he answered that they had practice, but he didn't approve it and emphasized that the more so, that it was for the first time for my daughter. After that categorical answer, I felt discouraged and all my feminist essence stormed inside me. I called my daughter's cell phone and asked if she still wanted to share all pain and happiness of child's birth with her husband. Of course, she wanted and waited for my help.

There is one nice moment in our society - when all impossible questions can be possible with the help of friends, relatives and private contacts. I called my good familiar doctor and asked him to help.

As a result, future father was dressed in white doctor's dress, boots, and mask and was led to the birth hall. His presence in spite of the doctor's disapproval influenced positively the complex process. Afterwards, when they remembered the process of the child's birth my daughter told that she didn't hear anything and didn't understand doctor's words because of the pain. And the only voice she could hear was her beloved husband voice. She understood only his words and followed only his directions while he held her hand. As for him, he simply repeated the doc-

tor's directions, smoothed her hair trying to make easier her sufferings. And she heard only his native and close voice and followed his words.

Later on the doctor said: "what would we do without your husband?!"

I do hope that after that case doctors of that hospital will stop disapproving and will start to approve the joint birth.

Now young father tells everybody that he watched his baby's birth, how his daughter's small head appeared and dissipated three times and how he was excited. With happy smile he tells all his friends how he took his small daughter on his hands at once after her birth, how he helped to cut the umbilical cord, how he weighted her and how he showed his baby to his mother feeling great happiness.

And I think he will never be able not to respect his wife and leave his daughter. He experienced the moment of the baby's birth together with his wife and he knows how it is difficult to give the birth to the child!

And this is the basis of the awareness of the paternity. A man has equal opportunity with woman to be present at the moment of their child's birth and during this moment he feels the birth of paternity as well as his wife feels the birth of maternity.



*Feminist mother-in-law has a proper son-in-law!
Young parents went through it together.*

photo by Svetlana Beisova, Kazakhstan

Medea ATANELOVA,
Israel

how it happens here

MATERNITY HOME LIKE A HOTEL

The hospital of Asafa Arofe will soon include a hotel complex for women giving birth

Before entering a hospital, pregnant women go through full course of medical examinations and psychological testing. Together with therapists, psychologists and social workers work with women in order to prepare her for the delivery.

The delivery department of Asafa Arofe in Ramle city is very quiet, clean and pretty and does not remind you medical institution at all. Active work of doctors is going on there, but the work is managed in such way that there is no noise and business.

Every delivery room is equipped with modern technologies, and does not look like a hospital room. A regular-looking bed turns into a gynecologist's chair or a surgeon's table. All the equipment is hidden in bedside-tables, and the room looks very home-like. Any family member of a woman can stay in this room together with her.

In Israel, it has become popular to use anesthesia during the delivery; it foresees injection of painkilling medicine in the particular part of the backbone. This procedure causes full anesthesia of lower part of the body and thus makes the delivery absolutely painless. After two hours since the delivery, woman is moved to the post-delivery department. Depending on the young mother's wish, baby stays either with her or in the separate baby department. Flowers, toys and fruits are allowed to be brought to the room. Woman can choose a dish she would like to eat from the menu offered three times during the day.

Here is what Tanya Gelfand from Rishon Lezion told me describing her recent stay in the hospital:

- Here in Israel, I gave birth to my second baby, my daughter Emily; my older son was born in Minsk. I was 34 years old when I had Emy. I had her in Wolfson hospital of Holon. My husband was with me all the time. We decided to use anesthesia. I was laid on the bad and connected to the necessary equipment. Doctors injected medicine into my backbones, and I felt full numbness in the lower part of my body. It did not feel very good, of course, but instead you feel no pain at all. Besides midwife and gynecologist, there was also pediatricist in the room. As Emy was born, all staff of the hospital came to our room to congratulate us. We were moved to the separate room. I needed rest and did not want to stay with

Emy those three days that we had to stay at the hospital. But mothers can enter babies' department as frequent as they want. According to the schedule, babies were supposed to be fed once every three hours, but I could go to feed my baby more frequently. After three days we went home. I would like to thank the staff of the hospital for their professionalism and care. I think I was lucky to have at least one baby in a clinic like this.

It is necessary to add that expenses on all researches, medical examinations, service, as well as a stay in the hospital, are covered by so-called 'hospital cash department,' a kind of a medical insurance. Almost entire Israeli healthcare is built in accordance to this system.



...this is why I am on good mood
photo by Polina Miloradovich, Georgia

Narine MHITARYAN,
Armenia

life

RIGHT TO HEAR obligation to say

...“If in my young years I would know all that you have told us know, my life would be different,” elderly woman villager said during our meeting. She showed so sincere and genuine interest, that I thought only children listen so attentively. However, these people were far from children's carelessness, they can be compared to children, only considering the lack of information. These people have so many complaints about their health, that they have learned not to notice them.

I talk about women with whom we communicated within five months when we traveled in the remote rural communities of Armenia, investigating a problem of availability of medical services and holding consultations on problems of health and the reproductive rights. My interlocutor is Anait AVETISYAN, therapist and main adviser of the Health of Village Women project, which is implemented by Aytur organization under the support of Mama Cash fund. The idea of the project appeared long time ago: to teach people how to take care of the health, to warn them of dangers. Being the practicing doctor, she witnessed full absence of basic knowledge, even in the city. While in the villages the situation is even more severe.

"It was painful for me to see that women do not pay enough attention to their health. They do not know much about infectious diseases, about their complications. They do not know about the reasons that may cause sterility," Anait said. "I was always amazed with indifference of the overwhelming majority of Armenian women to themselves. They find time for everything, for work, for housekeeping, everything, except for care of themselves. It is recognized that self-sacrificing is very common for Armenian women's mentality."

"Sometimes it is better to live for yourself, to be loved and needed by your family members, for being strong and healthy. I doubt that someone dreams of becoming sick and weak. This can be avoided if you pay more attention to your health, and not only to your family members."

"Maybe, the problem is about availability and quality of medical services?"

"Not only. However, frequently medical aid appears inaccessible to rural women. Remoteness from cities, problems with transport, financial problems, heavy physical work on the ground - these are the reasons why rural women overlook care of their health and do not follow basic rules even during the most responsible period of the life, when are pregnant."

"What did you speak about with women during your trips? What was the subjects of your seminars and consultations?"

"The topic was wide, we discussed everything from problems of preservation of women's health beginning from puberty and finishing with climax, to preventive maintenance of AIDS and fight against smoking. We spoke about the necessity of periodic physical examination, about duly diagnostics of pre-cancer diseases, distributed specially prepared instructions and information leaflets. I shall note, that according to interrogations, women do not address to doctors either because of the financial reasons, or psychological fear of the diagnosis. It is clear, that early diagnostics is hampered not only by a problem of women's consciousness. First of all, availability and quality of medical services is a problem which we already mentioned. The special attention was given to necessity of pregnancy planning and the recommendations on reproductive health. Speaking about pregnancy planning, we witnessed several interesting cases during the trips. In one of remote villages, which is impossible to be reached in winter, young families specially plan children so that it is not necessary to give birth in the winter when roads are blocked and it is impossible to reach hospital. In other village - all births happen in September. This 'baby-boom' can be explained simply - the husbands who left the village to earn money, as a rule, come home once a year, for Christmas.

Stress on work, adverse working conditions, fear to lose work, unemployment are very serious risk factors, influencing health of the person, especially the health of pregnant women. In Armenia, legal literacy of the population is very low, which is one of the reasons why women do not use even the stipulated privileges. For example, the pregnant women working in private companies, sometimes simply do not know, that they insured and that they are subject to pre-delivery and post-delivery vacations. However, there are cases, when pregnant women receive regular salary and try to stay at work place as long as possible, which is dangerous for the health of both, future child and his mother.

(Materials of Gender Situation in Armenia research, Association of Women with University Education, Yerevan, 2005)

"What were you asked most often?"

"The most part of time at the meetings with villagers was given to questions and answers. All the participants had an opportunity to address for practical advice and to share their fears and complaints. To those girls or women who hesitated to ask questions in public, we gave the opportunity to talk to doctor individually.

Among the reasons of women's deaths there are tumours, diabetes, hypertonic illness. According to the national statistics service, among 100 thousand population death rate of women is as follows: 91 caused by hypertension, 89 caused by cancer, endocrinic illnesses causes 89 deaths.

One of the reasons of growth of cancer cases among women, is the absence of financial opportunities to get duly and qualified medical aid. According to the sociological research held by National Institute of Public Health Services, only 40 % of respondents address to medical institutions, 72 % explained it as saying they were unable to afford medical care. Besides the reasons, there is also low culture and insufficient knowledge of women. Postponing treatment of various inflammatory diseases, women get in cancer group of risk.

Gender Situation in Armenia, Yerevan, 2005

"Today we had an opportunity to talk on the topics which are not always mentioned even between mother and the daughter," young villagers said. "These questions were news to me though I already have children and grandchildren," admitted elderly women. "Thanks, today I have made a decision not to postpone visiting the mammography center," others promised.

In Armenia steady dynamics of AIDS cases increase takes place. If in 2003 only 62 HIV infected were registered, in the first half of 2005 there were 41 infected and 28 patients with AIDS registered, among which there are 3 patients and 2 infected children aged less than 14 years. Women make about 25 % of all infected. Almost 77 % infected are patients of 15-35 age group. The majority of men were infected as a result of intravenous use of drugs, infection was transferred to the majority of women as a result of unsafe sex. Children were infected during mother's pregnancy.

During recent several years, 72 patients died, among them there were 11 women and 2 children.

At the same time, the registered cases do not reflect a true picture of prevalence. According to the Republican Center of HIV/AIDS Prevention, the number of virus carriers presumably exceeds 3000 persons.

Gender Situation in Armenia, Yerevan, 2005

BY THE WAY

WHAT IS

THE REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH?

In 1994, in Cairo, the International conference on the population and development issues took place. Here is how the conference defined the reproductive health in the recommendations it adopted. Reproductive health is not only the absence of diseases or infringements of reproductive system, it is a condition of full physical and social well-being. Thus, the person is 'reproductively healthy' in the case if she/he has all opportunities for a safe sexual life, ability to give birth to children and the right to decide when and how many of children to have. Reproductive health is closely connected with the reproductive rights. They include a complex of aspects, and the main of them are: the right of women and men to get information, access to safe and effective methods of family planning, effective health services allowing woman to have safe pregnancy and delivery.

It turns out, that protection of reproductive health combines different factors, methods, procedures and services, which are aimed to promote well-being of a family or a person. When we went to hold trainings for doctors, it appeared, that they had no idea about what did reproductive rights mean. As a result we had to publish the book where problems of reproductive health, reproductive rights and their interrelation are described.

It is absolutely obvious that many diseases happen because of domestic violence. We have patients with

hypertension, enuresis, and other diseases and doctors cannot understand the reasons, as examinations do not reveal any pathology. And the reason is that the person lives in a constant pressure.

A woman, wishing to become pregnant, but not becoming pregnant and suffering from constant complaints of relatives is the potential patient. Domestic violence does not mean, that someone necessarily beats someone.

I am very critical about our culture's attitude to the reproductive health. Numerous tabus, that disable you to speak out about different factors are very dangerous. We are catastrophically ignorant about everything that deals with reproduction. Workers of the Women's Center hold trainings for students on a regular basis. Quite often both an audience, get shocked after a class. Students get shocked because of the volume of information which is new to them, while trainers can not believe that the participants are so naive. Sometimes they do not know even very simple things. And it happens on the background when the number of HIV and AIDS cases increases significantly.

*Ia Verulashvili, doctor of medical sciences,
professor
head of Women's Center NGO,
Tbilisi*

Vefa SALEKH,
Azerbaijan

statistics and reality

WHO LIVES LONGER?

women live longer, men are more cheerful

however the tendency is that in twenty years in Azerbaijan there will be lack of women

In the first half of 1990es, closing of industrial and agricultural enterprises caused growth of unemployment and loss of reliable means of subsistence. Consequence of social and economic problems was a high level of diseases and death rate among the man's population. The women's reaction was decrease of activity of reproductive behavior; this is why the level of birth rate appeared lower than previously.

Today Azerbaijani NGOs pay a lot of attention to the reproductive health, protection of motherhood and children, development of services of family planning, influence of environmental conditions on health of women and men. At the same time, there are no state programs aimed at improvement of women's health of women. According to statistics, a parameter of death rate among pregnant women is the highest.

According to the World Health Organization, each 1400th woman dies during the delivery in Azerbaijan. According to UNICEF, Azerbaijan takes 48-th place in the world on children's and parent death rate. Last 10 years it is spoken about the increase in parent death rate in 4 times. One of the reasons is home delivery. Despite there is no statistics on the death rate of the women who give birth to their children at home, but the cases of home delivery make 65-70 percent in province. The population does not really think that it is very dangerous to women's health.

At the same time, according to the state statistical department, the number of girls among newborn children is promptly reduced recently, which is the consequence of selective abortions. When finding out the sex of the baby, women make abortion in the case she is pregnant on girl. If this tendency continues, in 20-25 years in Azerbaijan there will be serious lack of women.

During the Soviet period health of the women working on fields, was exposed to even greater danger. The use of chemical fertilizers caused great harm to the field workers. As a result of this, today there are hundreds of women who are unable to have children, children who were born with various deviations and other.

Other painful problem is connected with trade in women. There are many shocking cases of crimes against women who have become victims of trafficking. Becoming slaves abroad, these women offer sexual services to 10-15 men daily; they are subject to various kinds of violence. It is known that trafficking victims are forced to do abortions and surgeries on removal of a uterus. There are also many cases when women are artificial impregnated and forced to become surrogate mothers.

There is also a scary situation regarding the domestic violence. According to the indirect statistics, annually hundreds of women become victims of a various kind of violence in the family, many of them subsequently cannot restore health, and become disabled.

Nevertheless, according to our statistics, death rate among men is higher than that among women. Main reasons for this are accidents and traumas, diseases of blood circulation system, bodies of breath and digestion. Men, in comparison with women, have more thoughtless lifestyle, smoke more, use drugs and spirits.

BY THE WAY

RESTRICTIONS ON ULTRASONIC DEFINITION OF BABY'S SEX INTRODUCED IN CHINA

Chinese lawmakers have decided not to insert amendment to the Criminal Code, punishing for carrying out selective abortions. The corresponding decision was adopted by the national parliament. According to the amendment offered one year ago, three years imprisonment is foreseen for carrying out selective abortion.

Since the end of 1970-es, the country uses the policy of birth rate restriction ('one family - one child'). Chinese tradition considers, that continuers of family are boys, not girls. In these circumstances, the majority of parents wants its the only child to be a boy, instead of the girl. To achieve the desirable result, future mother, who knows that she'll have a girl, goes on abortion.

To prevent alike cases, in China restrictions on ultrasonic researches defining baby's sex are introduced. Selective abortions are already forbidden, however for infringement of this ban, not criminal, but administrative punishment, mainly penalties is foreseen. Gender situation is aggravated by the fact that on 100 girls in China 119 boys are born. This statistics seriously exceeds the world parameter of 103-107 boys. In some provinces up to 134 boys on 100 girls are born. Support of criminal punishment for selective abortions was based on aspiration to reduce gender misbalance. Nevertheless, legislators have disagreed on introduction of the criminal punishment for selective abortions and as a result the offer on entering the amendment has been rejected.

China Daily, June 26, 2006

<http://newsgeorgia.ru/world/20060626/41771399.html>

Nina YERKAEVA,
Kazakhstan

tried it myself

WHY MEN

ADDRESS TO DOCTORS LESS OFTEN?

they do not drink, but muffle a pain

In any polyclinic it is very easy to see that men make some 10 percent out of the total number of visitors

As we kept being treated I suddenly got an idea - why don't we just go to get drunk! Just as probable every man does when feeling sick. They are unlikely to go to a doctor until they feel alive. Women have more patience, and they remove stress more easily. But now let me tell you about the case which provoked my strange idea.

During the weekends my daughter Katya had a terrible toothache. It became clear that we had to go to the dentist. We went to the prestigious clinic, that gained authority during old Soviet times. We addressed to the first open room, but was refused: "You need to have an appointment. Try to get to the commercial doctor." We found a door with an inscription "Paid dental services by the doctor " titles of the doctor and the closed door, though the schedule on the door corresponded to the time we were at the clinic. We began knocking in all cabinets and asking, whether the doctor can receive us. Finally, one of the doctors examined Katya and said that it was a case for the surgeon, as it was necessary to make an incision in a gum. We paid 100 tenges for consultation in cash department, and waited in line to the surgeon, who sent us to X-Rays.

There was a long line in front of the X-Ray room, and we found out that the turn gathered because there was no reception for at least half an hour. And nobody knows whether it will be renewed. We decided to go to the private clinic of Dr. Osapov, which is more expensive, but has all necessary modern equipment and a proper service there.

We had to wait in line again. The doctor examined Katya and said that her tooth was the case for a special hospital, and thus we had to go to the different part of the city. In the new line Katya met her class-mate who suggested us to take photo first. The cost of the photo turned out to be 250 tenge. When the nurse saw the picture she said that the tooth had to be removed. She suggested us to have a snack, as after the surgery Katya was not supposed to eat for three hours. We managed to find the place where to eat and came back to the hospital. the surgery cost 2200 tenge, and nobody gave us a receipt. In the case there appear some complications after the surgery, we won't have any proofs that we visited this clinic. It was almost 6 p.m when we left the hospital. can you imagine how healthy and strong a patient must be in order to wait for 8 hours until he gets medical service?!

BY THE WAY

THE AMERICAN BIOLOGISTS HAVE CONFIRMED

the right of men to name themselves the stronger sex

It is considered that women live longer because of the reason, that they better resist to adverse physiological and psychological changes, which come with advanced age. Now researchers from Northern Michigan University have come to conclusion, that this ordinary opinion does not correspond to reality at all. This concept is stated in the article published by American Journal of Human Biology magazine. Authors of work do not deny data of demographic statistics, however they offer its new interpretation. They consider that shorter life of men is explained by their behavior and social circumstances, and not by genetically programmed tendency to the accelerated ageing a man's organism. Involving data of evolutionary biology, they approve that woman's organism gives failures more quickly than man's in the course of time. For example, women lose reproductive abilities more quickly, they possess greater propensity to a lot autoimmune diseases, suffer a bouquet of specific pathologies of the post climacteric period. However, they possess smaller aggression and spend less risky life, and this is why they die after men.



*All you need is a wish to drink. Toasts does not matter
photo by Polina Miloradovich, Georgia*

discrimination**GIVE BIRTH AND DIE**

Wanda NOWICKA,
Poland

BAN ON ABORTION IN POLAND MAY SOON BE EVEN STRICTER

In a few weeks, the League of Polish Families (LPR) will propose a draft law to further restrict anti-abortion law in Poland. According to Wojciech Wierzejski, vice-president of LPR and former Member of the European Parliament, abortion for medical reasons, when a woman's health is threatened, should be banned.

"Abortion on medical grounds cannot be used as a precedent to kill a human being. It is unacceptable that abortion could be granted if pregnancy threatens a woman's eyesight. It must be eliminated."

Wierzejski alluded to the famous case of Alicja Tysiac which is now pending in the European Court for Human Rights. Ms. Tysiac, a Polish woman, was forced to carry her third pregnancy to term in spite of the fact that her eyesight was in danger. Her eyesight eventually worsened as a result of delivery.

According to the present abortion bill, abortion is legal to save a woman's life and health, when the fetus is badly deformed or when the pregnancy is a result of a crime.

The LPR is planning to consult with the Catholic clergy on the draft law. The LPR president, Roman Giertych, is now Vice Prime Minister of the Polish government and Minister of Education. Last year, Maciej Giertych, Roman Giertych's father and member of the European Parliament, organized a radical anti-abortion exhibition in the European Parliament in Strasbourg.

Source: Rzeczpospolita daily, August 2, 2006

BY THE WAY

THE USA AGAINST THE UN DECLARATION ON THE RIGHT ON ABORTION

The senate of the USA for the first time for 30 years has approved the rigid law forbidding girls under 18 years old to do abortions without the consent of parents or trustees. Even pregnant after rape or incest are included in this category.

The new law is valid in 36 states, previously restriction was active only at a regional level. Girls bypassed private laws of states, getting rid of babies in the next state where there were no serious restrictions. Now pregnant schoolgirls can make abortion only in other country. Punishment for secret abortion foresees one year imprisonment. Senators banned abortion without approval of parents even if a girl has been raped or has become pregnant in case of incest.

George Bush, radical opponent of abortions, has highly evaluated the decision of the senate "to protect the American families," writes Washington Post. "It is the first great victory since 1973, when abortions were legalized," the president stated after signing the bill which in the White House.

According to the opposition, the law will harm mentality of underage mothers. "Often parents beat daughters, when they learn about their pregnancy," abortion defenders state. According to their data, it is especially important unsuccessful families. For example, in Idaho state, father who raped his own daughter, killed her when learned that she got rid of his child.

Opposition considers, that now anyone can interfere in the private life of a girl, starting with her grandmother and ending with the representatives of church.

Source:

<http://www.gazeta.ru/2006/07/26/oa209477.shtml>

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risk zone

IN THE US, GIRLS DRINK AND SMOKE MORE THAN BOYS

the same situation expected in Russia

In America, it never happened before: girls have caught up and have overtaken boys. But there are no reasons to feel happy about it. Not boys, as it was is considered before, but girls drink and smoke more.

The White House administration on the national policy of fight against drugs has published the report with the speaking name Girls and Drugs. This message tells about girls' attitude towards drugs, alcohol, and tobacco. The document is based on data of national poll for 2002-2004. "In last few years we have seen significant reduce of drug use among teenagers as a whole, but the tendency of use of harmful substances among our girls is very worrying," director of the national administration John P. Walters stated.

Girls told us that they understood the risks of using drugs, alcohol and cigarettes. But this understanding does not prevent them from drinking, smoking and using drugs."

In 2004, 1.5 million girls aged 12 -17 years old tried alcohol, 730 thousand have started smoking and 675 thousand to use marijuana. The White House experts state that girls are more vulnerable: tobacco, alcohol and drugs have a deeper influence on them, affecting both their physical and in psychological attitude.

For example, girls run into dependence on nicotine more quickly; and even moderate dozes of alcohol can have destructive influence on puberty.

The obtained data shows that American girls prefer marijuana to cocaine, heroin, ecstasy and other drugs. Though marihuana can raise for them risk of depression five times (1.6 million girls have informed on depression in 2004).

The reasons of using drugs and alcohol are different for girls and boys.

For example, one of the reasons for glue sniffing among girls is the aspiration to loose weight; girls use dietary pills and tablets twice more, than boys do. Also girls abuse the medicines which are released under the prescription.

And in general, they smoke and drink to restore their self-respect and confidence, to remove stress. It seems to them, that it is a way of solving a problem and getting on a better mood.

"Parents should understand, that there are unique risks and consequences for girls and, therefore it is necessary to keep them away from drugs, cigarettes and alcohol," Warren M. Seigel, the ex-president of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) noted.

And what happens in Russia? There is a fear, that the country is on the first place in the world considering teenage smoking. According to some data, in the age of 15-19, there smoke some 40 % of boys and 7 % of girls. Another data shows that in an average, 35.6 % of boys under 15 and 25 % of girls smoke. For 16-17 age group this index looks as 45 % to 18 %.

As for the alcohol, the situation is explained by Rossiiskaya Gazeta newspaper: " Now an average age of the beginning of consumption of alcoholic drinks in Russia makes 12-13 years old. In 11-24 age group, over 70 % of youth are consumers of alcoholic beverages. And girls consume alcoholic drinks practically on the same level with young men." It was impossible to find Russian statistics on marijuana, but for some reason it does not seem, that the situation is better in this direction.

Source: Zavtra

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We are leading in the wrong direction?

photo by Diana Petriashvili, Georgia

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