

Preface

Women's Issues in Gastrointestinal Endoscopy



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Guest Editors

Only recently has there been an awareness of the many medical issues that predominantly affect women. Past clinical trials and health-related research have not consistently evaluated gender-related differences within specific disease processes. Conditions such as heart disease, cancer, osteoporosis, and mental illness may manifest uniquely in women, who are biologically different from men. In the last decade, there has been a shift, with a rapid rise in awareness and funding for the promotion of women's health.

In the field of gastroenterology, women's issues hold a special importance. Gastrointestinal and liver conditions, such as irritable bowel syndrome, dyspepsia, and autoimmune liver disease are more prevalent in women. Additionally, pregnancy-related conditions may pose unique endoscopic challenges and therapeutic dilemmas. In 2002, the first forum on women's issues in gastroenterology was held to focus on many of these areas. The second symposium of women's issues in gastroenterology was successfully completed in 2004, reinforcing the need for continued education and support for these challenges unique to women's health.

This edition of *Gastrointestinal Endoscopy Clinics of North America* is divided into three sections, with specific focus on endoscopic topics that may be more relevant to women. The first section illustrates the challenges and solutions of performing various endoscopic procedures in a pregnant woman. The second section describes gender-specific abnormalities of the upper gastrointestinal tract.

The last section discusses the diverse pathologic and endoscopic findings in the lower gastrointestinal tract of women.

After a thorough review of this issue, you will develop a new appreciation for various endoscopic challenges that are gender specific. An awareness of these concepts is essential in providing improved health care for women.

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