

# Culturally Competent Healthcare

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# Merck's Therapeutic Areas

- **Merck has more than 40 prescription products in key therapeutic areas:**
  - Cardiovascular disease
  - Diabetes
  - Respiratory disease
  - Oncology
  - Neuroscience
  - Infectious disease
  - Immunology
  - Women's health (contraception, fertility, osteoporosis and HPV)

# Healthcare Quality and Disparities in Women: Cardiovascular Disease

- ***Women are more likely than men to experience a meaningful delay in ED care for cardiac symptoms***
  - Women were 52 percent more likely than men to be delayed 15 minutes or more in reaching the hospital after calling 911
- ***Female and black stroke patients are less likely than others to receive preventive care for subsequent strokes.***

# Role of Women in Healthcare

- **Women Account for 85% of overall consumer spending including everything from autos to healthcare.**
  - 93% Food
  - **93% OTC Pharmaceuticals**
  - 92% Vacations
  - 91% of New Homes
  - 89% Bank Accounts
  - **80% Healthcare**
  - 66% PCs
  - 65% New Cars
  - 58% of Total Online Spending

# Health Care Disparities: A Result of Poor Quality Health Care?



**“Many times, our system of healthcare distributes services inefficiently and unevenly across populations. Some Americans receive worse care than other Americans.”<sup>1</sup>**

-- US Dept. of Health and Human Services

# Health Disparity vs. Health Care Disparity

- **Health disparity:** A higher burden of illness, injury, disability, or mortality experienced by one population group relative to another group
- **Health care disparity:** Differences between groups in health insurance coverage, access to and use of care, and quality of care<sup>1</sup>

Disparities are commonly viewed through the lens of race and ethnicity, however disparities may occur across populations based on different characteristics, such as socioeconomic status, age, gender, geography, disability status, and sexual orientation.<sup>1</sup>

# Healthcare System Goals<sup>1</sup>

- Prevent, diagnose, and treat disease
- Improve physical and mental well-being
- Provide care throughout a person's life
- Help people stay healthy, recover from illness, live with chronic disease or disability, and cope with death and dying
- Deliver quality care



1. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. *National Healthcare Disparities Report 2012*. US Dept. of Health and Human Services. AHRQ Publication No. 13-0003. May 2013.

# Role of Patient-Centered Care

**A patient-centered approach to care has been shown to<sup>1</sup>:**

- Be supported by good provider-patient communication
- Improve patients' health status
- Lessen patients' symptom burden
- Encourage patients to comply with treatment regimens
- Reduce the chance of misdiagnosis due to poor communication
- Reduce underuse and overuse of medical care

1. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. *National Healthcare Disparities Report 2012*. US Dept. of Health and Human Services. AHRQ Publication No. 13-0003. May 2013.



# Role of Health Literacy

- Health literacy challenges can affect all people, but the impact disproportionately affects lower socioeconomic and minority groups<sup>1</sup>
- Low healthy literacy is associated with poor health outcomes, including increased hospitalization, greater emergency care, less preventive care screenings, and higher rates of disease and mortality<sup>1</sup>

**Recent studies have shown that improving health literacy can mediate race/ethnic and socioeconomic status related disparities<sup>1,2</sup>**

1. Berkman, ND, et al. Literacy and health outcomes. AHRQ Publication No. 04-E007-2. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. Rockville, MD; 2004.
2. Saha S. Improving Literacy as a Means to Reducing Health Disparities. *J Gen Intern Med*. 2006 August; 21: 893–895.

# Role of Cultural Competence

- Awareness and knowledge of diverse cultural beliefs and health practices can help improve communication and quality-of-care.<sup>1</sup>
- Cultural competency is essential in the effort to reduce health disparities and improve access to high-quality healthcare.<sup>1</sup>
- Health literacy and cultural competence are intertwined, as culture affects how people communicate, understand, and respond to health information.<sup>2</sup>

1. National Institutes of Health. Cultural Competency. Available at [nih.gov/clearcommunication/culturalcompetency.htm](http://nih.gov/clearcommunication/culturalcompetency.htm). Accessed August 1, 2013

2. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Quick Guide to Health Literacy. Fact Sheet. Health Literacy Basics. Available at [health.gov/communication/literacy/quickguide/factsbasic.htm](http://health.gov/communication/literacy/quickguide/factsbasic.htm). Accessed June 1, 2013.

# Potential Sources of Disparities:

## Patient Factors

- **Patient-level factors may include<sup>1,2</sup>:**
  - Socioeconomic (income, poverty, education, and occupation)
  - Language barriers
  - Health literacy
  - Preferences/cultural differences
  - Cultural / religious
  - Issues of mistrust, misunderstanding provider instructions

1. Smedley BD, Stith AY, Nelson AR, eds. *Unequal Treatment: Confronting racial and ethnic disparities in health care*. Washington DC: National Academy Press; 2003.

2. Adler NE & Newman K. Socioeconomic Disparities In Health: Pathways and Policies. *Health Affairs*. 2002; 21:6076.

# Potential Sources of Disparities:

## Health System Factors

- **Health care system factors are barriers that make it difficult for individuals to navigate the health care system and less likely they will receive quality care<sup>1</sup>**
  - The organizational and financial complexity of the health care system
  - The geographic availability of health care services
  - Cultural and linguistic differences
  - Lack of interpreter services
  - A lack of ethnically concordant providers
  - Time pressures on providers

# Potential Sources of Disparities:

## Provider Factors

**Provider factors refer to the provider's interactions with patients that may contribute to disparities<sup>1</sup>:**

- **Bias (or prejudice)**
  - Intended or unintended
- **Beliefs/stereotypes**
  - About behaviors of minorities
  - About health of minorities

1. Smedley BD, Stith AY, Nelson AR, eds. *Unequal Treatment: Confronting racial and ethnic disparities in health care*. Washington DC: National Academy Press; 2003.

# Cultural Considerations<sup>1</sup>

- **To avoid miscommunication in cross-cultural situations and foster more patient-centered relationships:**
  - Learn about patients' health beliefs and cultural practices
  - Communicate in a linguistically and culturally-appropriate manner

**Learning about patients' ethnic backgrounds, cultures, and traditions should not lead to stereotyping or assumptions, but should help providers deliver good patient-centered care.<sup>1</sup>**

# Merck's Commitment

“We must partner with patients to promote their understanding of their medical conditions or diseases, the reasons they are being treated, and the appropriate use of medications and other treatments. The result will be maximizing the benefit and minimizing safety issues when patients use our medicines. Merck is committed to improving health literacy as part of our mission to improve health.”

– Michael Rosenblatt, MD, Merck's Chief Medical Officer

# Merck for Mothers: Programs

- **In the US, Merck for Mothers is working to improve maternal health with a focus on regions where rates of maternal deaths and severe complications are disproportionately high**
  - Enhancing community initiatives that coordinate care for high-risk women before, during, and after childbirth
  - Strengthening data collection and review to better understand why maternal deaths are occurring
  - Implementing standard approaches to address obstetric emergencies



# Designing Patient Resources

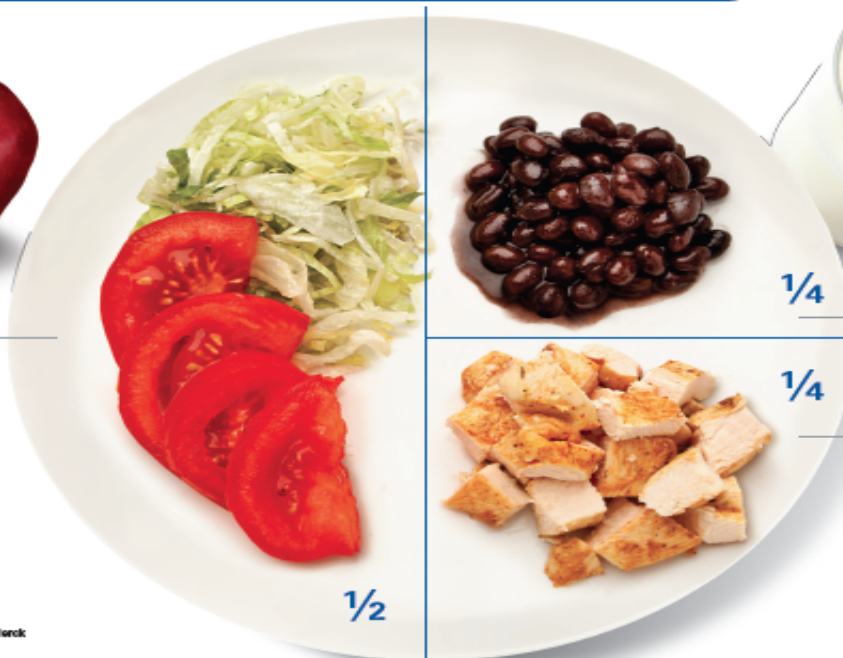
- **According to Merck's standardized health literacy approach, resources should be designed appropriately for health literacy, including:**
  - A reading level of 6<sup>th</sup> grade or lower
  - A clear purpose stated at the start of the material
  - Content that is limited in scope
  - Instruction that provides specific action steps
  - Visual elements that are a clear match to age, gender, and culture

# Illustrated Patient Education for Diabetes

## The diabetes portion plate for a Mexican-American meal

### How to divide your plate

**Nonstarchy vegetables**  
Fill 1/2 of your plate with nonstarchy vegetables, such as tomatoes, mushrooms, peppers, nopal (cactus), lettuce, and zucchini.



**Whole grains and starchy foods**  
Fill 1/4 of your plate with whole grains and starchy foods, such as whole-grain breads, high-fiber cereal, brown rice, 6-inch tortillas, beans, and low-fat crackers.

**Protein**  
Fill 1/4 of your plate with protein, such as skinless chicken, lean cuts of beef or pork, eggs, tuna, shrimp, and fish.

Provided as an educational resource by Merck



# Create Resources that Meet the Health Communication Needs of Customers: MerckEngage.com

The screenshot shows the MerckEngage.com homepage. At the top left is the MerckEngage logo, consisting of a colorful geometric icon and the text "merckEngage®". To the right of the logo is a "Share this page" button with Facebook and Twitter icons, and a search bar. Below the logo is a navigation bar with five tabs: "Health Planning", "Condition Library", "Healthy Conversations", "Caregiving", and "Rx for Health". The main content area features a large image of a smiling couple on the left. To the right of the image is a "Welcome to MerckEngage" section with the text: "Here's your resource for health information, tips, and ideas—all in 1 place." Below this text is a paragraph describing the site's features: "The Eating Well and Getting Fit sections feature easy-to-use tools for planning meals and staying active. Find a range of resources for taking care of health conditions as well as practical support for caregiving. A healthier life—and a closer partnership with your health care professional—can begin here." To the right of the welcome text is a sidebar with a "Sign up for MerckEngage.com. It's free." section, a "Benefits of signing up" section with "Sign up" and "Log in" buttons, a "Sign up with Facebook" button, and a "For Health Care Professionals" section with a "Sign up here" link. At the bottom of the page is a row of buttons: "Ways to Manage Your Health", "Sign Up Today", "Meal Planner", "Activity Planner", "Asthma Tracker", "Blood Pressure Tracker", and "Blood Sugar Tracker".

merckEngage®

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**Welcome to MerckEngage**

Here's your resource for health information, tips, and ideas—all in 1 place.

The [Eating Well](#) and [Getting Fit](#) sections feature easy-to-use tools for planning meals and staying active. Find a range of resources for taking care of health conditions as well as practical support for [caregiving](#). A healthier life—and a [closer partnership](#) with your health care professional—can begin here.

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# Resources and Customer Programs

- Case studies, cultural pointers and cultural-competence brochures
- An online video that provides tips on implementing universal health-literacy precautions
- Live presentations, including Delivering Quality Care to Diverse Populations; Implementing Universal Precautions
- Patient Education Materials
- **Resources for Care-givers through Merck Engage**

***Thank you!***