

Marriage & Family

Differences in Men & Women

1. Woman has greater constitutional vitality, perhaps because of her unique chromosome makeup. Normally, female outlives male by four to eight years in the US.
2. Woman's metabolism is normally lower than man's.
3. Man and woman differ in skeletal structure, woman having a shorter head, broader face, less protruding chin, shorter legs, and longer trunk.
4. Woman has larger kidneys, liver, stomach, and appendix than man, but smaller lungs.
5. Woman has several unique and important functions: menstruation, pregnancy, lactation. Woman's hormones are of a different type and more numerous than man's.
6. Woman's thyroid is larger and more active. It enlarges during pregnancy and menstruation; makes woman more prone to goiter; provides resistance to cold; is associated with her smooth-skinned, relatively hairless body and thin layer of subcutaneous fat.
7. Woman's blood contains more water and 20 percent fewer red cells. Since the red cells supply oxygen to the body cells, woman tires more easily and is more prone to faint. Her constitutional vitality is, therefore, limited to "life span." (When the working day in British factories was increased from ten to twelve hours under wartime conditions, accidents increased 150 percent among women but not at all among men.)
8. On the average, man possesses 50 percent more brute strength than woman (40 percent of a man's body weight is muscle; 23 percent of a woman's).
9. Woman's heart beats more rapidly (average 80 beats per minutes vs 72 for man). Woman's blood pressure (10 points lower than man's) varies minute to minute, but she has less tendency toward high blood pressure—at least until after menopause.
10. Woman's vital capacity or breathing power is significantly lower than man's.
11. Woman withstands high temperatures better than man because her metabolism slows down less.

These ideas are taken from Gary Smalley, *Hidden Keys to a Loving Lasting Marriage* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1988), 15-16.

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