

Sex and musculoskeletal health: Differences between males and females

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Women in general have a higher incidence of osteoporosis-related hip fractures yet, conversely, they have a lower rate of mortality than men with the same fracture, according to a study in the June 2015 issue of the *Journal of the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons (JAAOS)*. In addition, doctors don't always recognize or treat osteoporosis in men as often as they do in women.

"Male and Female Differences Matter in Musculoskeletal Disease" details the differences between how common musculoskeletal disorders manifest themselves in [males](#) versus females. The paper also underscores how important it is for healthcare professionals to understand those differences and recognize how multiple factors can contribute to musculoskeletal conditions and injuries.

"Knowing that there are differences in incidences and presentation between males and females is an important part of diagnosing and treating patients," says orthopaedic surgeon Jennifer Moriatis Wolf, MD, the lead study author. "Identifying both similarities and differences will allow [health care providers](#) to deliver better care to every orthopaedic patient."

There are differences between how males and females develop several common musculoskeletal disorders:

- Anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) injuries are 2-8 times more common in females.

- Females are 5-8 times more likely than males to suffer an ACL injury in high-intensity sports like soccer and basketball that require sudden changes of motion.
- Ankle sprains are twice as common in females.
- Osteoarthritis of the knee is more common in females.
- Metacarpal and phalangeal (finger) fractures are more common in males.

Recognition of these differences can contribute to better care of individual patients and to a higher index of suspicion for injury for certain diagnoses such as ACL tears.

Provided by American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons

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