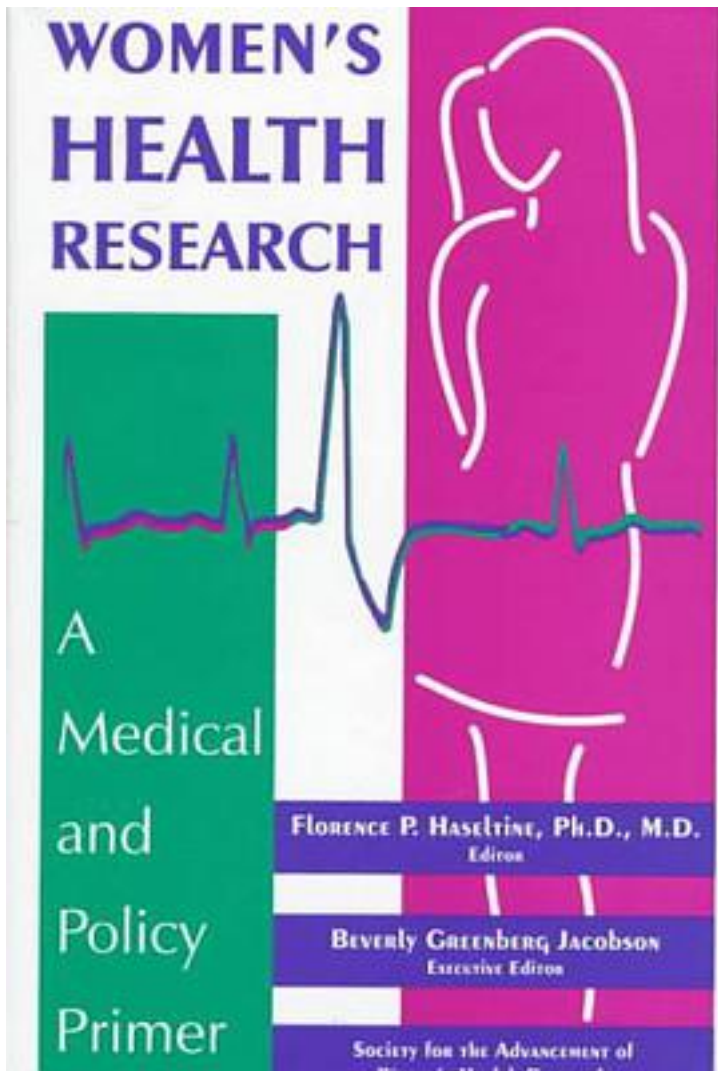


Women's Health Research



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著者:Society for the Advancement of Women's Health Research

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Only in recent years has women's health become an important item on the national health care agenda. Government guidelines that specifically excluded women from clinical trials based solely on their childbearing potential have been eliminated. In addition, Congress has boosted funding for specific women's health issues such as breast cancer and spurred the creation of an Office for Research on Women's Health at the National Institutes of Health. These successes, however, have revealed that much more work on women's health needs to be done. The costs of our national neglect of women's health, both in dollars and in shattered lives, are staggering. To ensure that women's health becomes a permanent priority for policy makers in the United States, a distinguished panel of experts from government health agencies, business, medicine, and health advocacy groups created Women's Health Research: A Medical and Policy Primer. This guidebook defines a research and policy agenda for the improvement of women's health research and the actions necessary to institutionalize this agenda. Because the public and Congress are influenced by clearly defined and explained research needs, this primer illuminates the large knowledge gaps in research and treatment to spur organized scientific inquiry into these areas. The authors also recommend a broad series of changes in medical student education and in the way research into women's health is funded and conducted. A case study illuminates several critical flaws in our current system of medical research funding as well as innovative approaches to medical research that will be an essential part of any new health program. The examination in this book of recent legislative decisions reaffirms the need for continual action by advocacy groups to demand additional resources for the improvement of women's health.

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