

Connie Tyne

What does the TTUHSC Laura W. Bush Institute for Women's health do?

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Laura Bush Institute is not a clinical institute, we don't have doctors and nurses who are treating people. But we are an educational and advocacy group. So we do really focus on prevention, because we don't treat. So we help people prevent. And we try to get ahead of these conditions, so that maybe they never happen in a serious way.

In addition to education and advocacy, can you talk about the institutes focus on research?

0:30

Women's health research was very much needed, particularly in 2007, and eight, when the institute was getting started. All the research was basically aggregated and put into one big bowl, and so everyone was treated the same. So as a result of that, while medications and devices may have been ideal for men, very often 80% of side effects were in women. So obviously, women were not getting the personalized medicine they need. Back then some medical devices were not even female and male. Women were getting men's knees, the same knee, a man might get or hip. So there was a huge need for women's health research, particularly the biological sex differences in medicine, in disease. And just to move more toward the kind of solutions that would really not harm me, but would really help me.

How do you think the institute has improved health care for women?

1:28

To really make a difference. We are strong advocates on every level, we advocate to physicians to learn new things, we advocate to women to take that information to their doctor. We also advocate nationally in organizations that try to really get the word out to everyone that biological sex differences are very real.

Why is stressing the point of advocacy so important for women?

1:54

I've known a number of women who have had heart disease and they blew it off themselves. They didn't seek help. They thought it was indigestion. They thought it was it was just some pain. You know, it was just maybe my tooth, but maybe I just have it tooth ache. Women, on average, seek help about three days after their symptoms begin because they have to convince themselves that it's serious and they don't want to go in or be embarrassed or cry wolf. Men tend to go in within six hours. So it's a tremendous difference. Women we need to get past. I don't know if it's, "I'm not worth it." But it's doubting ourselves and putting others first and being maybe overly optimistic that some of these symptoms will just go away. But I do think we need to listen to our ourselves.

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What advice would you give to women who have concerns about the cardiovascular health of themselves and other women?

2:56

We have to be ready, you have to reach out when you don't feel right. Tell somebody who can convince you to get the help you need even if you're reluctant to do it yourself.

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3:08

Just call the ambulance. You know because when anyone goes in to an emergency room in an ambulance, they pretty much have to get seen right away.