

Women’s Health and Wikipedia

Jennifer Rydz, MS4
Amin Azzam, MD, MA

BACKGROUND

Wikipedia is the most heavily-used source of online, open-access health information. Medical articles on Wikipedia are of variable quality, and like many other many medical resources, can be limited in their content regarding sex-specific pathophysiology. This project seeks to improve the quality of a series of articles with a focus on women’s health and sex-specific pathophysiology related to autoimmune disease.

METHODS

1. Identify high-importance, lower quality Wikipedia articles on female-focused health conditions.
2. Acquire and learn relevant material through database search and professional society guidelines.
3. Synthesize this knowledge in order improve target articles by:
 - a. Adding new information
 - b. Improving quality of preexisting information
 - c. Correcting errors, if present.

Editing Wikipedia is a unique opportunity for doctors serve the public through dissemination of medical knowledge.



All Wikipedia articles are ranked in importance and graded for quality by Wikiproject communities

Medicine articles by quality and importance							
Quality	Importance						Total
	Top	High	Mid	Low	NA	???	
★ FA	7	12	20	21			60
★ FL		2	3	8			13
★ FM					74		74
⊕ GA	31	50	109	171		1	362
B	58	433	1,299	1,610		22	3,422
C	3	416	3,164	7,182		102	10,867
Start		138	4,541	17,209	1	262	22,151
Stub			1,787	9,855	5	437	12,084
List		24	266	535	10	9	844
Category		1	2	3	8,844		8,850
Disambig				1	167		168
File					476		476
Portal					540		540
Project			1		168		169
Redirect		19	417	780	5,806		7,022
Template		1	1	3	1,640		1,645
NA					1		1
Draft				5	265		270
Assessed	99	1,096	11,610	37,383	17,997	833	69,018
Unassessed		1		3	2	190	196
Total	99	1,097	11,610	37,386	17,999	1,023	69,214

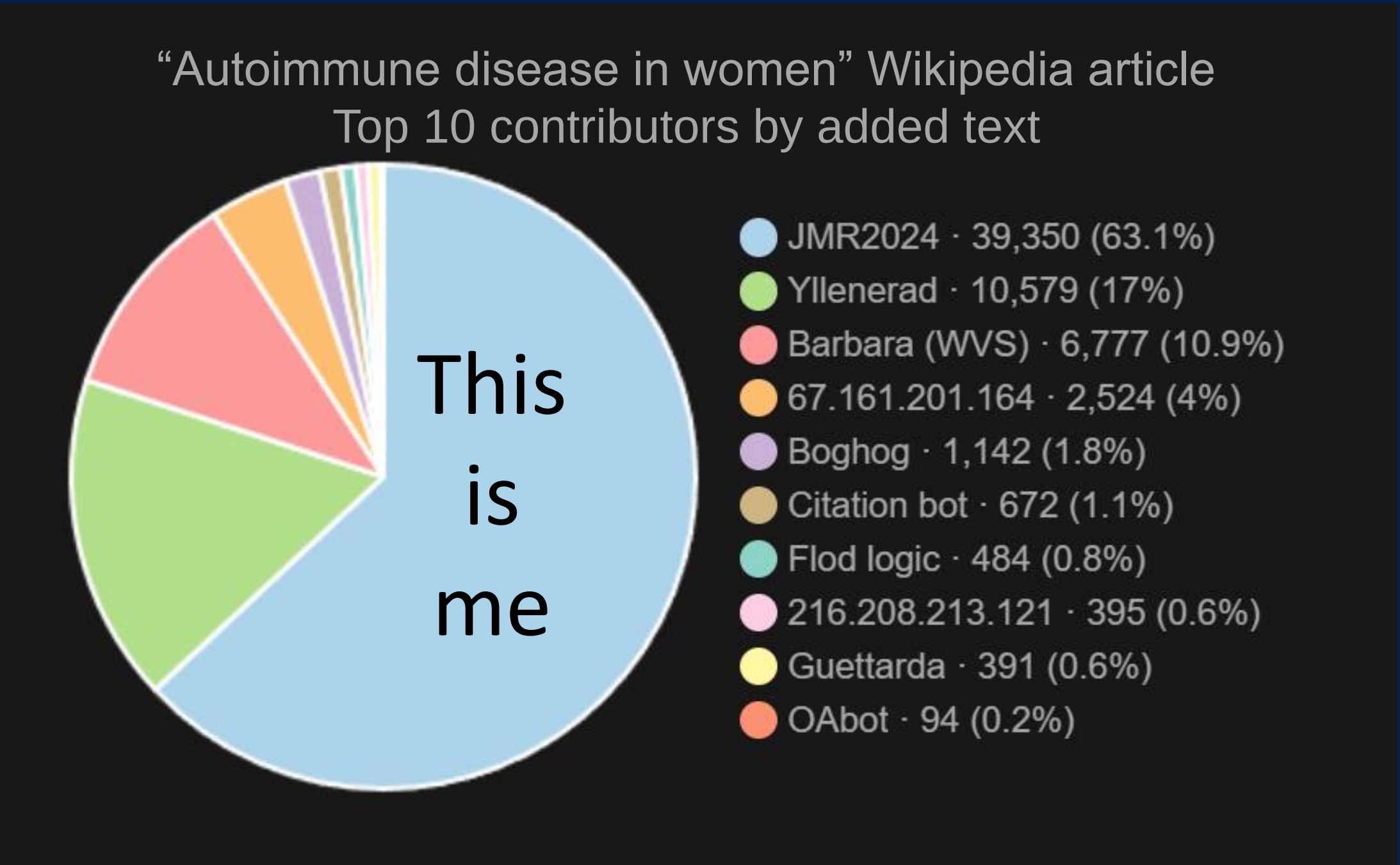
Autoimmune disease in women

See also: Autoimmune disease and Sex differences in medicine

Autoimmunity refers to a pathological immune response of the body's immune system against itself. Autoimmune disease is widely recognized to be significantly more common in women than in men, and often presents differently between the sexes.^{[1][2][3]} The reasons for these disparities are still under investigation, but may in part involve the presence of an additional X chromosome in women^[3] (given that several genes on the X chromosome are associated with immune system development), as well as the higher presence of female sex hormones such as estrogen (which increases immune system response).^[3] The risk, incidence, and character of autoimmune disease in women may also be associated with female-specific physiological changes, such as hormonal shifts during menses, pregnancy, and menopause.^[4]

Common autoimmune symptoms experienced by both sexes include rashes, fevers, fatigue, and joint pain. Symptoms which are specific to women include irregular menses, pelvic pain, or vaginal dryness, depending on the given disease. Some diseases such as Graves' disease, rheumatoid arthritis, and multiple sclerosis^{[5][6]} may improve during pregnancy, whereas others such as lupus may worsen.^{[5][6][7]}

Currently it is not possible to cure autoimmune disease, but many treatments are available. Treatment of autoimmune disease can be broadly classified into anti-inflammatory, immunosuppressive, and palliative – i.e., correcting a functional disturbance related to the condition.^[8] Some medications used to treat autoimmune diseases might not be safe to use during pregnancy.^{[2][8]}



University of California
San Francisco

RESULTS

- 5 articles edited
- 7,883 new words added
- 78 new citations added
- 209,000 total new pageviews since start of project in October 2023

DISCUSSION

By focusing on an area of niche biomedical interest with high health importance, this project shows one way by which individual medical professionals can improve the quality and quantity of health information available to the public. Working through Wikipedia has the potential to reach a much larger patient population than providers could ever encounter in individual practice.



Learn more at WikiProject Medicine