

2<sup>nd</sup> World Congress on

# Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome

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## Digital women's magazines as a source of information on polycystic ovary syndrome and hirsutism

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According to the 2012 National Institutes of Health Evidence-based Methodology Workshop on polycystic ovary syndrome, there is a need to improve public awareness of polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS). In the United States, people increasingly look to the Internet to find out what medical condition they or someone else might have. Women's digital magazines are a type of "edutainment" that publish health content in addition to beauty, fashion, and entertainment content. These media have the potential to expose primarily women readers to information on PCOS. This presentation will present content on PCOS-related hirsutism published in women's digital magazines such as Cosmopolitan en Español, O, The Oprah Magazine, Prevention, Women's Health, Health and Redbook. This includes descriptions of hirsutism, information on PCOS symptoms and consequences (e.g., infertility), and advice to consult health care providers. Examples of how women's magazines appeal to readers' concerns with hair growth and then provide readers with hair removal strategies and product advertisements to achieve smooth faces and bodies will also be presented. The limited content on racial/ethnic differences in hirsutism and information on campaigns to raise awareness of PCOS and support women with PCOS will be noted. Implications of the potential effects that content in women's digital magazines can have on readers' perceptions of PCOS-related hirsutism and the effect that women's hair removal techniques can have on health care providers' assessment of hirsutism will be discussed.

### Biography

Ninive Sanchez is an Assistant Professor of Social Work at the University of Missouri-Columbia, College of Human Environmental Sciences. She earned her PhD in Social Work and Psychology from the University of Michigan. Her research interests are in the areas of health disparities, sociodeterminants of health and chronic disease among low socioeconomic status and racial/ethnic minority groups.

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