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The Future of Femtech: Beyond Periods, Pregnancy and Menopause

Femtech is quickly becoming a \$50B market, as entrepreneurs target the most urgent problems impacting half the world's population. So, where are innovators focusing their attention, and will it improve your care? Three physician-investor-entrepreneurs share trends they see.

Gender Equity in Healthcare



Dr. Jane van Dis
Maven Clinic

Dr. Jane van Dis, Medical Director at Maven Clinic, begins, “Women are changing health care in amazing ways and one of the most important is that they bring an equity lens to how they approach digital health and healthcare in general.” The World Health Organization describes equity lens as “fairness and justice in the distribution of resources ... that often requires women-specific programs and policies to end existing inequalities.” Startups like Maven Clinic are creating a digital platform to address and meet women’s unique needs through their life stages.



Dr. Lisa Shah
Twin Health

Dr. Lisa Shah of Twin Health adds, “The health care system was not really built around women. Access to care for us, as women, was an afterthought. We’ve now realized the importance of preventive medicine and how different it looks for women. We know women’s bodies have a unique way that we manage things like coronary artery disease, and how we stay fit, how our metabolism with age goes down. You’ll see more unique strategies for women.”

Precision Medicine & Artificial Intelligence

Acknowledging those gender differences paves the way for new healthcare innovations in precision medicine and AI, Dr. Shah explains. “Eighty percent of what we do in healthcare can be automated, 24/7 technology.



Dr. Hala Sabry
Physician Digital Services

So imagine a world where if you're willing to do it for 30 days, we're collecting a lot of data on you, getting blood data, whether it be your blood sugars, or getting your lipids, or your daily BMI, and we're also looking at all the foods you eat.

The future holds being able to give you, in the palm of your hand, data on what your body is doing. And your doctor can devise a care plan unique to your body.”

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Mental Health and Focus on the Whole Woman

Dr. Hala Sabry, who runs an online support community for women doctors, offers a new option to complete the circle of care. “Where healthcare is broken is when we, as providers, aren't able to co-manage our women patients in a way that is going to be holistic for them. We need to make sure that information, from multiple care providers and data sources, makes its way to us. Because at the end of the day, that's the key to understanding our patients' needs.”

Dr. van Dis adds, “Consider pregnancy and postpartum. Often after women deliver, they don't have access to the specialist they need. Their mental health is not even asked about. Women give birth and then the focus is on the baby. However, 5% of preeclampsia and hypertensive disorders happen in the postpartum period. There's a lot of health happening in the postpartum period that actually gets ignored because the family, and even the mother herself, focuses on her baby (or babies). What are all the needs that she has, including mental health support?”

“We'll be paying much more attention to the impact of mental health.” Dr. Shah continues. “When we talk about precision medicine and AI, we talk about clinical data. So medical data might be your blood pressure, your heart rate. But now add in there, what's your mood? How is your stress level? We are now starting to take those pieces in and build algorithms that are able to predict how those two things interplay. We know when your mood and your happiness level is higher, you're also going to take better care of yourself. All of these things are in the future of healthcare for women”.

Shaping the Future, Together

All of our experts agree that women will see better representation in research studies. And research teams need to be more female. Dr. Sabry notes, “I think a lot of tech developers or tech companies don't really understand healthcare. It's a great space to develop a tech product, but you have to understand who your customers are.”

“Our investors have to have boards that are female. We need diverse investor communities that understand women,” Dr. Shah says. “When you walk into a room and you're pitching an idea about a startup, and you're a young, passionate, female entrepreneur who's trying to fix the problem you experienced in your early 20s or that your mother experienced, the group of investors has to know what you're talking about. And it can't be an 'n=1' it has to be 'n=millions'.”

**To learn more about our investment funds designed for women
and our FemTech II Fund visit portfolio.com**