

Breakout Session Three**ILLINOIS ROOM**

2:00-3:00 PM

Fertility, Hormones & Healing: Eating Disorders and Reproductive Health***SPEAKER: Laura Briz, MD, Psychiatrist*****Description:**

This presentation provides an in-depth examination of the intersection between eating disorders and reproductive health, with a focus on clinical implications and multidisciplinary care strategies. It outlines the diagnostic criteria, pathophysiology, and epidemiology of key eating disorders—including anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, and binge eating disorder—emphasizing their systemic effects on reproductive function. Key topics include infertility, complications during pregnancy, and the long-term impact of malnutrition on reproductive health. The presentation also explores psychosocial factors, such as stigma and body image dissatisfaction, which influence patient presentation and treatment adherence. Healthcare providers will gain insights into best practices for screening, early intervention, and collaborative care planning involving dietitians, mental health professionals, gynecologists, and endocrinologists. The presentation aims to enhance clinical awareness, encourage trauma-informed care, and promote integrated treatment approaches to improve reproductive outcomes in patients affected by eating disorders.

Objectives:

1. Explain the physiological mechanisms by which eating disorders impact reproductive health, including menstrual irregularities, infertility, and hormonal dysfunction.
2. Describe the short- and long-term reproductive complications associated with eating disorders, including risks during pregnancy and postpartum.
3. Develop integrated care plans that involve interdisciplinary collaboration among medical, nutritional, and mental health professionals.

Speaker Bio:

Dr. Laura Villavicencio Briz is a psychiatrist practicing in ERC Pathlight's Downtown Chicago location, where she provides comprehensive mental health care to a diverse patient population. She completed her Adult Psychiatry Residency at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) College of Medicine, where she also earned her Doctor of Medicine. Her multidisciplinary background informs her holistic approach to mental health, integrating insights from social determinants of health with evidence-based psychiatric care.

During her residency, Dr. Villavicencio Briz held the distinguished APA SAMHSA Minority Fellowship, supporting her focus on underserved populations and contributing to her expertise in women's mental health through a fellowship in this specialized area. Actively involved in academic psychiatry, she participated in the Clinician Educator Track, further enhancing her skills in patient-centered education and collaborative care.

In addition to her clinical and research contributions, Dr. Villavicencio Briz is a member of various professional societies, including the American Psychiatric Association (APA), where she served on the Ethics Committee, and the Illinois Psychiatric Society. A native Spanish speaker, she provides culturally sensitive care to her patients and is an advocate for accessible mental health services. Outside of work, she enjoys practicing yoga, baking, and gardening, balancing her professional life with personal passions that contribute to her well-rounded approach to wellness.