**Women Are More Likely Than Men to File for Divorce, Study Says**

Does gender play a role in assessing an individual’s likelihood of filing for divorce in Chicago? In a recent study, researchers sought to determine whether men or women may be more likely to actually [file for divorce](https://www.familylawadvocate.com/divorce/). What did the researchers determine? The study reported that women may be more likely than men to file for divorce, according to a [report](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-5044233/Women-twice-likely-men-file-divorce.html) in the *Daily Mail*. The study was conducted with data obtained by the [Early Years of Marriage](http://projects.isr.umich.edu/eym/index.html) (EYM) Project at the University of Michigan’s Survey Research Center, a project that began back in the 1980s. While the EYM primarily gathers data from individuals within the Detroit metropolitan area, it now has data from hundreds of participants that can help researchers to answer questions about marriage and divorce in the Chicago area, as well as across the country.

**In Heterosexual Marriages, Men Experience Tension but Women Take Action**

While the gender stereotype in most heterosexual relationships is that men are action-oriented while women are not, the study suggests that women are more likely than men to take action when a marriage is not working. In other words, the fact that women are more likely to file for divorce does not mean that men are not experiencing tension and dissatisfaction in a marriage. Rather, both spouses can experience the anxiety and unhappiness of a dysfunctional marriage, but women are more likely to take the next step of actually filing to dissolve the union.

How did the researchers come to this conclusion? The study followed 355 couples over about 16 years, beginning with the first months in their marriages. Here is the outcome they reached: “When it comes to marriage, men are more likely to experience tension that builds over time, starting out low and increasing with the years . . . but women are more likely to pull the plug.” To be clear, the researchers determined that men in heterosexual marriages might actually sense more conflict in the relationship but still are less likely to take the first step to end the marriage legally. To be sure, women are “twice as likely to file for divorce” as men, the researchers concluded.

**Shifting Levels of Marital Tension Among Couples Over Time**

In the study, the couples were interviewed multiple times during their marriages, beginning somewhere within the first four to nine months of the marriage. They were then interviewed again during the second, third, and fourth years of their marriages, followed by subsequent interviews during the seventh and sixteenth years of marriage.

The data showed that “women were more likely to start out with higher levels of tension, while tension among husbands appeared to grow with time.” According to Kira Birditt, one of the authors of the study, the data suggested that divorce could be imminent based on shifting levels of tension among the couple. For instance—and in particular—when men reported a low level of tension in the marriage yet women reported a higher level, that disconnect often indicated that the woman may be considering filing for divorce. Of all the couples involved in the study, approximately 40 percent were divorced within sixteen years after their marriages began.

**A Chicago Divorce Attorney Can Help**

Dealing with tension in a marriage can be difficult, and you may have questions about filing for divorce. A divorce lawyer in Chicago can speak with you today. [Contact M. Scott Gordon & Associates](https://www.familylawadvocate.com/contact-us/) to discuss your circumstances.

