

# ACTION

The "health" industry is designed to profit from our ill-health. It is more profitable to treat us with drugs and surgery (often with devastating effects on our health) than to encourage prevention and self-care. The health industry -- including government agencies -- blames our lifestyles (alcohol, cigarettes) for the increasing incidence of chronic disease and cancer. In fact, hazards in our workplaces -- including stress -- pollution of the air, the water and the food we eat, as well as poverty, are the major causes of sickness in our society, and are rarely addressed by the health industry.

We need to look at why we get sick, and take action now, and on a long-term basis, against conditions that endanger us all.

## Health Talks

From time to time we present a series of informational and practical talks on various aspects of the health industry and its effects on our lives, and other topics relevant to women's health.

## Speaking

We are eager to speak to groups of women who are interested in learning about women's health and in sharing our perspective of the health industry. One of our goals is to encourage further action.

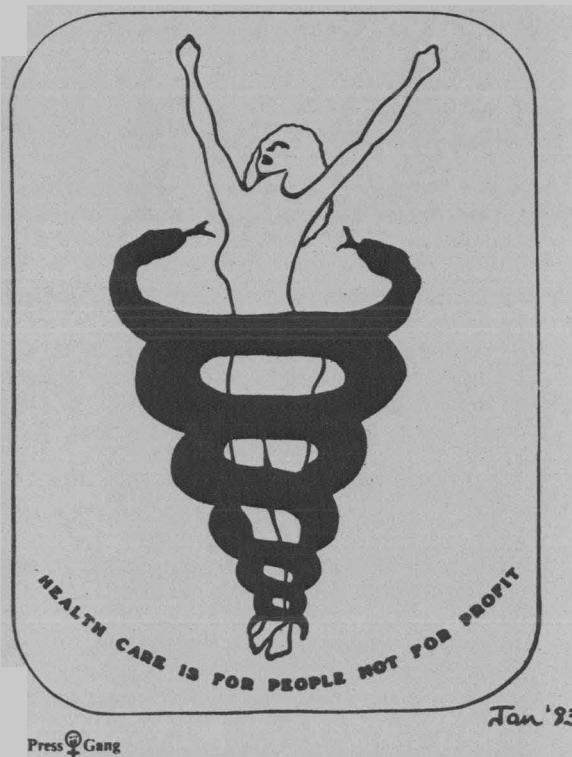
## Research Group

A group of women who meet to gather information on topics such as birth control pills, herbal remedies and pelvic inflammatory disease (PID). Call us for details.

## Women's Action on Occupational Health

A group whose focus is women's workplace hazards. They do research and educational sessions, and have committees on clerical workers -- with special emphasis on Video Display Terminals, and on hospital workers. This group can be reached through the Health Collective.

# Vancouver Women's Health Collective



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1501 West Broadway  
Vancouver, B.C.

(604) 736-6696

## HOURS

Sunday: Closed

Monday: Closed

Tuesday: 10:00 - 7:30

Wednesday: Closed

Thursday: 1:30 - 5:30

Friday: 1:30 - 5:30

Saturday: 12:00 - 4:00

# RESOURCE

For centuries health information was passed from woman to woman, from one generation to the next. As the medical profession took over health care late in the 19th century, this information became more and more their property.

One way women have begun to take back control of our own health care is to write and collect good information and to share it with each other.

We have been conditioned to think that only the medical "experts" know about good health care. In fact, we all have valuable information and we can share it and learn together.

The Resource Centre is available for women to use to find the information they need. We have a copying machine for public use. Health Collective workers will assist people using Resource Centre materials.

Our steep stairs make the Health Collective inaccessible to some women. We are willing to meet these women in another location.

## Library

Magazines, newsletters, reference books on gynecology, pharmacology, alternative healing, sexuality, children's health, women and therapy, and more. Books are available for reading at the Health Collective.

## Information Sheets

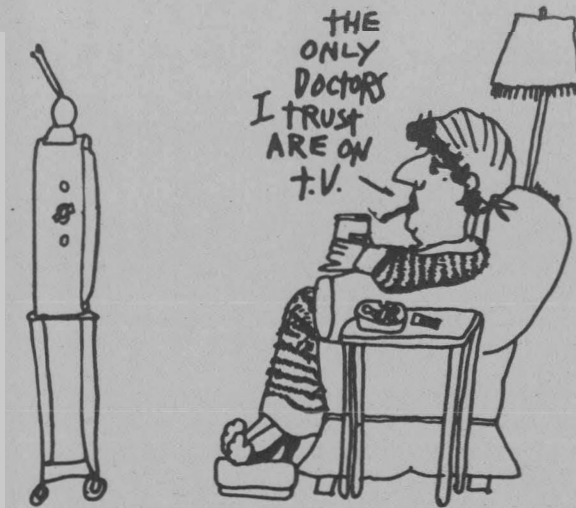
Free info sheets on many topics such as diaphragms, menopause, cervical and breast self-exam. Presently, we have copies of Our Bodies, Ourselves, Lesbian Health Matters, The Ovulation Method, and other women's health books for sale.

## Files

On all aspects of women's health: breast lumps and treatment, vaginal infections, herbs, estrogen and cancer, workplace hazards, the drug industry, third world women and more.

## Orientation

We hold regular training/orientation sessions for women who are interested in doing voluntary work in our resource centre. Call the Health Collective for more information.



## Health Practitioner Directory

We collect and file evaluation forms filled out by women on their experiences with doctors, chiropractors, massage therapists, naturopaths, therapists, etc. Another part of the Directory shares women's experiences with doctors who assisted at their births.

## Resource People

Sharing experiences is as important as sharing information. We encourage women with experience/information in a certain area to be a resource person for others. For example, a woman who has had a tubal ligation (sterilization) and has searched for information in that area would be a valuable resource to other women for information and support.

## Health Groups

We are currently facilitating several health groups. Call us for more details. Health Collective members are also willing to help women form groups about specific health topics, such as bladder infections, menopause, endometriosis, and so on. In these groups, women could research and share information and experiences on these issues.

# HEALTH CARE

The Health Collective was founded on the principle of self-help: active participation and control in our own health care. We are opposed to the traditional health care model where one person is the expert and the other receives advice or treatment with no opportunity for discussion or decision around alternatives.

In the health care work we do, we encourage self-help in dealing with health problems and in acquiring and sharing information that is useful in maintaining health.

Our own structure reflects our belief in sharing information, power and responsibility. We operate as a collective and everyone is expected to participate in decision-making. All of us share maintenance, operating details and projects.

## Pregnancy Testing

We use a two-minute test that is accurate six weeks from the first day of your last period. Bring in a refrigerated, first-morning urine sample if possible. The test is free.

## Pregnancy & Abortion Counselling

For women seeking advice on pre-natal care, birthing and childcare, we offer information and referrals. For women uncertain about continuing their pregnancy, we offer supportive help in making the decision.

For women wanting an abortion, we offer information, doctor referrals and supportive counselling.

## Diaphragm and Cervical Cap Fitting

We are affiliated with two collectives that fit diaphragms and cervical caps. Call us to make an appointment or if you would like to join one of the groups to learn the skill.

## Skill Sharing Days

Held regularly, once a month. In an informal atmosphere, women can learn cervical and breast self-exam, and get Pap tests.