

## WHAT WE DO

### *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.

### *Ovulation Method*

We teach the ovulation method of birth control in classes held each month. Classes are open to women or couples. Separate sessions are available for women wanting to use the method to conceive. Phone the Health Collective for more information.

### *Self Help Afternoons*

In an informal atmosphere women learn about vaginal and cervical health including cervical self-exam, vaginal infections and can get Pap tests.

### *Counselling For Specific Problems*

Women with abnormal Pap smears or DES daughters can get information and assistance deciding what course of treatment is best for them.

## WHO WE ARE

Most of us have not had professional training as doctors or nurses, but have trained each other and learned our skills through our own experiences and sharing those experiences with each other.

We try to look at why we get sick. Most people in the medical profession treat illness with drugs and surgery rather than encouraging prevention and self-help. In fact, hazards in our workplace, stress, pollution of the air, chemicals in the water and the food we eat, lack of access to regular and quality health care and poor living conditions are the major causes of illness in our society.



### *Structure*

Regular unpaid volunteers keep the Vancouver Women's Health Collective functioning. Continuity is maintained through monthly meetings. Women participate according to how much time they are able to put in and what they are willing to do.

### *Orientation*

We hold regular training and orientation sessions for women who are interested in working in the Resource Centre. This provides an overview of what is available at the Health Collective. Women also learn specific skills needed to assist women who use the Centre

### *Other Groups*

Women can also join any of the other groups which provide services or counselling. Some women do research into specific areas while others work on fundraising projects.



**1501 West Broadway  
Vancouver, B.C.**

**(604) 736-6696**

### **HOURS**

**Sunday: Closed**

**Monday: Closed**

**Tuesday: 10:00-1:00**

**Wednesday: 7:00-9:30 PM**

**Thursday: 1:00-4:00**

**Friday: Closed**

**Saturday: 1:00-4:00**

# INFORMATION

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.

We have become used to thinking that only the medical "experts" know about good health care. One way women have begun to take back control of our own health care is to collect and write good information and to share it with each other. In fact, we all have valuable information and we can share it and learn together.

When we are faced with an illness or a health problem, we need to have information on various kinds of treatment in order to decide what to do. We need to be able to make truly informed choices about our own health care. The Health Collective has information about both conventional and alternative treatments.

In the Resource Centre we have a library and an extensive set of files which anyone can come in and use. We also have a copying machine for public use. Health Collective workers are available to help you find information, to discuss health care alternatives and to help explain anything that is difficult to understand.

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

## Files

We have extensive files on all aspects of women's health. Topics include: breast lumps and treatment, urinary tract infections, abnormal Pap smears, DES, vaginal infections, birth control, PMS, menopause, pregnancy and childbirth, abortion, the drug industry and many more.

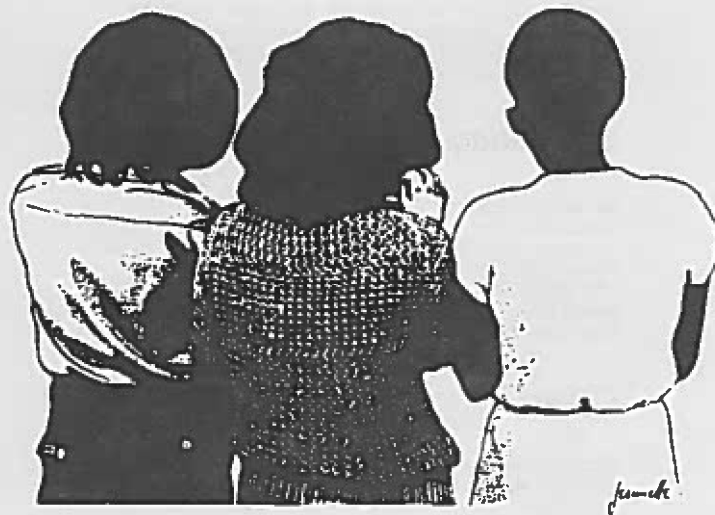
We have a separate set of files on women's occupational health, with extensive sections on video display terminals and on health hazards faced by health workers.

## Library

Reference books, magazines and journals on women's health, medicine, drugs, sexuality, childbirth, alternative healing, mental health, children's health and more. Books are available for reading at the Health Collective.

## Pamphlets & Information Sheets

Free info sheets on many topics such as Pap smears, birth control, menopause, nutrition and DES. We sell pamphlets and books at wholesale prices. Pamphlets on diaphragms, cervical caps, the ovulation method, abortion, menopause, sexuality, lesbian health, pre-menstrual syndrome, PID, herpes and other health topics are available. We stock Our Bodies, Ourselves, How to Stay Out of the Gynecologist's Office and A New View of a Woman's Body for sale.



## Resource People

Sharing experiences is as important as sharing information. We encourage women with experience and/or information in a certain area to be a resource person for others. For example, a woman with endometriosis and a woman with chronic PID who have learned about these conditions have valuable information for other women facing the same health problems. A woman who has had a hysterectomy or a mastectomy is a valuable resource woman for another woman about to experience the same operation.

## Health Workshops

We facilitate workshops on specific health topics such as menopause, PMS and alternative insemination. The workshops are oriented towards self-help and sharing of information. Ongoing support groups of women with similar health problems or interest sometimes continue to meet afterwards. Call us for details about current workshops.

## Speaking

We are available to speak or present workshops to groups of women who are interested in learning about our perspective on women's health care.

## Health Practitioner Directory

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