

3 Things All Women Should Know About Their Bodies

Written by Ginny Grimsley

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Between Untested Therapies & Intrusive Politics,
RN Says Individuals Must Take Responsibility for Their Health

There's plenty of information about women's physical and health-care needs. Unfortunately, some of it is incomplete, or based on opinion and conjecture, or it's just plain bad information, says registered nurse Iyalode Edwards.

"Women tend to be more vigilant about their bodies than men, and there is a huge marketplace of literature, products, studies, politics and other opinions on women's health," says Edwards, author of "Multiple Orgasms Made Simple: 'How to Do It' Sex Secrets All Women Should Know!" (www.multipleOmadesimple.com).

"Not all of it makes sense."

It's only natural that women are more focused on their bodies than men because women have the more complex anatomy, she says. But old ideas from a society based in patriarchy, along with today's health market issues, can create confusion. Edwards, who has more than 35 years experience as a registered nurse, clarifies three points about which she sees the most misunderstanding among her patients:

- Untested therapies: Several years ago hormone replacement therapy was all the rage, used

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almost as a cure-all for post-menopausal women suffering a variety of symptoms. After a few decades, however, a large percentage of those women started suffering ovarian and breast cancer, in addition to other complications. More recently, vaccines for the human papillomavirus have been touted to girls and young women as the new preventative measure against cervical cancer. But thousands of girls have experienced a wide range of side effects, including seizures, strokes, dizziness, fatigue, weakness, headaches, vomiting, weakness, joint pain, auto-immune problems, chest pains, hair loss, appetite loss, personality changes, insomnia, tremors and menstrual cycle changes. Be wary of new cure-alls. Adverse effects are sometimes not revealed until they've been in use for a significant amount of time.

- Health through pleasure: A 2011 survey by Jane Magazine found that, while more than 87 percent of men aged 18 to 26 years old experienced orgasm "most or all of the time" during sex, only 46.8 percent of women could say the same thing. Not only could that percentage be much higher for women, it could be more meaningful, too. "The truth is, if you have all your sex organs intact and can achieve the first level of climax, then you can achieve it multiple times during the same encounter," Edwards says. "You just need information, and there has been too much misinformation disseminated." Sexual satisfaction comes with several health benefits, including improved cardiovascular functioning, sounder sleep and a deeper bond with a partner.

- The politics of women's health: As imperative as it is to know more and listen closely to one's body, it is also important to stay connected to current events since women's health care has become a political football, she says. Comments from multiple elected officials seem to be narrowing the definition of rape, and there are many who support limiting women's care in insurance plans, to name a few public debates. "I want women to be more aware of their bodies," Edwards says. "Unfortunately, the rhetoric of many politicians seems to be pointing backward regarding our health."

About Iyalode Edwards, R.N.

Iyalode Edwards is the author of "Multiple Orgasms Made Simple," a straightforward, step-by-step how-to guide that includes physiological explanations for sensations women experience. Edwards is a registered nurse with more than 35 years of experience. She informally interviewed a number of women and physicians as part of her research.