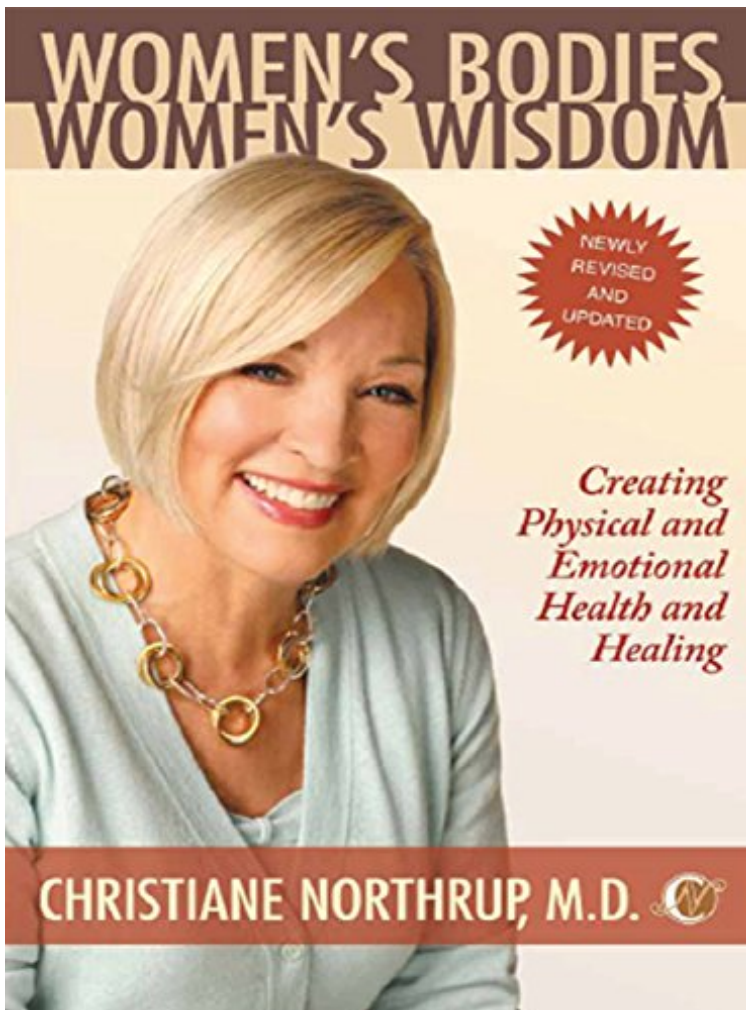


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Women's Bodies, Women's Wisdom



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Description :

Prsentation de l'diteurWhen it was first published in 1994, Womens Bodies, Womens Wisdom quickly became an international bestseller, and for the past fifteen years it has remained the veritable bible of womens health. Now, in this revised and updated edition, world-renowned and much-beloved womens health expert Dr. Christiane Northrup shares with us the latest developments and advances that will maximize our potential for living well in our bodies today. Inside you will discover new material on sexualityand how to have a more fulfilling sex life; the spiritual and scientific principles behind healing from terminal illnesses, and how you can utilize these principles for your own health and the health of others; vital information about how to truly dissolve PMS and ease menstrual cramps; extraordinary facts on Vitamin Dand why it is crucial for breast, cardiovascular, and immune system health; the importance of the preconception diet and how to greatly decrease your risk of birth defects; how to birth naturally, despite the current induction and C-section epidemic; all you need to know about thyroid function, including proper blood tests; life-saving facts about cellular inflammationthe root cause of all chronic degenerative

diseases and how to prevent this condition; and the essentials on the fountain of youth molecule and how to enhance your levels of it for vibrant health. Living a healthy life in a woman's body can be downright fun even ecstatic! And that's good news for everyone—women, men, and their children. Quite possibly every female over the age of 12 will find this huge book enlightening, pain saving, and perhaps even lifesaving. Think of it as a much more empowering and holistic *Our Bodies, Ourselves*. Northrup is a gynecologist who acknowledges the power of natural therapies and herbs, but also maintains that allopathic treatments, including surgery, are sometimes best. In *Women's Bodies, Women's Wisdom*, she covers the treatment of many physical concerns—among them PMS, menstrual cramps, breast cancer, fibroids, endometriosis, infertility, depression, childbirth, abortion, cystitis, and menopause—explaining how many of these physical problems have roots in emotional upsets. For example, a woman who is unhappy with her marriage may be infertile because deep down, she knows that her husband is not the right man to have children with; a teenager who has cramps may be having problems accepting society's expectations of her as a woman. Some readers may be put off at first by Northrup's obviously unconventional ways of thinking. Her medical approach is decidedly feminist, blaming our "addictive" and patriarchal society for many of the health problems plaguing women. She clearly illustrates her ideas, however, by drawing upon two decades of experience from her medical practice and citing dozens of her patients' remarkable personal stories.

Northrup also delineates the best way to go about tuning in to one's body and mind in order to start the healing process, a self-induced therapy of sorts. She also includes in the book a copy of the eye-opening health inventory she gives her clients. It includes unusual questions such as "Are you bored with your life?" and "Do you have enough friends or neighbors?" This book will be of special benefit to women who are pregnant or entering menopause. Northrup is an unequivocal believer in natural births and her dialogue on the birthing process will remove the fears of even the most petrified mother-to-be. She criticizes episiotomies (she should know; she's given birth without one) and supports midwifery. She also warns against the harmfulness of cesarean births and includes illustrations of acupuncture points that help turn around a breech baby. For women in perimenopause or menopause, Northrup will help turn this life phase into one of peace and personal growth instead of one of suffering. She was one of the first doctors to use natural progesterone to treat menopausal symptoms, and this revised edition includes a clear primer on the latest in hormone replacement therapy and how to determine if it's right for you. Northrup also expounds upon the benefits of acupuncture and herbalism—as well as emotional self-analysis—for alleviating hot flashes and mood swings.

--Erica Jorgensen
Extrait
Speaking Our Truth
During the month after this book was initially published, I had a series of nightmares that someone was in my bedroom about to kill me. For five consecutive nights I woke up screaming in terror, scaring my children as well as myself. My dreams were my not-so-subtle inner guidance system letting me know how terrified a part of me was to actually put what I knew out into the world. I was shocked by the power of this fear. Though I'd known intellectually that many women have a wall of fear within them that arises when they dare to speak their truth, I hadn't realized how much of that fear I also shared. I dreaded going to the hospital for the regular OB/GYN meeting in June 1994, after the book went on sale, because I was sure that my colleagues would reject me and my work.

Until then I had lived a professional double life: One part of me told patients what I really believe, in the privacy of my personal office, and the other part, the "official" me, held back a bit (or a lot) in the hospital around many colleagues. My socialization as a doctor had taught me well what was acceptable to my colleagues and the hospital staff. I'd been treading a fine line for years. In fact, back in 1980, right after the birth of my first child and before I took my oral exams for board certification in OB/GYN, I was featured in a cover story on holistic women's health for *East West Journal* (now *Natural Health*). In order to ensure that nobody at the hospital where I worked saw the article, I went to the co-op where *East West* was sold locally and personally purchased all the copies there. No one at my hospital ever saw it or if anyone did, they never said anything about it. But in 1994, it was not going to be possible to purchase every copy of a mass-marketed book! I had to face the music and bring the two parts of myself together publicly and in front of conventional medical groups for the first time. My first step was to go to my weekly hospital meeting. When I walked in, I was relieved when almost no one said anything about the book and I wasn't treated any differently. It was as though nothing had happened. I had to laugh, for at that moment I learned a lesson about self-centeredness—believing that everyone around me is interested in what I'm doing or saying, when in fact they have their own lives to live. My biggest lesson was that my fear was just that . . . all mine, and it was time to let it go. This has been a gradual process: On the book's first anniversary, I had a series of dreams in which someone was videotaping me naked. I was still feeling vulnerable, but at least I wasn't

about to be killed! Since then, the dreams have gradually disappeared. Since 1994, I've been invited to speak to hospital staffs and doctors all over the country and abroad, and I have received an overwhelmingly positive and heartwarming response from women and men in the United States and around the world. Clearly, the world is ready for women's wisdom. The comment I hear most often, from women, men, and even many doctors, goes something like this: "Somewhere deep within me, I've always known the truth of what you were saying . . . but I didn't have words for it. And I certainly had never heard a doctor say it." I have come to see that medical science, when combined with the wisdom of our hearts and our minds, is powerful medicine indeed. And that's why, almost as soon as this book was published, I found myself itching to revise it. Though there is no replacement for developing and honing our intuitive women's wisdom that inner guidance that helps us choose which roads to take and which ones to avoid I've found that this inner guidance works best when it's balanced with good, solid, up-to-date information. And though the principles of true wisdom don't change much over time, useful and practical information does. We need both just as we need both our left and right brain hemispheres. And with the burgeoning acceptance of alternative medicine into mainstream culture (a phenomenon that still surprises and delights me), more and more scientifically documented natural solutions to women's health problems become available every day. Simultaneously, good technological solutions, such as new devices to help stress urinary incontinence, as well as better surgical techniques to remove fibroids, are also helping many women. And each time I have updated my thinking and my recommendations, I have wanted to get that new information out to my readers so that they too can use it to improve their lives and their health. In addition to adding better and more timely solutions to each section of the book, I found it necessary to completely rewrite the chapters on nutrition and menopause because there is so much new and helpful information in these areas, ranging from how to individualize a hormone replacement regimen using hormones native to the female body to how to find a dietary approach that balances both your brain and body biochemistry. Women's health is finally getting the attention it deserves, and as a longtime player in this field, I have a great deal to say and a lot of new information to share. By sheer serendipity, my newsletter, Health Wisdom for Women, was launched in partnership with Phillips Publishing International several months after the first edition of this book came out. So now, instead of addressing the problems of twenty women in my office each day, I am able to reach thousands every month. In essence, the health care solutions offered through the newsletter, together with my subscribers' correspondence and feedback, have become a virtual practice. This has allowed me to keep my finger on the pulse of women's health care in a much broader and more diverse way than ever before. I've also heard from countless physician colleagues, who tell me that patients often bring in either a copy of Women's Bodies, Women's Wisdom or the newsletter to discuss a particular approach that I've recommended. Most of these doctors are grateful for the information. This grassroots approach truly appeals to my small-town origins. Writing the first edition of Women's Bodies, Women's Wisdom opened up to me a larger world of women's wisdom that is growing all over the planet. Because of this, I have more support from more people and places than I ever dreamed possible. This has allowed me to become more of who I really am. I know from all the letters I receive that the same thing is happening to others across the globe. The original book is being used as a text in nursing schools and hospitals around the country and this helps women's wisdom gather steam and momentum. I've learned the power of telling my personal truth. It has been a very significant part of my healing process. And I have emerged feeling stronger and freer than ever before. I hope this book will inspire other women to speak their personal truths, too. I know that as each of us does this, the world and our health changes for the better.

Chapter twelve: Pregnancy and Birthing My Personal Story

As a mother and a women's doctor, I have experienced childbirth from both sides of the bed. Every mother has moments that she cherishes from the birth experience and insights and feelings she'd like to share with other women. I'd like to tell you my story and also some remarkable stories of other women. The due date for my first child was December 7, 1980. I continued my work supervising the residency clinic at a Boston hospital, and I flew or drove to Maine every other week to keep my practice going there. I had watched far too many pregnant women stop work early and then mope around the house eating, waiting for the baby to come, sometimes begging their obstetrician to induce labor. I didn't want to fall into that category. I had also seen dozens of women go overdue. I certainly wasn't going to get excited about labor at least, not until my due date. On Thanksgiving we went to dinner at a friend's house. Later that evening, back home in bed, I started to experience very mild but regular contractions that didn't hurt. Like the good controlled doctor that I was, I went into the bathroom and decided to examine my cervix to see if I was dilating. When I did this, my water broke. I thought, "Damn, now I know this really is it." Shortly

thereafter, without the natural "padding" that the amniotic fluid provides, my contractions began coming every two minutes and were much more uncomfortable than initially. I called my mother, who was planning to help me after the birth and said, "I'm not going to like this." She said that she understood (after six children, she knew) but that it wouldn't last forever. In the 1940s, Mom had always had to labor alone, strapped down in bed with no pain relief or personal support. For each delivery, she had been knocked unconscious by drugs and was handed the baby later by the obstetrician, as though it were a gift from him and not the fruit of her own labor. Thousands of women like her were never given a choice and didn't even know there were other ways to deliver. The pain of labor was far greater than I thought it would be. (It's always worse after the membranes are ruptured, a point that doesn't seem to stop some obstetricians from doing it prematurely even when there's no need to.) I had seen hundreds of women in labor after five years of OB training. I had always focused on the women who didn't appear to have any discomfort, and I was so sure I would be one of them. But here I was stuck. I felt as though I were in a box, and there was no way out except through. My intellect could not get me out of this and I was determined to go through the process naturally. I already trusted the natural world more than the artificial man-made one. What I didn't appreciate then was the depth of my own programming into and cooperation with that same man-made world. We called my obstetrician, ...