

INFUSION

VANCOUVER WOMEN'S HEALTH COLLECTIVE

The Collective

The Vancouver Women's Health Collective is a volunteer based, charitable, non-profit organization founded in 1972. We work to promote and support the idea of women helping women to help themselves, and to help women develop a proactive approach to their own healthcare. We carry out a range of services and activities for women in Greater Vancouver and across BC, including a health information centre and health line, health practitioner, holistic practitioner and therapist files, educational work, support groups, publications and advocacy.

#1-175 East 15th Avenue
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Infusion

Infusion, The Vancouver Women's Health Collective newsletter, is a forum to connect us with our members and the community at large around women's health issues and activities at the Collective. Submissions relevant to women's health or well-being are always welcome. Leave a message at the collective, or drop a note in our newsletter box. *Infusion* is published three times a year. All opinions expressed are those of the writers and not necessarily those of the VWHC.

Contributors

Ana-Lisa Boye
Caryn Duncan
Pam Fichtner
Silvia Musholt

The Collective on the Move

by Caryn Duncan

The Vancouver Women's Health Collective has moved. Our new office is located at #1 - 175 East 15th Avenue (at Main Street) in Vancouver.

The VWHC has undergone a number of changes over the last couple of years and now we are able to turn our complete attention to offering women the important health information they are seeking. The resources at our Information Centre are in ever-increasing demand by Lower Mainland women. We continue to respond to calls from women interested in our health practitioner directory, therapist files, woman-centred health information including complementary services, and support groups available in their community.

We are looking forward to a smooth year ahead building on the strengths of 1999/2000. Please join us at our September Annual General Meeting for an update on the work of the collective and to see our new office.

It's hard to believe, but soon we'll be celebrating our 30th anniversary and all of the remarkable women who have, since 1972, made the VWHC a healthy, thriving women's resource centre!

What's in a name?

by Silvia Musholt

Things are changing at the Health Collective while the commitment to women's health and well-being remains. The Collective just moved to a new location and its Newsletter is changing as well. Since last year the Collective and its Newsletter have a beautiful new logo. Now it's time to change the name of the newsletter as well. The name *Infusion* was inspired by the tea-pot that used to be our logo. Now that the tea-pot is gone, it is time to find a new name that captures the spirit of the Vancouver Women's Health Collective. Any Ideas? Please send us any suggestions you have and help us get started with renaming our newsletter.

INFUSION Connection

Your Questions: Our Answers

The Pleasure of Yoga for Women

by Anna-Lisa Boye

Yoga, an ancient practise of self care, a union between the body, mind and spirit, is a combination of breathing exercises, meditation, postures and relaxation that has been proven to be beneficial to both men and women. Is yoga different for women? Can a daily practise of yoga benefit or harm us? We know that yoga was created exclusively for men by men, yet it is women who have been popularizing it throughout the western world for decades.

It is important to remember that women's bodies

By honouring the body's natural processes, women can achieve strength, increased energy flow, spinal alignment and mental focus.

differ from men's. By honouring the body's natural processes, women can achieve strength, increased energy flow, spinal alignment and mental focus. Information about the chakras (energy centres) and how they relate to the postures practised at certain times in a woman's life may help to understand how the body works during these times. There are emotional, physical and spiritual benefits when practising yoga on a regular basis, all of which are very individual and self-gratifying.

During a woman's moon cycle it is suggested that she refrain from doing inverted postures such as plough pose and shoulder stand and certain breathing exercises such as the kapalabhati (breath of fire). An inverted posture is any pose that elevates the legs, uterus or lower abdominal area above the heart centre. The abdominal area should be free from any pressure for the first few days of menstruation.

There are two perspectives to explaining why women should not practise

inverted postures during menstruation. The western point of view suggests that an inverted posture may lessen or even stop the menstrual flow and possibly increase the flow when it resumes. Moreover eastern yogic philosophy teaches us that inverted postures block the apana (life force) energy from the pelvic region. If inverted postures and/or the breath of fire are practised during this time, women may feel

Moderation and balance are the key words for women during certain courses of their life.

nausea and/or dizzy.

Although moon cycles vary with each woman, precaution should be taken on the first few days of menstruation depending on the intensity of blood flow. Moderation and balance are the key words for women during certain courses of their life. Before beginning a yoga practise consult your health practitioner if you are taking medication, have a heart condition, high blood pressure, or suffer from PMS, endometriosis, irregular menstruation or other specific conditions.

Some general benefits of practising yoga regularly may be: aids in digestion and elimination problems; enhances mental focus and awareness; improves blood circulation and overall flexibility; relieves stress and discomfort from overwork; and strengthens the nervous and respiratory systems. Some specific benefits during. . . .

Menstruation (first days of flow)

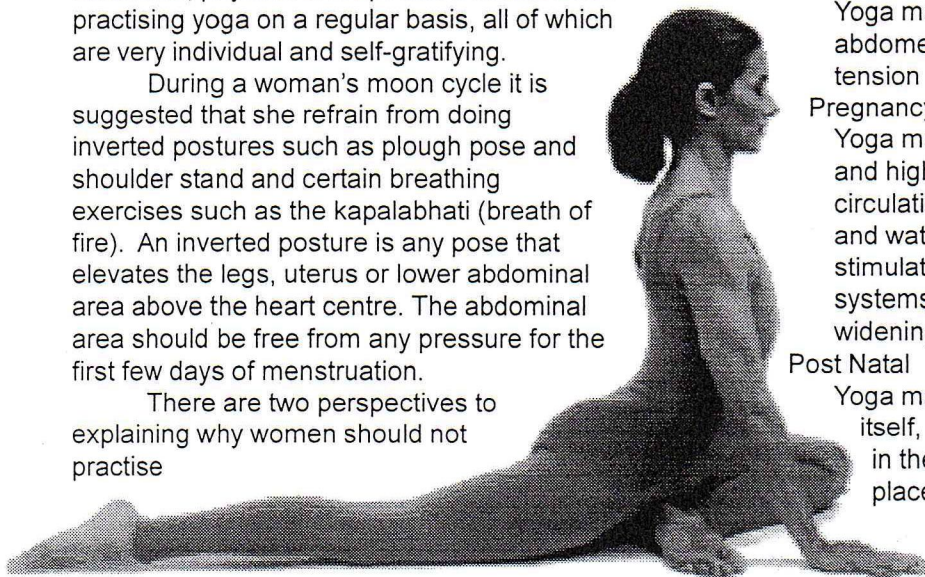
Yoga may alleviate cramps, open the abdomen, reduce fatigue, relieve back tension and assist menstrual flow release.

Pregnancy (last five months)

Yoga may help to alleviate morning sickness and high blood pressure, improve blood circulation and mental focus, reduce fatigue and water retention, relieve back tension, stimulate the digestion and elimination systems, and encourage a natural gentle widening of the pelvic canal.

Post Natal

Yoga may help to encourage the body to heal itself, prevent prolapsed pelvic organs, aid in the recovery of organ tone and placement, and regain muscle tone.



Menopause

Yoga may help to stimulate the ovaries and pituitary gland that control the production of hormones.

Unfortunately there is very little written about yoga for women, however, the following are some suggested reading materials:

- Relax and Renew by Judith Lasater, Ph.D. P.T.
- YOGA Physical Education for Women by Sitadevi Yogendra
- YOGA FOR EVERYONE by Kareen Zebroff
- The Gift Of Giving by Tarn Taran Kaur Khalsa

For more information on the various styles of yoga contact The Yoga Association of BC (YABC) at (604) 682-3269, ext. 9744.

If anyone knows of other books on yoga for women, please call Anna-Lisa Boye at (604) 875-9394, or contact the Vancouver Women's Health Collective (604) 736-5262.

Anna-Lisa Boye is a certified Yoga Instructor and teaches Kundalini, Pregnancy and Post Natal Yoga in Vancouver. She is also the Information Centre Coordinator at the Vancouver Women's Health Collective.

Dr. Jean Adler
Registered Psychologist

3312 Inverness Street
Vancouver, BC
V5Y 4Y4

875-8753

The Vancouver Women's Health Collective
welcomes all women at its new location

**#1 -175 East 15th Avenue
Vancouver, BC
V5T 2P6**

Health Information Line:
(604) 736-5262

Sephira

healing center
"with a focus on women's health"
#10 - 2495 Commercial Drive
Vancouver, BC V5N 4B8
phone - 251-6879

I am pleased to announce my current practice at Sephira Healing Centre. I just opened the doors of this newly created center in mid January with the vision to develop a community healing center, primarily for women, in the Commercial Drive area.

I specialize in women's health with an integrated approach using a variety of techniques. In addition to massage therapy, I practice cranialsacral therapy, somatoemotional release and energy balancing.

My main focus is addressing women's health concerns; *breast health, menstrual pain, menopause, post traumatic stress, osteoporosis, pregnancy, fertility, post-abortion care, eating disorders and healthy body image.* I am interested in working with a diverse population of women. It is my belief that it is necessary to empower women to listen to their bodies' wisdom in a safe healing environment.

I also continue to focus on musculoskeletal concerns for both men and women; *headaches, neck, shoulder, back and foot pain, respiratory and arthritic conditions, stress, and other full body discomfort.* I offer many specific techniques such as manual lymph drainage, fascial release, exercise rehabilitation and even setting you up into a stretch and strengthening program to improve posture.

I look forward to your visit and referrals!

Pam Fichtner
Registered Massage Therapist



SEAD
Self Expression And
Dance Therapy Centre

Individual
Sessions,
Workshops
& Classes

Sunita Romeder M.A.
Tel: (604 254-6795)

Vancouver Women's Health Collective Membership Form

Categories of VWHC Memberships

Volunteer Member
(Sliding Scale -
pay what you can up to \$25/year)

Associate Member
(\$10-25/year)

**Health Practitioner/Therapist/
Business Member** (\$50/year)

All VWHC Members receive the VWHC Newsletter *Infusion*, invitations to special events and may participate at the Info Centre Committee, Steering Committee and the Annual General Meeting.

Volunteer Members:

- Expected to become involved with the Info Centre Committee or a VWHC Project
- Responsible for attending one Bingo shift per year

Health Practitioner/Therapist/Business Member

- Entitled to one free newsletter listing

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____
(street) (city/province) (postal code)

Membership Category: _____ Fee enclosed: \$ _____

Donation: \$ _____ (a charitable receipt will be sent to you)

Please return to:

Vancouver Women's Health Collective
#1 - 175 East 15th Avenue Vancouver, BC V5T 2P6

Visit Our Information Centre at the New Location

#1 - 175 East 15th Avenue, Vancouver Info Line: 736-5262

The Info Centre has a wide variety of health information and volunteers available to help you research your own health issues.

- Check out our Resource Centre!
- Women's Health Library
 - Health/Holistic Practitioner or Therapist Files
 - Health Information Files
 - Videos on Women's Health
 - Helpful Volunteers
 - VWHC Menopause Kit
 - "The Keeper" Menstrual Cup
 - Reusable Cloth Menstrual Pads

Staffed exclusively by Volunteers, the Info Centre is open:

Monday through to Thursday: 10am - 1pm

Tuesday additionally: 3pm - 6pm

Wednesday additionally: 6:30pm - 8:30pm