

A Happy Healthy You: A Woman's Guide to Happiness, Health & Harmony

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Health is a concern for every woman. Some women struggle all their lives to be healthy, while others seem to keep healthy without even trying. In *A Happy Healthy You*, five professional women come together to reveal what they believe is necessary to achieve and maintain good health. They assert that, “with proper nutrition, movement, and engagement in life, every woman can embrace a new model for aging that is dramatically different from the one our grandmothers followed.”

The basic building blocks of good health—including attitude, exercise, and nutrition—are covered in the first section of the book. In the chapters on attitude, psychologist Jan DeLipsey discusses the importance of hope and of using language as a means of bringing about positive change. In chapters on physical fitness, exercise physiologist Lu Jurcova Phillips discusses both aerobic exercise and weight training. She also includes a very informative chapter on the damage done by wearing heels, carrying a purse, and even sitting with crossed legs; specific stretching and weight training exercises are offered to counteract this damage. Dr. Jyotsna Sahni contributes chapters on nutrition and the importance of maintaining a healthy weight. Though the advice on portion control and eating lots of fruits and vegetables will be familiar to most readers, information on factors that affect weight and a seven-step plan for weight loss will be valuable for many.

The next part of the book focuses on health conditions that women often struggle with, including menopause, osteoporosis, heart disease, breast cancer, and sleep disorders. Sahni is the primary contributor here, but the chapter on breast cancer comes from Oncologist Kristi McIntyre. These chapters are particularly valuable because they address problems women are often hesitant to talk about, like urinary incontinence and vaginal dryness brought on by menopause. Treatments for various maladies are discussed, and the information is thorough without being condescending or oversimplified. The last section, written by lawyer and life coach Mary Johanna McCurley, covers topics that include building and maintaining good relationships, finding inner peace, and making change happen.

A Happy Healthy You is an accessible book with a conversational tone and practical advice. The authors bring both their professional expertise and their personal experience to the book, often sharing personal anecdotes in addition to stories from their clients and patients. There is, however, one significant flaw. Throughout the book, mention is made of various studies and experiments from which the authors have drawn their information. The references for these studies are generally not provided. There is a brief notes section that lists twenty-two sources, but it is not comprehensive. Readers who want more information will be unable to find the studies referred to.

Ultimately, all women will find worthwhile health information here. Those who are struggling to become healthy will find practical steps to help them achieve their goals, and those who are already healthy will find ways to improve their quality of life and increase their happiness.

CATHERINE THURESON (July 15, 2010)

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