

Tired of hearing: “*It’s all in your head. Here, take a pill...*”?



Find the *Right Doctor*

The Savvy Woman’s Health Guide™

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Is this you?

Are you tired of feeling sick?

Tired of the “same ole” medical advice?

Fed up with feeling your doctor just isn’t listening—*again*?

Then this booklet is for YOU.

This is your first step to getting better medical help tailored for you. Explore your options. Don’t be afraid to ask questions.

Here is your FIVE STEP ACTION PLAN:

Step 1. Find the right doctor: How?

- 👉 Talk to your friends. Talk to state and local medical societies. Visit libraries.
- 👉 Ask a doctor or nurse you know personally for names.
- 👉 Check the Yellow Pages for physicians board-certified in their specialty.
- 👉 Ask a hospital referral center for names of local health professionals interested in prevention, wellness, and mid-life women’s health care.
- 👉 Check the state board of medical examiners to see whether or not a physician has ever had disciplinary actions or a number of malpractice suits.
- 👉 Hit the internet—read *valid* medical websites first. However—don’t believe everything you read without double-checking from other sources.
- 👉 Find an internist or family physician to coordinate your care. Most of your routine medical care can be managed by one doctor with referral to specialists when needed.

Most current health insurance plans have you identify a primary care physician who serves as the “gatekeeper” for your health care. She or he checks your general health, treats your aches and pains, approves screening or diagnostic tests and medications, and makes referrals to specialists.

Find someone you trust, respect, and with whom you feel comfortable talking. Don’t be afraid to change doctors if you are not satisfied.

Is This You?

- 👉 Are you tired of feeling sick?
- 👉 Are you tired of feeling run down?
- 👉 Are you tired of feeling “fuzzy brained”?
- 👉 Are you tired of not sleeping?
- 👉 Are you tired of gaining weight?
- 👉 Are you tired of losing your hair?
- 👉 Are you tired of those headaches when your period starts?
- 👉 Has your interest in sex gone down the tube?
- 👉 Are you just *tired* of feeling *tired*?

Then *The Savvy Woman’s Guide™* health series of books is for YOU:

The Savvy Woman’s Guide™ to PCOS

The Savvy Woman’s Guide™ to Testosterone

Coming Soon:

The Savvy Woman’s Guide™ Hormone Workbook—Put the “H” Back in Happy

The Savvy Woman’s Guide™ to Estrogen

The Savvy Woman’s Guide™ to Anxiety & Depression

and others . . .

For more in depth reading on these topics:

1. *Screaming to Be Heard: Hormone Connections Women Suspect and Doctors Still Ignore* (Revised edition, M. Evans, New York, 2001)
2. *Women, Weight, and Hormones*, M. Evans, New York, 2003
3. *It’s My Ovaries, Stupid!*, Scribner, New York, 2003

For more information:

Contact Dr. Vliet at www.herplace.com or our

Main number: 520-797-9131.

Dr. Vliet’s medical practice, HER Place, has clinical offices in Tucson AZ and Dallas TX.

Getting the best health care is a two-way street:

Patients want doctors to:

- 👉 Be knowledgeable and competent
- 👉 Answer questions honestly and completely
- 👉 Explain medical problems in clear language
- 👉 Spend enough time with patients
- 👉 Really care about patients' health
- 👉 Make an effort to get patients to explain problems and symptoms completely.

Doctors want patients to:

- 👉 Arrive on time for appointments and be prepared with what questions they want addressed
- 👉 Keep focused when describing symptoms—there isn't time to give too much detail; keep to the key points.
- 👉 Have an up to date list of medications and OTC supplements they are taking
- 👉 Follow instructions with medications and other treatment recommendations
- 👉 Read instructions that are given and follow them.
- 👉 Give new approaches time to work before calling the office to change something

Step 5. Start now!

You have taken a crucial first step in reading this booklet. Now, don't stop here! Start making other positive changes today.

You may have all the money, friends, family, relationships, and anything else you desire, but if you don't have your health you can't fully enjoy all the rest.

Organize your health information *now*.

YOU are worth it.

Questions to ask and tasks to do:

- 👉 What is her/his interest in preventive medicine and “wellness” approaches?
- 👉 What is her/his interest in women's health and has he/she been attending update medical education programs in health problems unique to women, especially at mid-life and menopause?
- 👉 If not, find someone else.
- 👉 What is her or his training, specialty and professional interests?
- 👉 What are the payment policies. Your choices for health benefits, and even physicians, may be limited to a great extent by your health plan requirements. That's why it is so important to compare what different plans offer when you have “open enrollment” times at your place of employment.
- 👉 The plan that has the lowest premium and co-payment may be the most expensive in the long haul if you pay preventive services from your own pocket.

Step 2. Organize your health information

- 👉 If you are menstruating, keep track of when during your monthly cycle the problems are worse.
- 👉 Take an honest look at your self and your habits. Write down all the ones you know you need to change.
- 👉 Make a list of every over the counter supplement you take. List all the ingredients for each one. Update the list regularly. Take this list to every medical appointment.
- 👉 Get your family medical history and write it down. Find out this information now, while it is available.
- 👉 Make a notebook of your medical records from your health professionals that you keep at home. Take it with you to medical appointments for quick reference.
- 👉 Get copies of all lab tests and diagnostic tests that you have done. Add them to your notebook. Update this regularly.

Step 3. Make the most of your appointments

Most health professionals today have very little time to spend with patients. You need to know your medical history, and be able to give this information in an organized way to make the most of your appointment.

Make your doctor's visit effective. Take these steps before your appointment:

- Organize your health information as I outlined in Step 2. Take this information with you to your appointment, especially the list of medicines and supplements.
- Make a list of what questions you want to address at this appointment. Only you know how you feel—for better or worse. Only you can get that across. Write down key points!
- Describe whether your current treatment is working or not.
- Ask about new approaches you think may be suitable for you, and talk with your doctor about the pros and cons.
- Don't make medication changes on your own, or add over-the-counter herbs and new supplements without talking with your doctor to check for possible interactions and side effects.
- Don't ask your friends for medical advice about your prescriptions—talk with your doctor! Talk with your friends to get ideas and resources, but remember: their medicines won't necessarily be what YOU need because each person's symptoms, body chemistry, and medication response is different.
- Don't be afraid to speak up. If you don't understand say so.
- **Treat your physician with respect for her/his time and intelligence and expect the same response in return.**

Step 4. Do your homework. Read more.

Each of us has to do our homework to make *wise* decisions. Know yourself, your health history, health risks, your values and preferences. Make informed, intelligent choices among the many options available to you today.

Many of us early “baby boomers” are at a point *now* when we have to make important decisions about our course of action for our health. We can't wait another ten years for “definitive” answers to come in from research. You make the best decisions you can now, based on what we know at this time. You can change course when new information becomes available.

Read medical articles, often available free on the internet. The internet has more information available at your fingertips than ever before in history. Use it wisely and carefully.

Read ones that are *not* trying to sell you more supplements. Go to independent sources that don't carry advertising, and aren't sponsored by large pharmaceutical companies or purveyors of herbs, vitamins, and other “quick fix” remedies.

Select resources that help you work in partnership with your physician, not ones that try to replace your own doctor.

I wrote *The Savvy Woman's Guide*™ series, and my earlier books, to help you work more effectively with your doctors to get what you need. I write from my own experiences as a physician advocate for women and as a patient in a health system that has not listened well to the voices of women. I have no financial ties to any pharmaceutical company, pharmacy or product. I just want you to have the best information possible.

I attend the World Congresses of organizations such as the International Menopause Society, the International Society of Gynecological Endocrinology, The European Neuroendocrine Association and others, to keep up with cutting edge scientific information presented by world-renown researchers and physicians. I am committed to personally reviewing the medical studies to bring in new information to make my books as helpful to you possible.