

This newsletter is brought to you by Well-Woman Peer Educators and the Well-woman Health Promotion Program at Barnard College

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Volume 9, Issue 6

# The Well-Woman

Guide to Recent News in Women's Health  
Barnard College Student Health Service



## Note from the Director



The warm Spring weather has arrived (at least sometimes) and we begin to pull out our more revealing clothes. For some people this is an uncomfortable time. Skimpy clothes and bathing suits raise issues of body image, weight and self esteem. As Well-Woman celebrates "Body Appreciation" week starting April 21st, we urge you to think about not only how your body looks, but also about all the wonderful things it does. The human body is a marvel. It sings and dances, thinks and creates, grows and procreates and does much more. Eating for health and enjoyment, exercising to maintain strength and flexibility are ways of showing our bodies that we care for and take care of it. To be healthy is to be neither too thin from food restriction, nor too heavy from overindulgence. In between those two poles is a world of good eating, healthy exercise and positive body image. It's a good place to be.

Giselle Harrington

## Dates of Interest:

- April 22: Body Celebration Tabling  
LL Mac 11am-1pm
- April 22: Alexander Technique  
Workshop Atrium 12-1pm
- April 23: Midnight Swim  
Barnard Pool 11pm-12am
- April 23: Glamour Panel Discussion  
RSVP Reservations Only

## Health Myths Exposed— The Truth About Ephedra

The FDA reported adverse events associated with the use of ephedra products marketed as dietary supplements for weight loss, energy, and body-building purposes in September, 1994. Adverse reactions, which can occur in young, otherwise healthy individuals, vary from nervousness, insomnia, dizziness, tremor, alternations in blood pressure or heart rate, headache, gastrointestinal distress to chest pain, myocardial infarction, hepatitis, stroke, seizures, psychosis, and death.

Products that contain Ma huang (Ephedra sinica or Chinese ephedra, pseudoephedrine, and norpseudoephedrine), are touted for their reported stimulant effects (pep or energy) and their ability to enhance metabolism with subsequent weight loss (so-called "fat burners"). The RAND study (2003), commissioned by the NIH, found limited evidence of ephedra's effect on short-term weight loss, and minimal evidence of an effect on performance enhancement in physical activities. The study reviewed over 16,000 adverse events reported after ephedra use and provides new evidence suggesting that dietary supplements containing ephedra may present significant or unreasonable safety risks.

Related weight-loss products often marketed as "dieter's or slimming teas" contain a variety of strong botanical laxatives and diuretics. Adverse reactions associated with these products are characteristic of those seen in laxative abuse syndromes, and include severe electrolyte imbalances leading to cardiac arrhythmia and death. The most recent RAND study cautions that the risk can increase with the dose, with strenuous exercise, and with other stimulants such as caffeine.



# Femme FITales

By Katie Kupfer '03 and Ebony Wiresinger '04



Currently, Well Woman is conducting interviews for the next batch of peer educators, and as I participate in this process I am saddened that my "turn" is over. However, I know that Well-Woman is something that will always be a part of my life, even after Barnard. However, each year as our senior Well-Women graduate I wonder where they go off to and how Well Woman remains an influence on their lives. This year, Well-Woman celebrated its 10 year anniversary with a reunion, providing us all the opportunity to answer this question.

In addition to the Well Women alum, we asked senior Well Women what they would take from their experience. So for the new peer educators out there, here are a few reasons why soon you will love Well Woman as much as we do.

**Jayne B., Well Woman 1995-96**

**WHAT DO YOU REMEMBER MOST ABOUT WELL-WOMAN?**

Working with a passionate group of women, lots of laughter, and a great sense of community.

**HOW HAS WW STAYED A PART OF YOUR LIFE?**

Since Barnard, I have maintained an interest in women's health issues and healthcare. Well Woman has helped me make better informed decisions and changed how I read health information.

**WHAT DID YOU LEARN AT THE REUNION?**

The sense of community that I remembered still exists.

**Anita, BC '03**

**WHAT WILL YOU REMEMBER MOST ABOUT WELL WOMAN?**

I think just being at an all women's college and seeing a group of women who are so passionate about the world and issues relating to women's health is something really inspiring about Well-Woman. I'll always remember all the amazing things I learn from each of the individual Well-Woman and their different life experiences as well as the dedication that Giselle and Eileen put into running this club.

**HOW WILL WW STAY A PART OF YOUR LIFE AFTER BARNARD?**

I think Well-Woman will stay a part of my life after Barnard because it really has helped shape the course of my life. I don't think I would be nearly as interested in issues relating to women's health had I not joined. It was always a topic of interest for me, but just having been in Well-Woman and being able to learn so much more and talk to a larger student base to find out their experiences with women's health has really changed the trajectory of my future. Now, I really think that women's health is something that will stay a very strong concern in my future as a (hopeful) physician and the knowledge and experience I've gained here at Well-Woman is something that I'll always keep with me.

**WHAT DID YOU LEARN AT THE REUNION?**

I think I realized at the reunion how important and unique Well-Woman is to the school community. It does more than just help the school community—I think it really helps us as Well-Women too. Just reflecting back on Well-Woman during the reunion, it was interesting to see how each of us has changed a bit after entering -it really builds leadership and is a forum for the thoughts of it's members. I think just being able to feel that you have a voice and can make a change is something that really builds leadership in people. I think it's a very empowering movement in this way and I think Giselle must be so proud of the generation of women she (with the help of Eileen) is helping to really go out into the world and may be change by having formed and helping keep this program alive. The combined experiences of all the well women and what we do in the future with all this is something that I'm really excited and curious to find out at the next ten year reunion.

**Michelle, BC '03**

**WHAT WILL YOU REMEMBER MOST?**

I will remember the many graphic and hysterical conversations that the group has had, and the many friendships that I have made as a result of Well-woman.

**HOW WILL WW STAY A PART OF YOUR LIFE?**

This doesn't apply to me yet!





**WHAT DID YOU LEARN AT THE REUNION?**

I learned that WW had a major impact on its peer educators and the student body back when it was just a little bud of a program, and it continues to do so today as it grows bigger and stronger.

*Stacey, Well Woman 1993-1996*

*Well Woman Grad Assistant 1996-1997*

**WHAT DO YOU REMEMBER MOST?**

I remember the weekly meetings, the gyn ed sessions, and running into people from the ed sessions on campus and having them express their gratitude.

**HOW HAS WW STAYED A PART OF YOUR LIFE?**

I currently work at Columbia's Health Services and develop similar programs.

**SO IT PRETTY MUCH SHAPED YOUR CAREER?**

Yes!

**WHAT DID YOU LEARN AT THE REUNION?**

The Well-Women have a lot of energy and there is a similar enthusiasm to what I remembered.

*Marie, Well Woman 1993-1995*

**WHAT DO YOU REMEMBER MOST?**

The ed sessions and the weekly meetings.

**HOW HAS WW STAYED A PART OF YOUR LIFE?**

I supervise 60 peer educators at NYU. So I'm doing almost the same things.

**WHAT DID YOU LEARN AT THE REUNION?**

That not many people from my year came! Also, there are more people of color in Well Woman now than there was and I think that's great.

**Well-Woman**

has a new web address

Check out our new web site at

**[barnard.edu/wwoman](http://barnard.edu/wwoman)**

**Body Celebration  
Events**

**APRIL 22 & 23**



Well-Woman believes that every body deserves celebration! We appreciate the hard work our body does everyday to keep us functioning. Join us during Body Celebration Week for a series of self expression, learning experiences, good times, and lots of self-care gifts for you.

**April 22:**

**Body Celebration Tabling**

11am-1pm Lower Level Mac

**Alexander Technique Workshop**

Atrium 12-1pm

**April 23:**

**Glamour Panel Discussion**

RSVP Reservations Only

**Midnight Swim**

Barnard Pool 11pm-12am

sponsored by

**Well-Woman & Physical Education**



## End of the Year Reminders from Health Services

### SENIORS TAKE NOTE:

- Before leaving Barnard schedule your routine gyn exam at HS (x4-2091).
- Do you have enough birth control pills to last the summer? If not you will need a gyn exam for a new prescription
- Please take care of you **outstanding Health Service bills**— failure to do so may **delay or prevent you from receiving your diploma or transcripts.**
- You can extend your Student Health Insurance through the summer, **Deadline May 15!** Call HS for more information.

### TO ALL BARNARD STUDENTS:

- **Student Health Insurance** can be extended through the summer months— **enrollment cut off date is MAY 15!**
- **Student Health Services will close for clinical care on May 16th.** Make sure you have enough allergy serum, birth control pills, acne medicine, and any other medications you may need to last until next semester.
- Wear sunblock over the summer. Remember that birth control pills make your skin more sensitive to the sun.
- If you are traveling to a foreign country and need **immunization**, please come to HS early. You may need a series of inoculations and some time to build up immunity.

### Peer Educator Office Hours end May 3rd!

Peer Educators will be preparing for exams.

### Well-Woman Q&A:

**A.** Is there a Weight Watchers program close to Barnard College?

**Q.** Columbia University has a Weight Watchers at Work program. The meetings are conducted Thursdays at noon, call Carine Hock at 854-2897 for details.

**Confidential Health Care is Available to You :** You can get emergency contraception if you had unprotected sex and are concerned about a pregnancy. Pregnancy testing and counseling for all options, carrying to term , adoption, abortion are all choices available to you in Student Health Services.

View brochures on our web site [www.barnard.edu/health/publications.htm](http://www.barnard.edu/health/publications.htm)

#### Well-Woman Office Hours

	Office	Peer Ed
Mon	1-5pm	7-9pm
Tues	1-5pm	
Wed	1-5pm	7-9pm
Thurs	1-5pm	7-9pm
Fri	1-5pm	
Sun		7-9pm



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**We're on the Web!**  
[www.barnard.edu/wwoman.htm](http://www.barnard.edu/wwoman.htm)