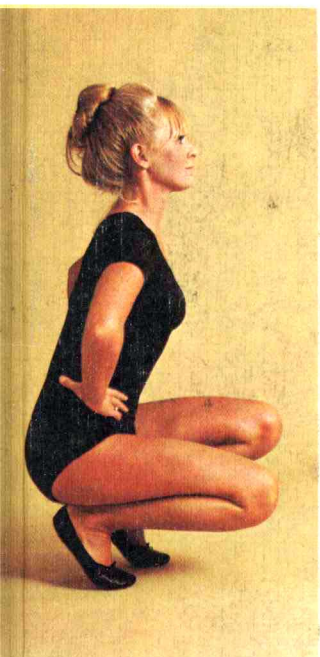


WOMAN ALIVE /

# *Understanding Your Body*



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WOMAN ALIVE

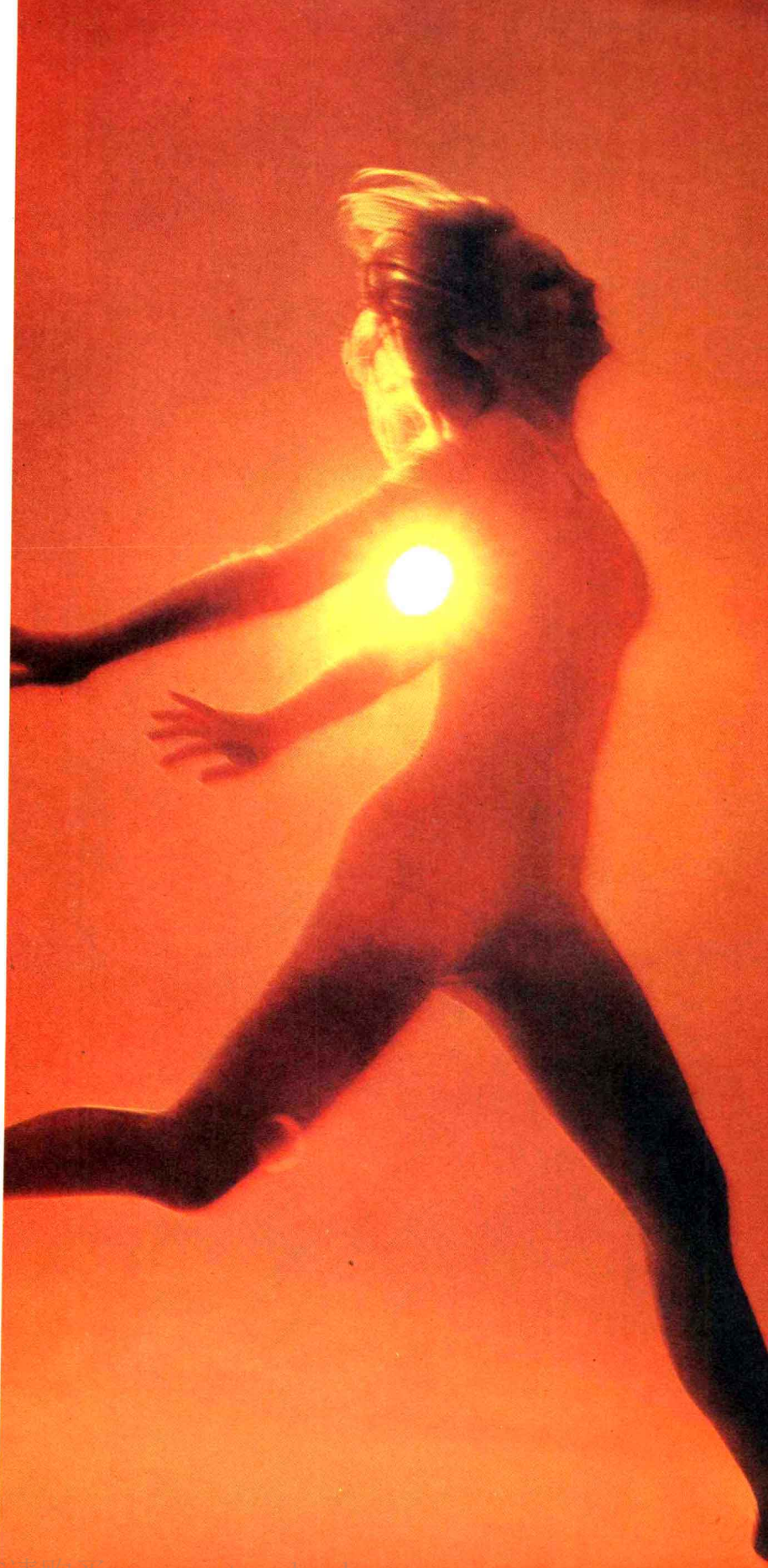
*Understanding  
Your Body*

by Frederic C. Appel

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***This book is about health. Your good health. It starts with a clear and simple explanation of how the female body works, telling you just what you need to know about your own body in order to keep it in perfect condition. Later chapters lead you to proper care of yourself to make you feel on top of the world mentally and emotionally as well as physically. Here are facts about a woman's psychological outlook, about the nervous system, menstruation, and the right eating habits. A final section answers some often-asked questions on such important topics as aging, menopause, and sleep. In all, this book is a guide to the kind of vital health that makes you feel — and look — your best as today's Woman Alive.***

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# A Woman's Body

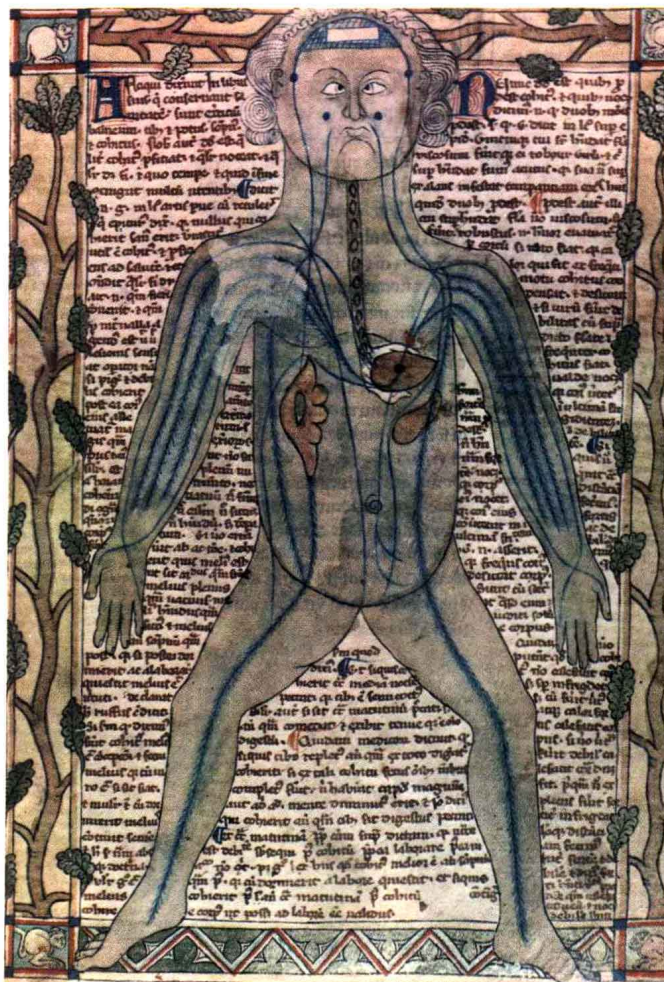
This is a good time to be alive. Every day brings us new insights into the workings of the human body. And understanding the body is the key to health. But to people of past ages the body long remained a mystery.

**Below:** the artist of 30,000 years ago emphasized woman's role as the giver of life.



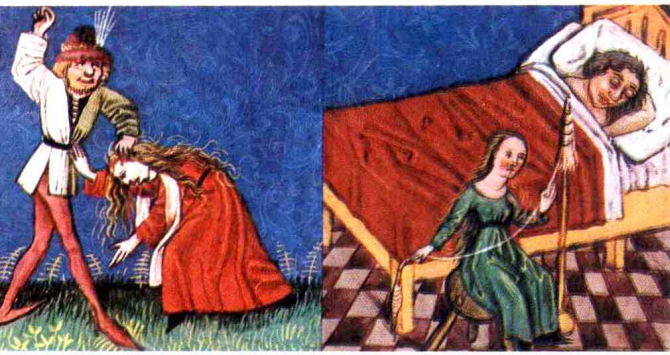
**Above:** the four moods of man. Doctors of the 1300's thought that the body held four "humors." The dominant humor determined temperament: sad, cheerful, violent, or lazy.

**Below:** in the 1200's surgical operations were rare. With little practical knowledge to go on, anatomists sometimes sketched the right organs—but often in the wrong places.



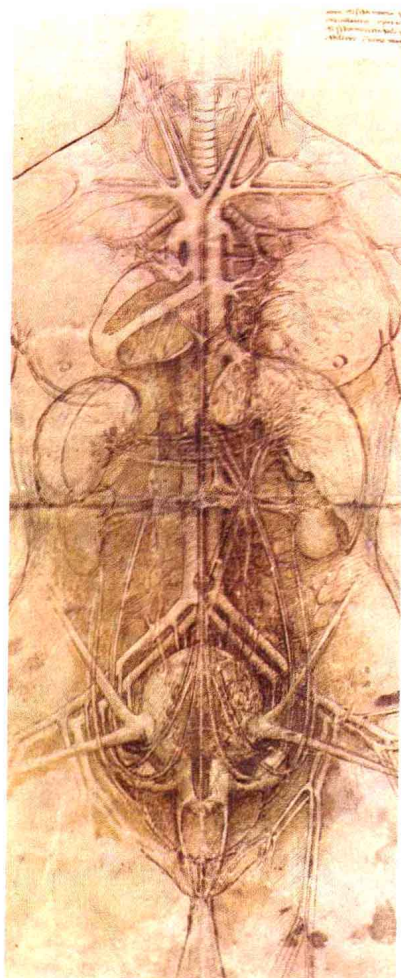
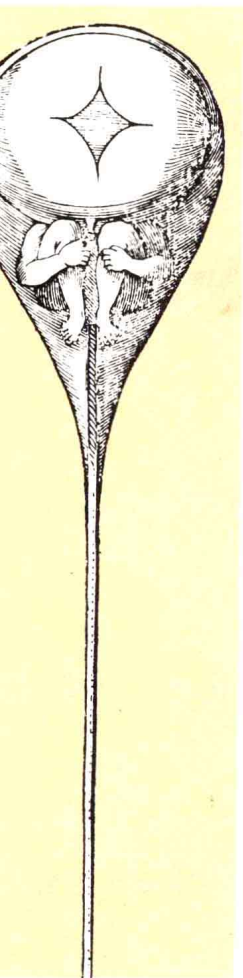
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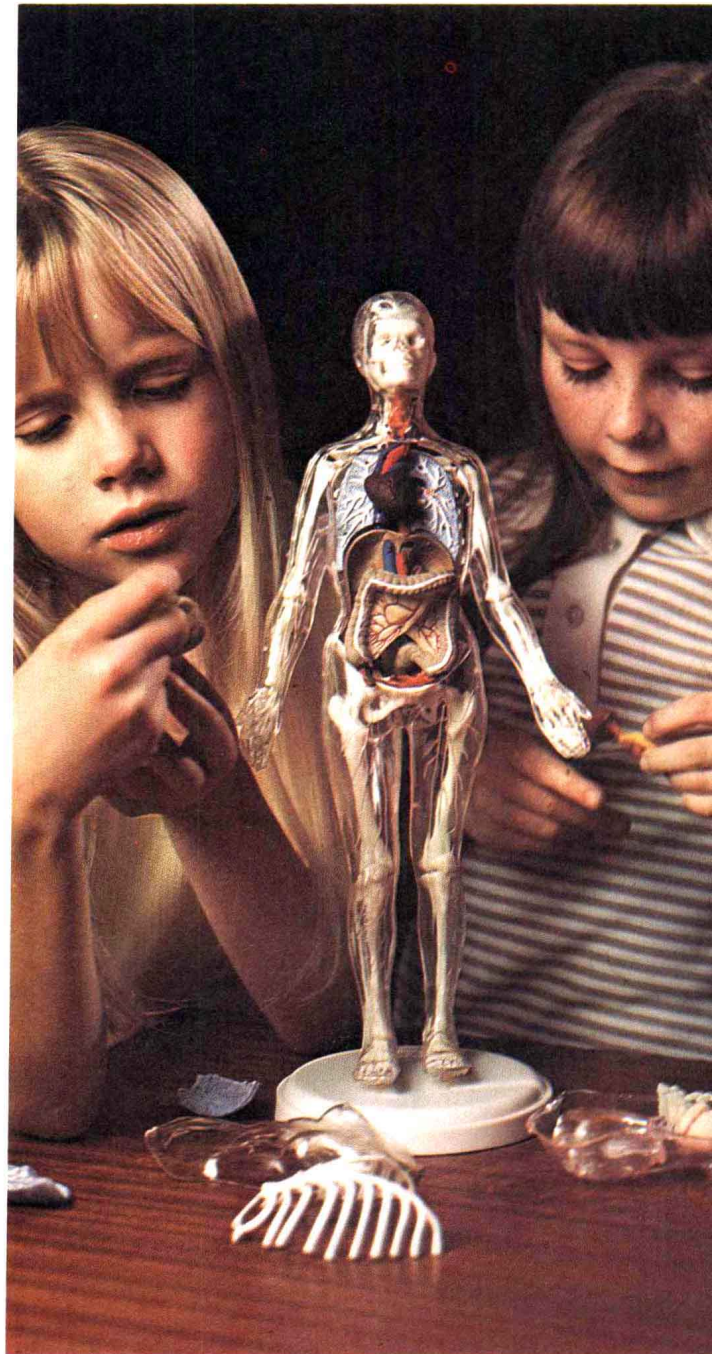


**Below left:** the sperm held a completely formed embryo, according to biologists of the 1600's. The woman's body was merely the house in which the baby would grow.

**Below right:** the Italian artist Leonardo da Vinci made some of the first anatomical drawings of a woman's body. But his discoveries went unheeded for many centuries.



**Below:** learning how our bodies work is now an essential part of education. By studying a see-through model of a woman's body, these children will learn with ease lessons that baffled scientists for hundreds of years. Anatomy is no longer a puzzle. And while scientists continue to probe the secrets of the human body, modern medicine can already promise us longer and healthier lives than our ancestors dreamed could be possible.





# How We Abuse Our Bodies

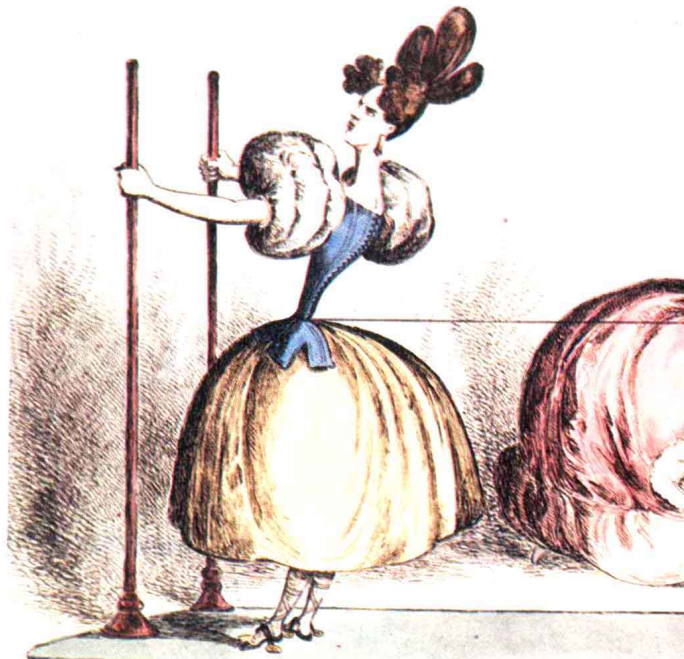
Fashion and custom have often made women do weird and dangerous things to their bodies. Although fewer physical abuses exist today, drugs, drink, and gluttony still take a toll.



**Above:** babies were once wrapped in tight swaddling clothes to keep out "bad air."

**Left:** Elizabethan ladies wore poisonous cosmetics that actually ate away the skin.

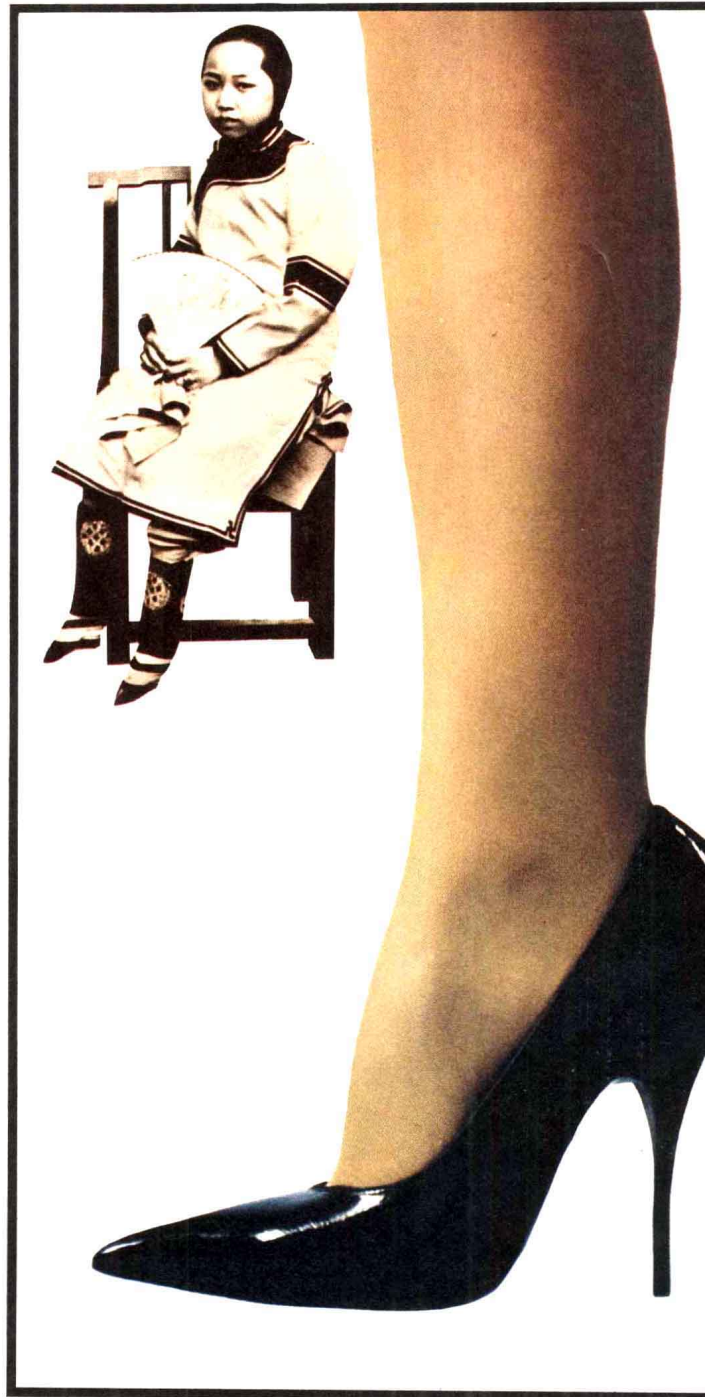
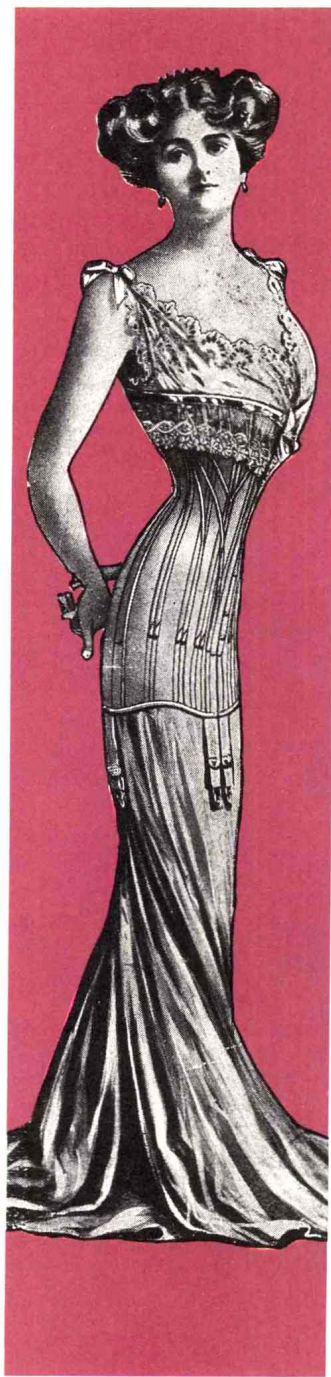
**Below:** fashion in the 1830's demanded a tiny waist achieved by extremely tight lacing. This sometimes made women faint away.





**Below left:** women of the Burmese Padaung tribe still wear heavy brass collars to stretch their necks. Built up as a girl grows up, these collars are never removed throughout life.

**Below right:** the desirable shape of 1909. Corsets like these were often so tight that they damaged the rib-cage and even forced vital organs dangerously out of shape.



**Above left:** Chinese girls used to have their feet tightly bound from babyhood to stop them growing. Their bones became twisted, and walking was both difficult and painful.

**Above:** shoes like this are harmful, too. Apart from being uncomfortable to wear, they crush the feet, destroy natural balance, and make it hard to walk or stand.

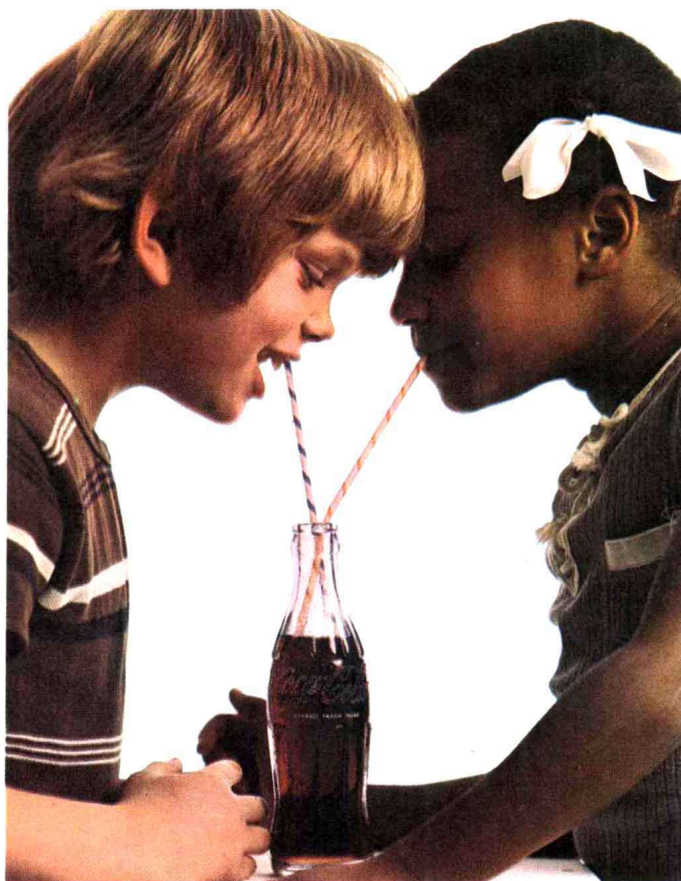


**Below:** the plump woman in Frans Hals' famous 17th-century oil painting, *The Merry Company*, looks like she has already indulged heavily in the sausages and bread heaped high on the table. The habit of overeating is a hard one to break, as shown by current statistics on the number of people who are overweight or obese. Yet many continue to eat far more than they need for health.



**Above:** how long before overdrinking makes the ravishing young woman look like the ravaged old woman? This drawing of the 1800's shows the evils of too much gin.

**Below:** sipping cola from a straw may be fun, but too much is far from good for children. Cola can become addictive.







**Above:** the ashtray chockablock with cigarette stubs tells of a heavy smoker—someone who is running serious risk of getting lung cancer. Death statistics include a higher percentage of women each year.

**Above right:** many people today seek an escape from the pressures of life by smoking marijuana, even though its use is illegal.



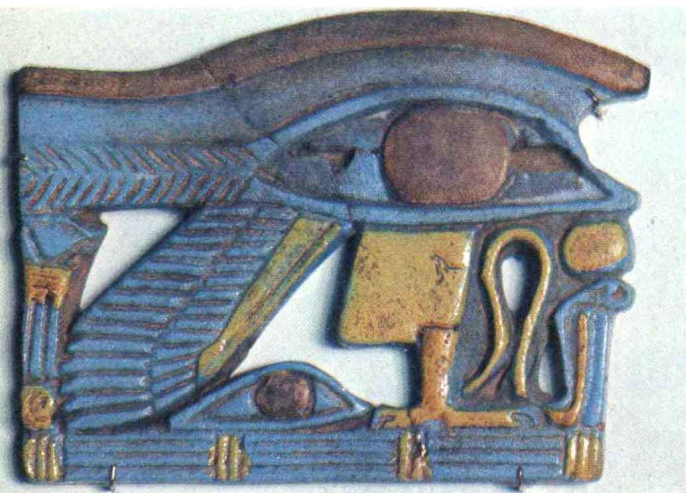
**Below:** traffic, crowds, noise, and dirt—all are typical of New York and other big cities. The traffic and crowds add greatly to the stress and tension of modern city living. Noise has been proven to cause excess fatigue and insomnia. And dirt helps aggravate air pollution. Many women today do volunteer work with organizations that are trying to save and improve the natural environment.





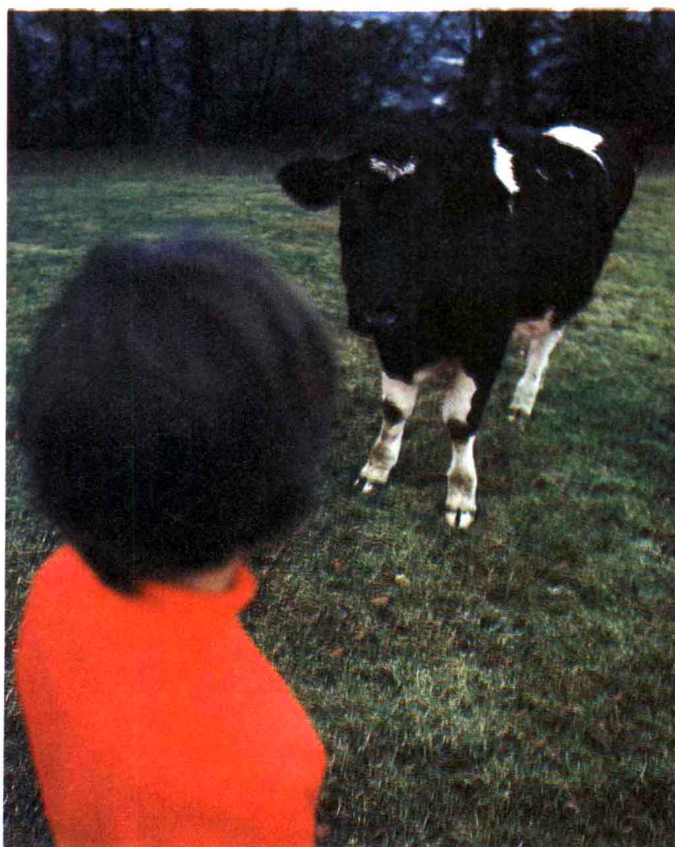
# Copper Bracelets and other Cure Alls

Potions, brews, and cures are all part of a folk medicine that has been passed from generation to generation. Today, many traditional remedies are still known and used.

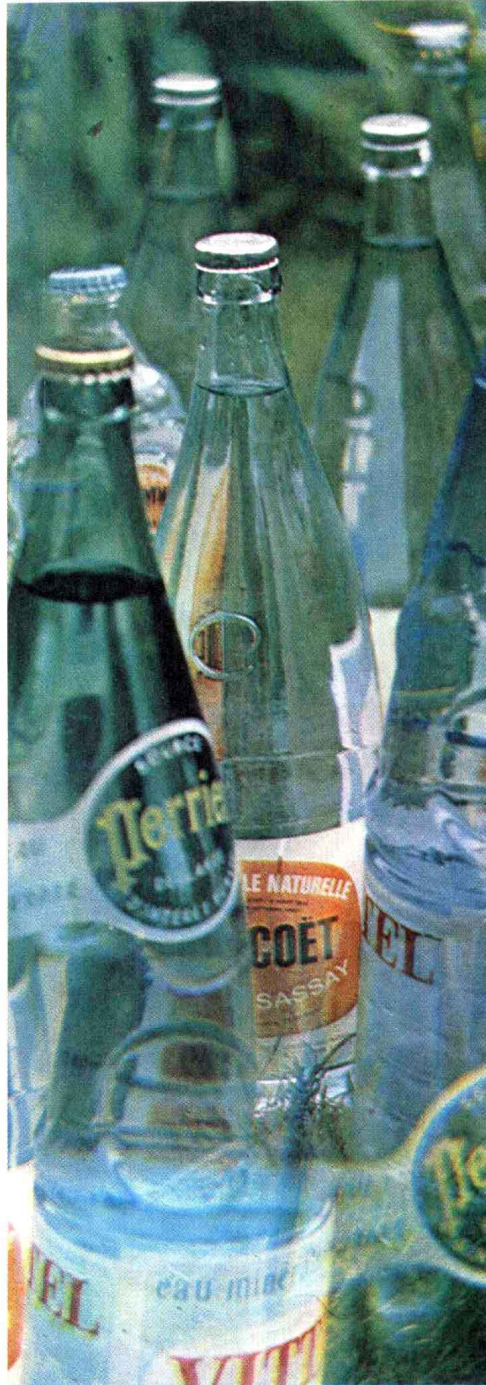
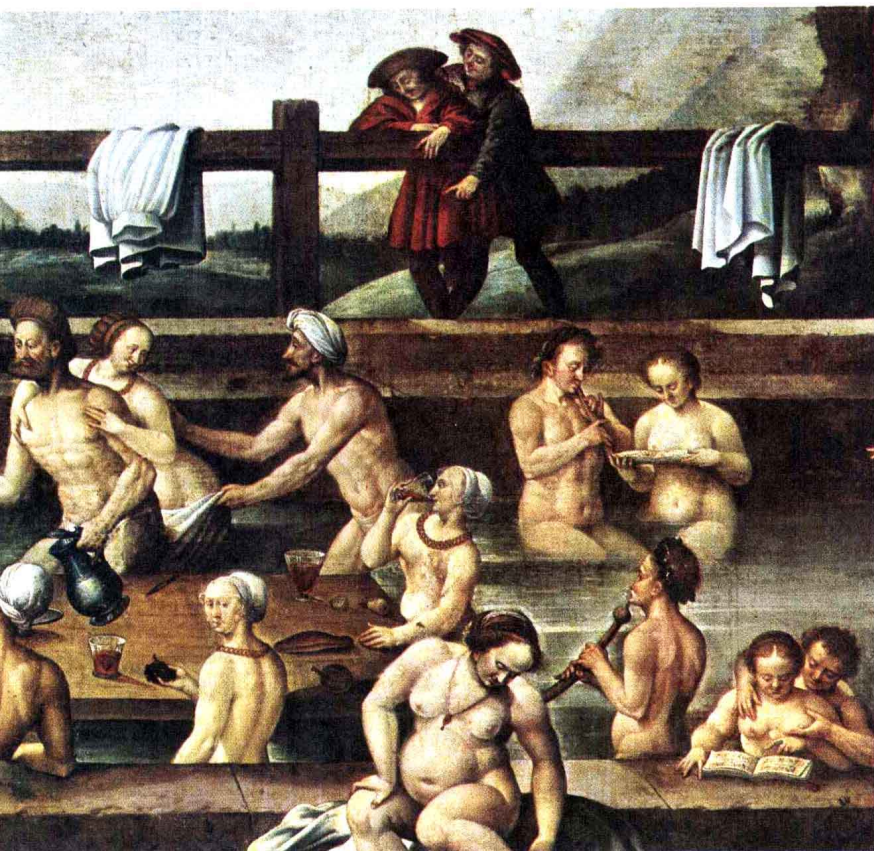


**Above:** the garden yields its sage to the women shown in a 15th-century miniature. Herbs have long been used medicinally.

**Left and below left:** ancient Egyptians made amulets, or good luck charms, to ward off sickness. People today sometimes wear copper bracelets as a preventative against rheumatism, or even as a cure.







**Above:** “taking the waters” was the thing to do in the old days, and there still are some frequented mineral spas in the world. But the goings on, shown in this 16th-century painting, are hardly typical of today.

**Left:** boy eyes cow. Maybe he’s heard the old tale that the breath of a cow cures whooping cough, and wants to see Bossy play doctor.

**Top center:** garlic not only enhances flavor of food, but is also said to aid health by stimulating appetite and digestion, clearing the head, and relieving coughs. Garlic now also comes in an easy-to-use capsule form.

**Above right:** bottled mineral waters, drunk on their own or with meals, are popular on continental Europe as an aid to digestion.





## *Health and Beauty*

Happily for the modern woman, she is most often judged for the vitality, poise, and attractiveness that comes from simple good health and proper grooming. For her, beauty is the fruit of the bloom of health—and she can measure up just by common-sense care.

**Above and above left:** a splash of water is a fun way to start face care. Phoenician women of antiquity also bathed for beauty, as shown by this ancient terra cotta figurine.

**Below left and below:** when swimming started in Europe in the 1800's, women were swathed from neck to toe for modesty. Today, nothing need stand between you and the sun.





**Below:** the mouth-filling taste of a crisp apple is a treat that has a health bonus. Apples not only provide you with valuable vitamins, but also help keep teeth cleaner.

**Bottom:** “beauty sleep” and “sweet dreams” may be clichés, but restful and adequate sleep is essential to good looks—and a proper sleep is one that is filled with dreams.



**Below:** dressed comfortably for the season and wearing the right shoes, you could probably walk for miles. And what a world of good it would do you! Walking keeps you fit and trim, tones up muscles, and fights tension. A long ramble with your child can be filled with fun, a sense of adventure, and healthful exercise. Walking is also fun on your own, if you can get away by yourself.





# *The Rhythm of Your Life*

## 1

Since this is a book about health, let's start at the beginning. How do you feel? Right now, this very minute? Would you say you're in the pink of condition? Buoyant, sunny-natured, and up to most any challenge? Or perhaps you feel a bit off your peak, a trifle heavy and dull. Maybe you are even downright edgy and irritable.

However you feel, chances are that the present state of your body and emotions has something—possibly quite a bit—to do with your menstrual month. For, although countless outside pressures contribute to the way you feel at any particular moment, it is an established fact that your sense of well-being—the state of body and mind that we call health—is profoundly influenced by the fact that, in nature's eyes, your body was designed for childbearing. Whether you ever fulfill this biological role or not, your body has been provided with special organs and special functions. And, beginning with the time you reach puberty, your body prepares itself each month to bear a child. With nearly clockwork regularity, interrupted only by pregnancy, stress or illness, your womb builds up a special lining rich in tiny blood vessels to receive, nourish and protect a newly conceived baby. And if you do not become pregnant, the lining is broken down and shed each month in a flow of blood.

Every woman knows that there are days when, in spite of all life's problems, it feels good to be alive, when things run smoothly, and she feels in full control of her life. On the other hand, there are days—usually just before your period—when the outlook seems unbelievably gloomy. The whole world seems to be against you. And as if this weren't

Right: under the surface of a woman's everyday life, the menstrual cycle—which usually lasts for more than 30 years—moves in regular rhythm.

