

Sexual Health



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While Americans feel free to tell medical doctors of our health ills from headaches to hemorrhoids, and to tell psychologists of our mental problems from depression to delusions, there is one area that affects both our physical and mental health that most people don't discuss with either doctor or psychologist when something goes wrong: sexual health. According to a survey published by the American Medical Association, 43 percent of women and 31 percent of men in the United States experience some form of sexual dysfunction. And the problems are largely hidden in silence, so exacerbated. Doctors don't initiate the topic with patients; neither do most psychologists aside from trained sex therapists. And the problems might not even be rooted in disorders commonly understood as "illness." As officials at the World Health Organization have defined it, sexual health is more than the absence of disease. It is a "state of physical, emotional, mental and social well-being related to sexuality." In this unprecedented four volume set, doctors, psychiatrists, psychologists, educators and clergy break the silence and join voices to present information vital for sexual health. Topics candidly discussed here by experts in the field include the meaning of "sexual health," the effects of ignorance or neglect, and the role of love, touch and communication. Doctors explain the role of various physical systems from the brain to hormones and the circulatory system. Psychologists and members of the clergy detail the role of

religion, culture and parental or family beliefs in spurring or squashing sexual health. State-of-the-art treatments and research are also featured. Each volume includes a chapter on how to talk with your doctor, therapist or patient about sexual health. Also cited are responsible organizations and Web sites to visit for further, reliable information.

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