

A man's world: our healthcare system is failing us.

I will never be understood- my anatomy that is, my body functions cannot be grasped, even by professionals. How am I meant to live my life in unjust pain, cancelling plans because I can't get out of bed or taking days off school because I can't swallow paracetamol. If I were a man, I would be indestructible, mark my words. This is why we must do better. Better in understanding the female anatomy so that us women can also be invincible.

This is more than a global issue. It is the retelling of stories from millions of women across the world. Together, our experiences are chapters in a book, written universally, which displays the ways in which our healthcare has failed our female population.

There are many myths about women's health. Believe it or not, wired bras do not cause cancer and cranberry juice doesn't cure UTIs. Shocking- I know! We've all been there, chugging glasses of bitter cranberry juice in hopes that each gulp brings relief when we pee. The stories and absurd misconceptions around women's health are only distractions from the truth; our health is still a mystery. But why are there little well-known myths about men's health? Men simply have to say the letter U and get prescribed antibiotics for their UTIs. If only it were that easy...

In medical institutions there is an extreme health care bias. One study found that [women in the emergency department who report having acute pain are less likely to be given opioid painkillers](#) (the most effective type) than men. After they are prescribed, women wait longer to receive them. Once again, our biological makeup defeats us. If a doctor cannot prescribe and diagnose with equality, then I fear to think what other occupational fields may.

Nausea, extreme bloating, acne, headaches, depression, insomnia and fainting. This list contains only some symptoms of menstruation which women globally suffer with. In my opinion, they sound like a thorn in one's flesh and from firsthand experience, I can confirm that it is ten times worse. These symptoms are experienced by teenage girls every day but are deemed as 'normal'. Periods shouldn't have to feel like our insides are tearing each other apart. Due to the stigma around the normality of these period symptoms, around one in ten women are misdiagnosed with endometriosis and other significant health conditions. Imagine having to convince your GP five times that your chronic pelvic pains aren't 'normal'. Their degrees should prove their coherent understanding of our anatomy, yet time and time again we are being misdiagnosed. I

have always been told to listen to my body and its cry for help, but how can I help it if nobody wants to listen?

We are not taken seriously, and neither are our organs. The thing I can't take seriously is the burden of contraception being placed on our shoulders, and it weighs not just grams, but tonnes. Although, I would like to emphasise how contraception is majorly 'female' in that men don't have the delight of ruining their brain chemistry due to societal pressures and gendered expectations. Hundreds of thousands of young girls are prescribed the contraceptive pill for various reasons such as for their acne or preventing pregnancy but as it aims to better one undesirable feature, it destroys our most precious one: our body. To the men reading: it takes two to tango. [Dimethandrolone undecanoate](#) . A new testosterone-like medicine that can be taken as male contraception. There are no more excuses...

Menopause. The dreaded M word for many. Along comes the train of hot flushes and night sweats which we will all inevitably hop on by the time we are 45. We shouldn't have to fear our future. But our healthcare says otherwise. [An online survey of perimenopausal women determined that 67% of women had poor knowledge of the menopause.](#) Many women aren't aware of the possible treatments available to them and need to be educated urgently.

I will leave you with this: I have the right to understand my body, and so do the other 3.95 billion other women in the world. Healthcare do better.