



SPRING 2017

SWAN Vancouver



SWANzine

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SWAN Expansion

SWAN has expanded outreach to Surrey, Abbotsford and Tri-Cities! We visit Surrey every third Friday of the month. We visit Abbotsford and Tri-Cities every two months. Other than safe sex supplies, our staff can also connect you with services such as health care or answer your questions regarding social, legal, immigration, housing, employment and/or police issues. If you live or work in Surrey, Abbotsford and/or Tri-Cities and would like us to stop by when we are in your area, text or call 778-865-6343. Tell your friends who work or live in these areas about our services too. Please remember, we do not require your name or any other personal information to access our services as we respect your privacy.

If you have any ideas or know of friends who could use our services outside of Vancouver, Richmond, Burnaby, Surrey, Abbotsford and Tri-Cities, please let us know what municipalities we should also go to. We are interested in hearing your ideas!

Tax Clinic



It's tax time again. SWAN is hosting a tax clinic at our office on April 3. A tax professional will be available to complete your tax returns for \$75 - \$125. We are offering a non-judgmental environment where you can talk openly about your income and expenses. SWAN will offer Cantonese and Mandarin translation (if required). We expect the clinic to fill up quickly so call **778-865-6343** to book your appointment now!

What is SWANzine?

The SWANzine newsletter is a guide to health, legal, social, employment, and community information for women engaged in indoor sex work in the Lower Mainland. English and Chinese versions are available. If you require SWANzine in another language, please let us know.



If there is a topic you would like to see in SWANzine, please send us your questions or comments.

SWAN VANCOUVER SOCIETY

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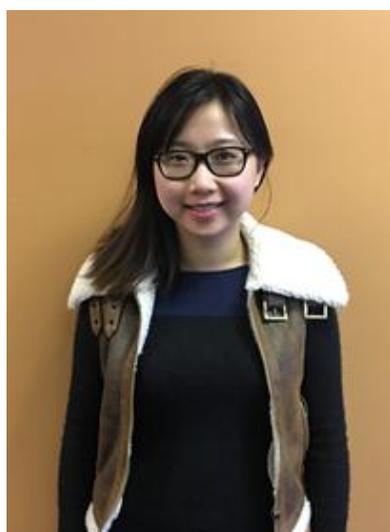
Mailing Address: P.O. 21520, 1424 Commercial Drive, Vancouver, BC, V5L 3X9



SWAN Staff – About Us

Do you ever wonder who SWAN is? Curious about who is behind the phone? Here is some fun and interesting information about two of our newest staff members.

Kelly is outreach staff. She connects with women in massage shops and apartments. She started working with SWAN full-time in January which means that she is likely to be the one who answers your call or text. Kelly speaks Cantonese, Mandarin and English. In her free time, she enjoys snowboarding, watching movies, and going to thrift stores to look for hidden gems. She loves dogs and is a dog mom to a 5-year-old Boston Terrier. If you have any dogs, she would love to see pictures!



Alice is outreach staff and connects with women in massage shops as well as in apartments. She speaks English, Mandarin and Cantonese. She is currently in her last semester studying culture and politics. Alice likes to hike and ride her bike in the summer. She is a cat lover and wants to adopt a cat in the future. In her spare time, she also enjoys cooking cuisines from different cultures and countries. If you like to cook and have a favorite recipe, or know a good spot for an outdoor activity in your area, feel free to share it with her!

Other staff updates: Some of you may miss seeing **Jane** around. Jane is our long-time outreach staff member who is currently on leave. Jane will be back in May.

Health Clinics

VANCOUVER

Women's Health Collective

29 West Hastings
604-736-5262

All ages. Women only.

*Check-ups *Diagnosis and prescriptions *Specialist referrals *Birth control *Pap tests *STI & HIV testing.

Mon 9:30am-4:30pm

Tues-Thurs 1:00pm-4:30pm; Friday 9:30am-1:30pm.

Will not share results with family doctor if requested.

BCCDC Clinic Drop-in Clinic

1170 Bute St.

Mon-Fri 11am -6:30pm

All ages. Offers: *STI & HIV testing *Birth control *Hepatitis B vaccine.

Free and confidential. No MSP required.

BURNABY

Options for Sexual Health Clinic

4734 Imperial 604-731-4252

All ages. Offers: *Birth control *pregnancy testing and options

*STI & HIV testing.

Wednesdays

7pm-9pm

Surrey

Surrey North Community Health Centre

10697 135A St.

Call SWAN 778-865-6343 to arrange appointment

For clinics in other municipalities, check SWAN's Health Page on our website. Click "Resources" and select the health section from the drop down menu options

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Money & Housing Issues: How SWAN Can Support You

Condoms in the Workplace

Some women have concerns about having condoms in the workplace and fear that condoms will be used by police as evidence of sex work. We understand your concern and have asked local police their policies on taking condoms.



Both the RCMP and VPD have informed us that they are not in the practice of taking condoms as evidence of sex work occurring in the workplace.

If police have ever taken condoms from your workplace, please contact SWAN.

Law enforcement should not affect your ability to work safely.

We receive all kinds of calls at SWAN such as requests to see a doctor, information about the laws, questions about immigration and so on. In this issue of the SWANzine, we'd like to highlight two types of calls we receive and let you know what SWAN can do to assist you if you ever find yourself in any of the following situations regarding money or housing.

Money - Getting Ripped Off By Your Boss

Have you ever felt that your boss is treating you unfairly when it comes to money? Has s/he promised to pay you but didn't follow through? Have you ever worked without getting paid at all? Do you feel there is an unfair split between you and your employer? If you answer yes to any of these questions, you may be financially exploited by your boss or some in cases, a victim of a more serious crime.

Housing – Getting Evicted Because of Your Job

Have you ever been evicted because of what you do for a living? Has your landlord unfairly withheld your damage deposit and/or rent? Has your landlord extorted money with threats to 'out' you? Have you ever had essential services like the electricity or water cut off or furniture removed forcing you to leave?

What can SWAN do?

We can discuss your situation over the phone or in-person. Depending on your situation, SWAN can provide the following services:

- SWAN can connect you with resources so that you can learn what your rights are. For example, for housing issues, the Tenancy Resource and Advisory Centre (<http://tenants.bc.ca/>) is a great resource to learn about illegal evictions, getting your deposit back and other rental housing issues.
- SWAN can write a formal letter on your behalf to your former employer or landlord to ask for the money that is owed to you. Sometimes this works and no further steps need to be taken.
- If your situation is more complicated and/or writing a formal letter is not a viable option, SWAN can connect you with a legal advocate to determine what can be done. For example, Atira Women's Resource Society has a Legal Advocacy Program (<http://www.atira.bc.ca/legal-advocacy>).
- If you are considering reporting a crime, SWAN can talk through your concerns about reporting to the police. If you decide that you would like to report to the police, we can call on a police officer we trust, and support you in every step of reporting process.
- SWAN can also send out an Abuser Alert to other women so that your experience can help others avoid similar misfortunes and stay safe. Sign up for these notifications by texting 'Alert' to 778 865 6343. To make a report, go to <http://swanvancouver.ca/abuser-alert/>

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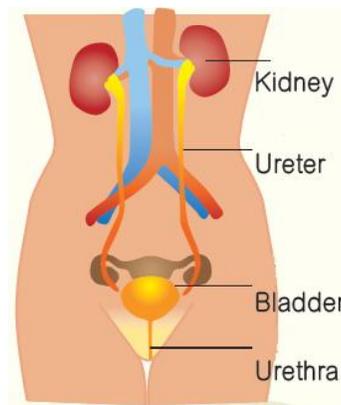


Urinary Tract Infections

Each issue, SWAN covers a women's health issue. This issue we look at Urinary tract infections (UTIs). UTIs are infections in the urinary tract. The urinary tract includes two kidneys, two ureters, a bladder, and a urethra. The majority of infections are caused by E.coli, a type of bacteria normally living in the intestine. With each UTI, the risk that a woman will continue having recurrent UTIs increases.

Symptoms

- Frequent urination with only a small amount of urine passed each time, pain or burning sensation when urinating
- Urine is cloudy and may contain blood, lower abdominal pain (near the pubic bone), indicating bladder infection
- Fever, lower back pain, nausea and vomiting may indicate possible kidney infection



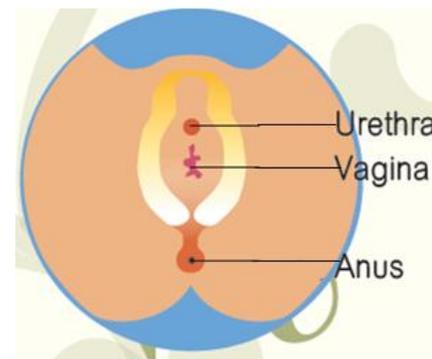
Why are women more vulnerable to UTIs?

Women are more vulnerable to UTIs. This is mainly due to the differences in biological structures:

- **Length of urethra:** Male urethras are about 15 cm long, compared to female urethras that are only 5 cm. Thus, bacteria can reach the bladder more easily and then reflux towards the kidneys.
- **Stimulation by sexual intercourse:** Penetration of the penis not only stimulates the genitals but also brings bacteria from the vulva into the female urethra.
- **Opening of urethra:** A male's urethral opening is located at the tip of the penis, while a female's is at the vulva adjoining the vaginal opening and is enclosed by the labia majora and minora. Since the vulva is close to the anus, if the vulva is unclean or if wiping is made from the anus to the vulva (back to front) after using the toilet, the urethra is susceptible to infection by bacteria at the vulva, vagina or anus.
- **Periods prone to infection:** 1) Pregnancy - the uterus enlarges and presses the bladder, making the bladder unable to empty completely; 2) Menopause - weakening of immunity

Treatment

- Complete the whole course of antibiotics according to doctor's prescription without any interim breaks, otherwise bacteria may develop resistance and will require stronger antibiotics and a longer time to completely eliminate the bacteria.
- Drink plenty of water since sufficient amount of urine helps rinse out bacteria in the urethra.



Prevention

- Maintain personal hygiene; after using the toilet, wipe from the vulva to the anus (front to back)
- Maintain sex hygiene, and empty your bladder after having sex
- Avoid soap, liquid soap, vaginal douche, which contain fragrances
- Avoid wearing overly-tight or air-impermeable trousers, including panties
- Drink plenty of water, avoid the habit of withholding urine
- Stay alert for early detection and treatment

http://www.fhs.gov.hk/tc_chi/health_info/woman/9938.html

<https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/urologic-diseases/urinary-tract-infections-utis>

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