

Foreword

Welcome to "Ancestral Memory the Link to Fibroids." This book is a heartfelt exploration of the intricate connections between fibroids, ancestral memory, and the unique experiences of Black women. It is a journey that has been deeply personal for me, shaped by my upbringing as a daughter from a "DES daughter" and my collaboration with Ohemaa Akua Phyllis, "The Fibroids Queen." Together, we have cultivated a beautiful sisterhood rooted in healing and empowerment, and I hope this book serves as a source of inspiration for all who read it.

In these pages, we will delve into the profound ties between our ancestral legacies and the health challenges we face today. Through extensive research and coaching, I have come to believe that the essence of fibroids is linked to suppressed ancestral memories, which we pass down through generations. This book offers holistic healing practices, including journaling, herbal remedies, and spiritual rituals, to help you reclaim your narrative and foster resilience within yourself and your community.

I am also proud to dedicate a portion of the proceeds from this book to my NGO, Abosom, and our #PositivePeriods project. This initiative aims to provide young girls in Ghana with the resources and education they need to navigate their menstrual health with confidence and positivity. By sharing the message of positive periods, we empower these girls to embrace their bodies and understand the beauty of their natural cycles.

As you embark on this journey with me, I invite you to reflect on your own experiences, honor your ancestral connections, and embrace the healing practices that resonate with you. Together, we can create a ripple effect of empowerment that transcends generations, fostering a future where every girl knows her worth and carries forward the legacy of resilience and strength.

Thank you for joining me on this transformative journey. May you find healing, empowerment, and connection in the pages of this book and beyond. Let us honor our ancestors, celebrate our stories, and work together to create a brighter future for ourselves and those who come after us.

With love and gratitude,

Nana Fofi

Ancestral Memory, Fibroids, and the Legacy of DES: A Call for Awareness and Healing

The intricate tapestry of our health is woven not only from our individual experiences but also from the collective memories and traumas of our ancestors. Ancestral memory plays a crucial role in understanding the prevalence of certain health conditions, particularly uterine fibroids, which disproportionately affect Black women. These benign tumors, which can lead to significant physical and emotional distress, are not merely a matter of genetics or lifestyle; they are also deeply intertwined with the historical and cultural legacies that shape our lives today.

Research indicates that Black women are significantly more likely to develop fibroids than women of other ethnicities, with studies suggesting that as many as 60% of Black women and their daughters who were exposed to diethylstilbestrol (DES) have experienced fibroid-related issues. DES, a synthetic estrogen prescribed to pregnant women from the 1940s to the 1970s, was intended to prevent complications during pregnancy. However, it was later discovered that this drug had devastating effects on both mothers and their children, leading to a range of reproductive health problems, including an increased risk of fibroids.

The impact of DES has reverberated through at least four generations of Black women, many of whom remain unaware of their exposure and its potential consequences. This lack of awareness is alarming, as the genetic legacy of DES exposure can manifest in various health issues, compounding the ancestral trauma that many Black women carry. The historical injustices faced by our ancestors, combined with the modern implications of substances like DES, create a complex landscape of health challenges that require urgent attention and understanding.

It is essential to recognize that the effects of DES are not isolated to those who were directly exposed. The intergenerational transmission of trauma means that the health of one generation can profoundly influence the well-being of the next. As we grapple with the implications of this legacy, it becomes increasingly clear that healing must involve not only addressing physical health issues but also nurturing positive ancestral memories. By fostering a collective understanding of our shared history, we can begin to reclaim our narratives and empower ourselves as a community.

The importance of positive memories cannot be overstated. They serve as a counterbalance to the weight of trauma, offering a pathway to healing and resilience. As

we acknowledge the injustices faced by Black women throughout history, we must also celebrate our strength, creativity, and capacity for healing. Our wombs, as sacred vessels of life and continuity, are interconnected through our ancestral memory. This connection underscores the need for informed dialogue about our health, as well as the importance of community support in navigating these challenges.

To truly heal as a collective, we must prioritize education and awareness around issues like DES and fibroids. It is imperative that we inform ourselves and our communities about the potential risks and health implications associated with these conditions. By doing so, we can break the cycle of silence and stigma that often surrounds reproductive health issues, empowering Black women to advocate for their health and well-being.

In conclusion, the link between ancestral memory, fibroids, and the legacy of DES highlights the urgent need for awareness and healing within the Black community. As we strive to understand the complexities of our health, let us remember that our shared experiences and memories can be sources of strength. By embracing our history and supporting one another, we can pave the way for a healthier future, honoring the resilience of our ancestors and nurturing the well-being of generations to come.

Introduction

Fibroids, or uterine leiomyoma's, are a common health issue that disproportionately affects Black women. While the medical community often approaches fibroids from a purely biological and physiological perspective, there is a growing recognition of the interplay between physical health and the psychological, emotional, and spiritual dimensions of well-being. This book invites readers to explore the concept of ancestral memory and its potential connection to the prevalence of fibroids among Black women.

Ancestral memory posits that the experiences, traumas, and wisdom of our ancestors can be passed down through generations, influencing our physical and mental health. For Black women, the legacy of trauma stemming from historical events such as the Arabic and transatlantic slave trade, colonialism, and systemic oppression has created a complex tapestry of inherited experiences. These traumas are not merely historical; they manifest in the present, affecting health outcomes and emotional well-being.

The womb, often viewed as a sacred space of creation and nurturing, can become a repository for the pain and suffering endured by generations of Black women. The historical context of oppression, violence, and subjugation may contribute to a collective memory that influences the health of women today. This book aims to explore these connections and provide a holistic approach to healing that honors ancestral wisdom.

As we delve into the spiritual and emotional dimensions of fibroids, we will see that they can represent more than just a physical ailment. They may symbolize suppressed emotions and unresolved trauma, reflecting the historical resilience of Black women, which often requires emotional suppression. The need to endure and survive may lead to the internalization of trauma, which can express itself physically through conditions like fibroids.

Recognizing the connection between ancestral memory and fibroids opens up new avenues for healing. It suggests that addressing fibroids requires more than just medical intervention; it necessitates a holistic approach that considers emotional, spiritual, and psychological dimensions. Healing practices that honor ancestral wisdom, such as therapy, community support, and spiritual practices, can play a vital role in this process.

Furthermore, the idea of “resetting” through positive ancestral memories is powerful. By consciously engaging with the narratives of strength, resilience, and healing from ancestors, Black women can begin to reclaim their narratives and transform their relationship with their bodies. This reclamation can foster a sense of empowerment and agency, allowing for the release of stored trauma and the potential for physical healing.

In this book, you will find not only an exploration of the connection between ancestral memory and fibroids but also practical activities, herbal remedies, spiritual rituals, physical healing practices, and nutritional guidance aimed at promoting holistic well-being. Each chapter is designed to empower you on your healing journey, providing tools and insights to help you reclaim your body, your health, and your story.

Let us embark on this transformative journey together, honoring our ancestors and embracing the healing that awaits us.

Chapter 1: Understanding Fibroids

Fibroids are non-cancerous growths that develop in or on the uterus. They are also known as uterine leiomyomas or myomas and can vary in size, shape, and location. While many women may have fibroids without experiencing any symptoms, for others, these growths can lead to significant health challenges. Understanding fibroids is the first step in addressing their impact on health, particularly for Black women, who are disproportionately affected by this condition.

What Are Fibroids?

Fibroids are composed of muscle and fibrous tissue and can occur in various forms:

1. **Intramural Fibroids**: These are the most common type and grow within the uterine wall. They can cause the uterus to become enlarged and may lead to heavy menstrual bleeding and pain.
1. **Subserosal Fibroids**: These fibroids grow on the outer surface of the uterus and can extend outward, potentially causing pressure on surrounding organs.
1. **Submucosal Fibroids**: Located just beneath the uterine lining, these fibroids can protrude into the uterine cavity, often leading to heavy bleeding and complications during pregnancy.
1. **Pedunculated Fibroids**: These fibroids are attached to the uterus by a stalk and can be either subserosal or submucosal. They can cause discomfort and may twist, leading to pain.

Fibroids can range in size from as small as a pea to as large as a grapefruit. While the exact cause of fibroids remains unclear, several factors are believed to contribute to their development, including hormonal influences, genetic predisposition, and environmental factors.

Prevalence Among Black Women