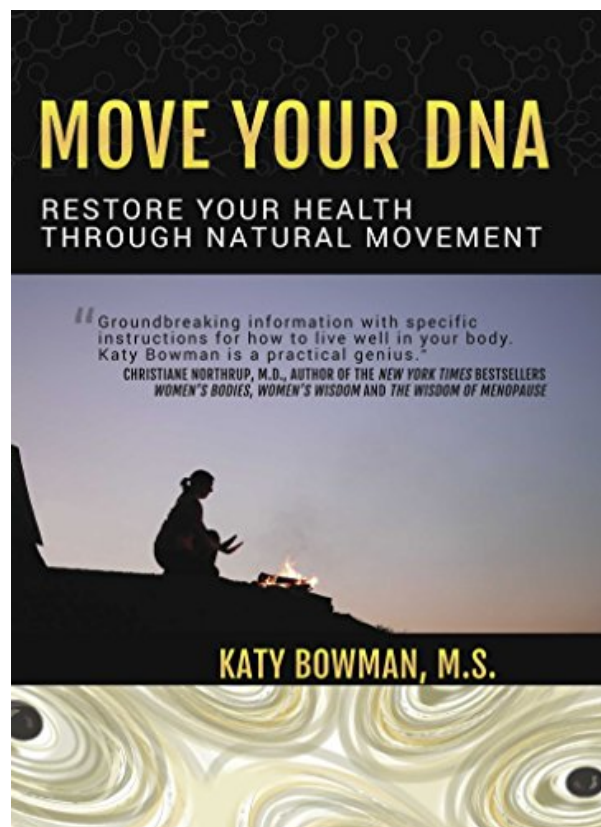


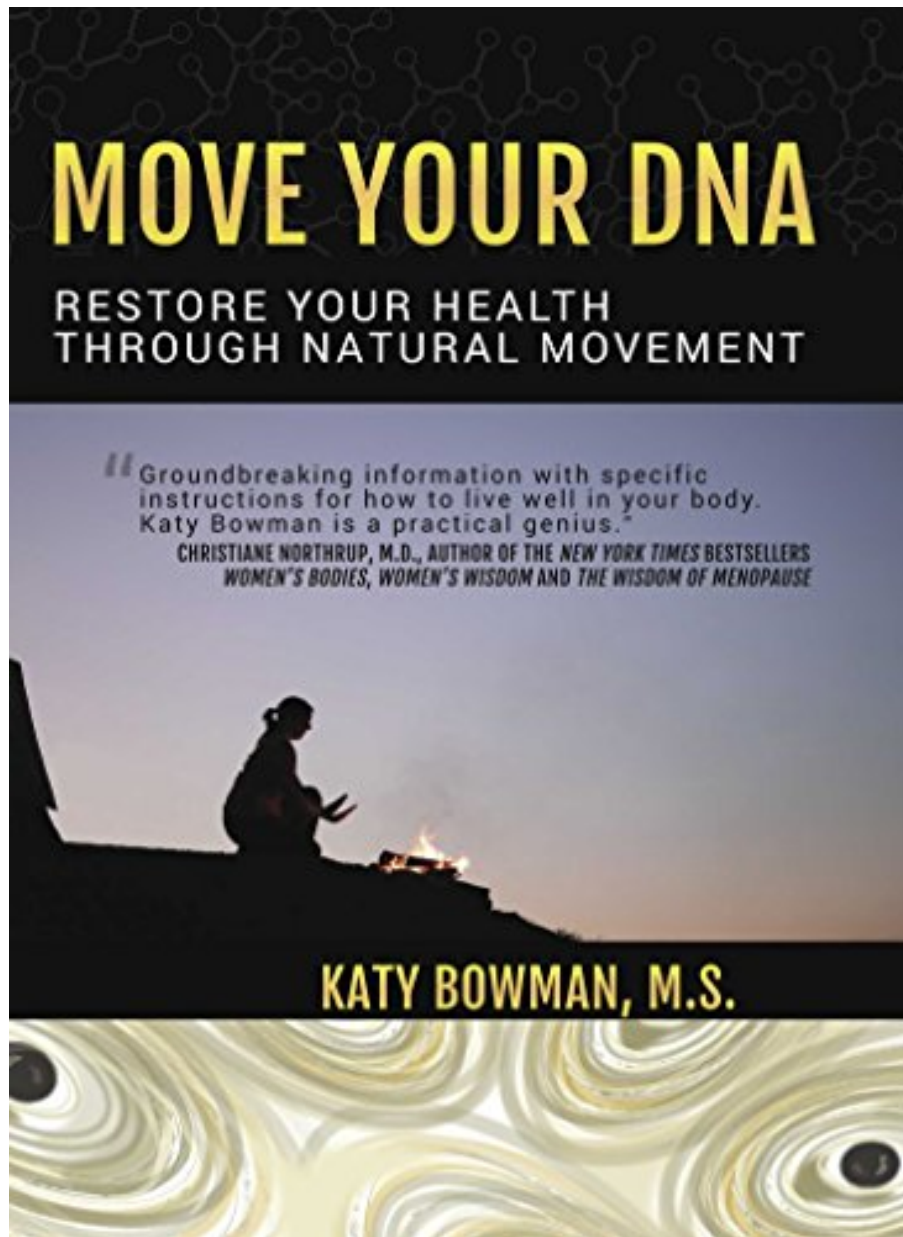
# MOVE YOUR DNA: RESTORE YOUR HEALTH THROUGH NATURAL MOVEMENT

## BY KATY BOWMAN



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- Sales Rank: #15761 in Books
- Brand: Bowman, Katy/ Lewis, Jason (FRW)
- Published on: 2014-10-15
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.50" h x 7.25" w x .75" l, 1.10 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 264 pages

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## Most helpful customer reviews

169 of 181 people found the following review helpful.

As a polemic, Katy Bowman's *Move Your DNA* rates 5 stars.

By Elyse Shafarman

As a polemic, Katy Bowman's *Move Your DNA* rates 5 stars. As a work of popular science writing and an exercise manual, ratings drop to 2 stars.

As an Alexander Technique Teacher, I can't help but cheer at Katy's thesis that the mechanical forces created from our daily hours of sitting, wearing shoes and staring at screens shape our bodies. Even an admirable daily exercise habit cannot combat the other 23 hours of our day. It's F.M. Alexander's thesis: "Use affects function," reformatted for a modern audience with a scientific and paleo twist. After reading Bowman's book, you may find yourself squatting to go the potty, running barefoot and sleeping on the floor — or at least throwing away your pillows.

She opens with the dramatic example of "Floppy fin syndrome." The mechanical forces created when a killer whale swims in the ocean at variable depths, speeds and direction load the fin tissues in ways that stimulate the fin to stiffen and stay upright. Whales in captivity don't get these natural mechanical loads and the top fin flops. Every modern convenience from heat, to cars, to your fluffy mattress, protects the body from the mechanical loads necessary for health. Our bodies are the whale's floppy fin.

Bowman does not shy away from strong analogies like "casting." The adaptations our bodies make when we have to wear a cast, such as muscle wasting, stiffening and bone loss occur in response to our environmental "casts" of smooth sidewalks, chairs, and even indoor time. From our eyes to our feet, our tissues conform to the limitations of our daily positions.

Bowman has a firm handle on the reality that our bodies function as a whole, and the added benefit of a scientist's perspective on the effects of force on tissue development. I can't help cheering when she states that the invocation to tighten your tummy to protect your low-back is hopelessly outdated. And her assertion that the endless regimen of crunches (that occur even in some of my favorite yoga classes) may have limited value and may even damage the spine.

The book is less wonderful as an exercise manual. It's poorly organized and hard to search. This problem may be worse in the Kindle version, where the index lacks hyperlinks and location references. The illustrative photographs are often pages away from the text instructions. If it was hard for me, as a movement specialist, to decipher all of her exercises, I'm imagining it would be quite frustrating for a lay person.

Although the book is not intended as a technical study in bio-mechanical sciences, I would have appreciated a little bit more evidence. For example, she devotes a large section to her thesis that Kegel exercises (isolated contractions of the pelvic floor muscles) may cause more harm than good. I completely agree that Kegels do not address the overall use patterns of the pelvis and torso, and ideally, it's best to let those muscles function automatically. However she does not present evidence that her approach works better. Although something seems intuitively true, it may not be.

There's no way that such a small book can be comprehensive, and I believe Bowman's attempt is not to get us to adopt a fully paleo lifestyle, but to rethink our current one. By bettering our daily movement habits, we have a better quality of life.

91 of 96 people found the following review helpful.

One of the rare books that will change how you think



By El Corredor

"Move your DNA" is one of those rare books that will completely change the way you think. In this case, Katy Bowman will change how you think about your body, how you move it (movement), and the role of exercise (necessary but not sufficient). The book is filled with insights. For instance, just like supplement cannot replace real food in your diet, exercise cannot replace movement to keep your body healthy. I've taught biology but her discussion of the heart and blood flow opened my eyes to something that should have been obvious. Understanding circulation as ONLY the heart pushing blood to our tissues is appropriate only in our movement deficient culture. When we move like we ought, then circulation is a combination of the heart pumping and moving muscles vasodilating drawing blood into capillary beds - pushing and pulling! A great book to read, to study, and to apply. One of the best books of the year.

77 of 83 people found the following review helpful.

A shift in the right direction

By Carol Robbins

This is basically the program that Katy offers at the Restorative Exercise Institute in book format for the general public, complete with exercises. I love the fact that she is asking us to think about things from a different perspective - such as changing diseases of affluence to diseases of behaviour. The concepts in this book are actually deeper than appear at first reading. It will challenge your understanding of the way our bodies work and how we strengthen them. The title is perfect. We need to consider how we evolved and how we were meant to be all-day all-body movers, and not one hour a day exercisers of a few muscles. A shift in lifestyle and philosophy is required, toward a world that is less convenient but more natural, because our bodies are degenerating due to our "captivity". We have the potential for greater health of our bodies, our systems, our society. I hope this book gets the notice it deserves - I consider it crucial. Highly recommended.

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