

# HEALTH NEWS *4 pages of expert advice*

Inside this week... Respectable ways to sell your body

- Helping kids beat bed-wetting ● Natural deodorants ● How safe are laser eye ops?

Women's  
health

## IS YOUR **TAMPON** REALLY NECESSARY?

More and more women are giving up conventional sanitary products because of irritation, the potentially fatal toxic shock syndrome and worries about the environment. Here's a guide to some of the alternatives



**Name:** Marina McCarty  
**Age:** 35  
**From:** Stapleford, Notts  
**Problem:** Disliked tampons and wanted a natural alternative  
**Remedy:** Mooncup – a device worn internally during a period

**M**arina McCarty gave up using tampons two years ago.

She says: 'Tampons made me feel dry and uncomfortable and I was worried about the risk of toxic shock syndrome. I was also unhappy about the environmental problems they caused.'

'My friends were raving about something called a Mooncup, so I decided to give it a try.'

'It's a reusable bell-shaped silicon rubber cup – a bit like a diaphragm – which you wear internally

to collect the blood.

'It's comfortable, easy to use and I can leave it in twice as long as a tampon. And cleaning is simple – when you remove it the liquid stays inside so you just tilt the contents into the loo. It's no messier than using non-applicator tampons.'

Liz Sutton of Women's Environmental Network (WEN) says there are several reasons women want to swap to natural menstrual products.

She explains: 'Rayon, which is used in many tampons, has been linked

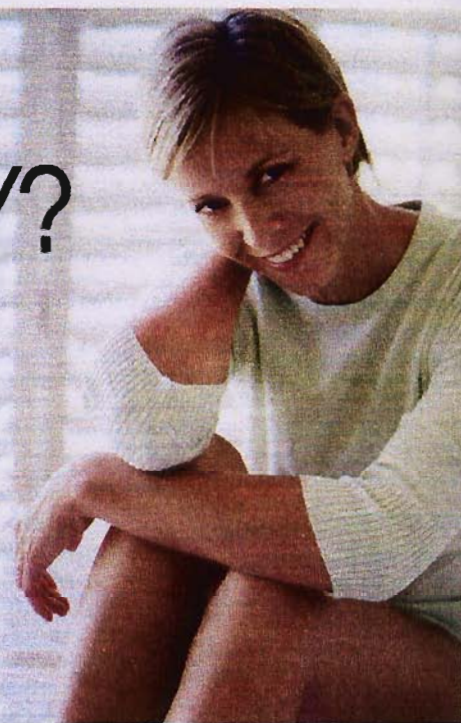
to toxic shock syndrome. It's a rare disease but it can be fatal.'

'In Britain we flush away four million sanitary items a day. They block sewers and some of them get washed out to sea. It's better to bag and bin them but this can add waste to landfill sites.'

'There are many natural products on the market, you just need to find one that suits you.'

For further information contact WEN (020 7481 9004; [www.wen.org.uk](http://www.wen.org.uk)).

Jo Mears



### Natural products

- Mooncup is available from larger Boots stores, priced at £19.99, or by mail order for £17.99 (01273 673845; [www.mooncup.co.uk](http://www.mooncup.co.uk)).
- Sea Pearls are natural reusable sea sponge tampons. A pack of two costs £7.99 from chemists or by mail order (01787 371527; [www.seapearls.co.uk](http://www.seapearls.co.uk)).
- Natracare's non-chlorine bleached organic cotton tampons and towels are available from supermarkets and chemists or by mail order (0117 968 7744; [www.natural-woman.com](http://www.natural-woman.com)).

### Quick fixes for bladder infection

Many factors put women at higher risk of bladder infections. They include:

#### ● Bad toilet habits

Bugs from the bowel are often responsible for infections.

**Fix** Drink plenty of cranberry juice and water. When using loo paper, wipe from the front to the back.

#### ● Lots of sex

Women who have frequent sex (more than three times a week)

are five times more at risk.

**Fix** Never have sex when dry. Use a vaginal lubricant and pee before and after sex.

#### ● Leakage

Stress incontinence will make you more prone to infections.

**Fix** Do pelvic floor exercises.

#### ● Spemicide

Using it doubles your risk of bladder infections.

**Fix** Choose another form of contraception.



Cranberry juice fights infection

### Boob job boo-hoos

Even plastic surgery may not give you the perfect breasts you crave.

In a survey by American plastic surgeons, 30 per cent of women having breast implants were undergoing their second operation because they weren't happy with the results of the first one.

The main complaint was that the rebuilt boobs were too big.

