

What About The Gross Factor?



I can't begin to tell you how often I get the "eww isn't it gross to wash the pads after they have been used!" Usually said with a snarl of disgust. It's unfortunate that most women have been taught that having a menstrual cycle is gross and something to feel shameful about. Kotex, Playtex and all the other commercial pad pushers have skillfully delivered the message that menstruation is dirty, smelly and shameful.

The media perpetuates this message. Doesn't the term "feminine hygiene" imply that we need help with our hygiene? This is simply not true. Menstrual blood is not unclean or smelly, neither is it gross. Menstruation is a natural biological event. Menstruation is the monthly shedding of the uterine lining; the blood and tissues leave the body through the vagina. Menstruation is a normal, natural process that occurs in all healthy adult women who have not reached menopause.

Here is your factual Gross Factor

- The chlorine used in the bleaching process of commercial pad and tampons can release dioxin, a known carcinogen, into a woman's body and uterus.
- Repeated exposure to dioxin can lead to cancer, as well as non cancer health effects, including developmental delays, birth defects, hormone disruption and immune cell suppression. The toxin accumulates in humans, particularly woman's' body fat and **breast milk**, with repeated exposures. (The Hidden Price of Feminine Hygiene Products," eMagazine, Jennifer Bogo).
- 35% of fluids absorbed by tampons are essential fluids that are necessary for proper self-cleansing of the vagina as well as maintaining a pH balance.
- The plastic and glue backing on disposable pads greatly reduce air circulation, creating an environment in which bacteria thrive. This causes odor and vaginal irritation. The plastic lining also causes perspiration, which can lead to rashes and leave you susceptible to yeast infections and other vaginal problems. Not to mention that those sticky wings can reach up and grab sensitive pubic hairs – ouch!
- According to a 1999 article in eMagazine, "studies concluded that tampons containing synthetics amplify the production of the TSS – causing toxin by certain strains of bacteria." And the same article quotes Dr. Tierno as saying, "synthetic tampons absorb more water than (does) cotton, leaving behind concentrated proteins that are used by staph bacteria to create the toxin, creating toxin factories."

Do you ever wonder why none of the major tampon or pad manufacturers have every offered a safe, environmentally sound menstrual product? Well, I will tell you, it's all about the Bengamins. These companies choose to make their money selling you a disposable product that they know you'll need to come back for month after month after month rather than by selling you a product that supports your health.