

“Do you know the **alternatives?**”

The potentially fatal toxic shock syndrome, concerns about the environment and irritation are just some of the reasons why woman today are becoming more aware of the alternatives to conventional sanitary products. Here's a quick guide to some of the options available...

Cath Wanless, 37 made what some women might consider a radical decision to give up using traditional tampons over three years ago. She says “Tampons have always made me feel dry and uncomfortable and I was also worried about the risk of toxic shock syndrome. I was also concerned about the environmental problems they caused, not to mention the fact that traditional tampons used to infuriate thrush which I've suffered from for years.”

“So I launched my quest for a natural alternative and began experimenting with alternative forms of sanitary protection. I initially tried the Mooncup, a reusable rubber cup which you wear internally to collect the blood and found it reasonably comfortable and easy to use.”

“However, the real breakthrough came when I stumbled across Sea Pearls on the internet. They're a natural, reusable sea sponge tampon and they're amazing! The idea may seem a little unusual, and it may take a little getting used to but they're surprisingly easy to use and certainly no messier than non-applicator tampons.”

“Moreover, I haven't been hit with a single bout of thrush since! My life has been transformed from miserable itching fiend to normal human being. Every woman should know the alternatives that are available, after all it's a natural and unavoidable part of every woman's life.”

There are a number of reasons why women want to swap to more natural menstrual products. Liz Sutton of Women's Environmental Network (WEN) 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 visit www.wen.org.uk.

The Alternatives:

- **Sea Pearls** Available in packs of 2 for £7.99, lasting six months or more from health food shops, chemists and beauty salons. They can also be found online at www.seapearls.co.uk.
- **The Mooncup** Available from larger Boots stores, priced at £19.99 or by mail order for £17.99 at www.mooncup.co.uk.
- **Natracare's** non-chlorine bleached organic cotton tampons and towels are available from supermarkets and chemists or by mail order at www.natural-woman.com.