

Menstruation and Sanpro/Femcare Market Facts and Fig's

Social/Market Info.

- In a 1997 quality of life survey conducted by the Louis Harris Research Institute, British women rated disposable hygiene products second place only to electrical household goods as having had the most beneficial impact on post war lifestyles.
- There are 15 million women who are of menstrual age in the UK.
- A woman will spend around 6 ½ years of her life menstruating.
- The average age for commencement of menstruation is now 12 ½ years. This is much early than would have been the case 150 years or so ago when the average age would have been 17 years. This is due to improved lifestyle and diet.
- On average a woman will menstruate until she is fifty years old. An average total of 37 ½ years during which time she will menstruate around 500 times. Menstrual cycles vary from woman, on average there are 13 per year.
- Average menstrual flow is around 85g per cycle.
- More recent products: Pant and string liners, ultra thin pads, coloured liners, fragranced tampons.
- Liners are very adaptable products used to absorb everyday discharge, for extra protection during a period or may be used where menstrual flow is very light. Many women choose to use pant liners for personal freshness throughout the month.
- Women use pads following childbirth for around one month, personal preference determines which type.
- Around 22 items of Sanpro are used per cycle. An individual will use around 11,000 in her lifetime. 4.3 billion items are used per year in the UK.
- The sanitary towel was invented during the early part of last century. Dr White's was the first towel. It was very bulky and held in place with pins and a belt. Modern pads and liners are very discreet and are held in place by adhesive strips.
- During the 1990s new 'ultra' style highly absorbent thin pads came into the market. These thin high-tech towels helped to regain the popularity of pads. Many women choose to use a combination of towels, tampons and pant liners for their personal hygiene requirements. The new modern products are easy to use and are highly efficient.

- A wide variety of pads are available, predominantly divided into two categories – thick and ultra. Pads are made largely of fluff pulp and may contain superabsorbent materials which rapidly absorb and lock in moisture, added to which they have a waterproof backsheet. Many have a high tech one-way flow top sheet.
- The first tampon brought about radical change in femcare trends. A US doctor invented the first tampon for his wife, a nurse. She encouraged development of a more suitable product to be placed on the market. The resulting product was marketed by Tampax in the USA in 1937, and reached the UK market by 1939. This new product was met with a great deal of resistance from politicians and the clergy. Bishops complained in the House of Lords about these ‘sinful products.’ Until as late as the 50s every packet of tampons had to carry the warning ‘Not suitable for unmarried women’ for fear that virginity might be impaired. Completely untrue, of course. To this day however, in predominantly Catholic countries, sales of pads are notably higher than tampons.
- Early tampons had paper applicators. Digital tampons (no applicator - inserted with finger) were launched after the war. Applicators are made from either paper or plastic.
- Tampons are simple products made of cotton or rayon or a blend of both. Guidelines for correct usage are contained in each pack and these should be observed.
- 2001 saw reduction in VAT on Sanpro from 17.5% to 5%.

Anecdotal Information

- Ancient Egyptians – used rolled Papyrus leaves to make primitive tampons
- Ancient Tribes – used natural materials, usually grasses, moss, etc.
- Early forms of tampons were in use some 2,000 years ago.