

# HONESTLY

on intimate care

About the woman of today

***Women are strong  
when we show  
our vulnerability***

Probiotics

**Microorganisms  
make life  
possible**

Strategic development

**We are  
guided by  
women's needs**



**TOSAMA**

*Caring across generations since 1923*





EDITORIAL

THE ESSENCE OF FEMALE INTIMATE HEALTH

At Tosama, we understand that feminine hygiene is the healthy foundation for the rest of a woman's body. The products, especially pads and tampons, a woman requires for her intimate care can affect the delicate microflora of her intimate area, so they must be carefully selected. Modern, informed women demand only the best for themselves, and they will not fall prey to empty promises and attractive packaging, but rather expert their intimate products to be safe, reliable, along with a guarantee that the product will not harm them or the environment.

Dear women and girls: this magazine will demonstrate that everything that is launched onto the market bearing the Tosama brand has been created using a combination of cutting-edge knowledge, extensive tradition, and respect for the latest scientific findings. Our aim is to communicate and demonstrate to you that our focus when developing products is not solely the technological aspect, but that we are always guided by the concept of a woman as a whole: the needs of her body and the requirements for her health, all the dimensions of the female nature. Peruse the pages of this HONESTLY magazine and read more about our mission to produce top-quality Tosama feminine hygiene products and about our decisive steps towards nature and the natural. Delve deeper into your intimate health.

Editorial board



Tosama's seal certifies that the product is both health and environmentally friendly.

CONTENTS

WE ARE STRONG WHEN WE SHOW OUR VULNERABILITY / <i>interview with dr. Veronika Podgoršek</i>	4
FACTS ABOUT WOMEN'S INTIMATE HEALTH / <i>let's explain</i>	8
MICROORGANISMS MAKE LIFE POSSIBLE / <i>microbiome</i>	10
INTRODUCING PROBIOTICS INTO THE VAGINA IS BENEFICIAL / <i>clinically proven</i>	14
FOUR STEPS TO INTIMATE HEALTH / <i>intimate care</i>	16
ON VALUES AND THE FEMALE NATURE / <i>with Nina Šušnjara</i>	18
FEMALE-MALE COMPROMISES / <i>we are guided by women's needs</i>	20
VULVA, THE EXPOSED PART OF THE FEMALE GENITALIA / <i>check what your pads are made of</i>	22
LADIES, LET'S DON OURSELVES IN WHITE GOLD / <i>how will you choose?</i>	26
MODERN WOMAN IN HARMONY WITH NATURE / <i>give yourself the gift of health</i>	30
FOR DAYS WHEN EVERYTHING IS RIGHT AND ABSOLUTELY NOTHING IS WRONG / <i>a tribute to life with Ula Furlan</i>	32
EVEN YOUNG GIRLS EXPERIENCE DIFFICULTIES / <i>we asked gynaecologist Uršula Reš Muravec</i>	34
HOW TO CARE FOR YOUR VAGINAL FLORA / <i>from your first period onward</i>	36
OPPORTUNITIES, PERSONAL GROWTH, AND DOWNTIME / <i>with Maja Zupan</i>	39
MENSTRUATION AND SPORTS / <i>when it is moist down there</i>	40
THE BEAUTY QUEEN CROWN AND SPORTS / <i>with Lara Kalanj</i>	43
EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT TAMPONS / <i>tips for safe use</i>	44
TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF AFTER GIVING BIRTH / <i>good to know</i>	50
INCONTINENCE DOESN'T HAVE TO SHAPE YOUR LIFE / <i>partnership</i>	54
A TRADITION THAT CONNECTS GENERATIONS / <i>from the legend to modern innovation</i>	58

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Journalist: Andreja Ažman  
Designer: Špelca Golob  
Editorial: Ana Lukek Konte, Lea Virant, Živa Košak Mišković, Klavdija Golja  
Photos: photoarchive Tosama  
Contact: info@tosama.si, www.tosama.si  
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ON THE FEMALE NATURE  
WITH dr. VERONIKA  
PODGORŠEK

**We are strong,**  
when we show  
our vulnerability

Photo: Aleksandra Saša Prelesnik

We sought out a very knowledgeable expert to talk about the dilemmas facing women and girls today and about the challenges of the female nature.

Dr. Veronika Podgoršek is well-known to the public as a successful family and couples therapist, a creative writer, and someone who doesn't mince words. Last but not least, she is also a mother and wife herself, and spends a lot of time thinking about the woman of today.

**Dr. Podgoršek, what are some of the biggest challenges facing women and girls today?**

In the past, women were valued for being good mothers and housewives. Nowadays, this is still expected of us, but our desire to be independent has caused us to saddle ourselves with a host of other roles and tasks. Alongside motherhood and heading a household, a woman is expected to be a good wife, successful in business and her career, she must constantly look her best, work out, eat well, and on it goes. To me, the greatest challenge facing women today is to find our own path, to discover what we enjoy and what we do not, and to learn to set boundaries for ourselves as well as for others.

## ABOUT THE WOMAN OF TODAY

“Admitting something happened to you too or that you are battling something, then explaining how you are getting through it – that takes a lot of strength.”

**Do you also have the feeling that the women of today are constantly comparing ourselves? Why do we do that?**

We ruthlessly compare ourselves to different women in various areas – but these are always the top achievers. But we never ask ourselves what would be the best for us and for those around us. Women are actually quite aimless, we are like ships lost at sea. We have somehow lost ourselves in trying to constantly please everyone around us. We let ourselves be provoked by our surroundings and want to conform to the norms, but this causes us to burn out and fall into a depression. We must realize we will never be able to please everyone. If we do not want something, it is perfectly fine to forgo it and let ourselves live with that. Do not fall for the lie that good mothers are only those who dedicate all of their time to their child, but forgetting that by doing this, the child is suffocated; it is not true that children must be occupied with something every minute of the day, because it is precisely “boredom” that facilitates the most creative ideas.

**Social media are full of photographs of women shamelessly baring their entire lives. Is this because we seek or need approval?**

Women want to please. We look for external approval and do all sorts of things to be noticed. The internet has been quite damaging in this, as it has solidified the belief that anything that is exposed is automatically good. It has become important to be seen, while also accepting absolutely any form of this, no matter how bizarre, low-brow, eccentric. It is unfortunate that many young girls are not aware that it is important how and for what you are recognized. The thing that first gained people's attention is what remains and is reinforced. This is a marathon. And if today that thing happens to be a juicy bottom – do you think that woman will like only being remembered for that as a girl? Modern technology is not a bad thing, but you must know how to distil the positive, the good from it. It is up to us to decide what we want to be recognized for, who and what we want to be.





“As women of today, we must find our own path, discover what we enjoy and what we do not, and learn to set boundaries for ourselves as well as for others.”

### Do we as women know what we really want?

Women seem to have lost the answer to that question within us, we cannot find it anymore. If the little girl never had to use her head, if no one encouraged her curiosity, self-initiative, and studiousness, if the parents and everyone around her always did everything for her, the grown-up woman does not dare to speak, think, she believes she is dumb and that her opinion does not count. Many women have stifled themselves long ago and now believe they do not know what they truly want. But I know from my practice that once we look deep inside ourselves, that each of us knows exactly what she wants. When I instruct a woman in my sessions to put everything, the entire world out of her mind and not be limited by anything, each and every woman knows exactly what she would like for herself at that moment.

### Why is it that we often hide who we really are, that we do not know how to show our true colours?

Because we are afraid, afraid of how our environment will judge us. The fact is that everything we say or do is judged by people. But we must understand that we can never please everyone because people are so different. In actuality, we can please about half the people and they are sincere, open, and encouraging towards us. From the other half, about half of them, so a quarter, simply do not like us. These people think differently, but they are not rude, envious, they simply move on and do not try to oppose us.

If they do, they express their criticism or opinion in a constructive way. The other quarter of the people are envious. They do actually like us, but their own bitterness makes them despise, humiliate, detest us, write negative comments online and so on. But experts have determined that people who act that way are generally not happy or content in themselves. It should therefore be clear to us that it is useless to place any effort and attention onto those people, because we will never be able to satisfy them. It is better to focus on the first half of those honest and open people, so that the group becomes stronger, larger, more solid.

### What advice would you give to women and girls to be more confident, content with ourselves?

Each woman should first answer the question of what she actually wants, what she wishes would change in her life and how can that happen. Then take things step by step. As the saying goes: when one door closes, another opens. However, no journey is without its slip-ups, but these are not defeats. The greatest defeat is not having learned anything from it. Not doing something out of fear of making a mistake is not good. Of course, we cannot be expected to take every loss with a smile.

### Where do you think lies a woman's greatest power?

A woman's greatest power is her ability to show her weakness and vulnerability.

And to explain how she dealt with it. It is a bit like saying: "I'm sorry," it requires putting yourself out there. Admitting something happened to you too or that you are battling something, then explaining how you are getting through it – that takes a lot of strength. Few of us can do this. But there are many other women who spend all their time proving—for example, in forums—that they are great and completely trouble-free. When asking these women for advice or help, the only thing they know is to reproach and revel over someone else's misery. This is because they have severe internal struggles, but will not admit to them and pass them onto others. They want the other woman to feel as they do. This is their way of calming down, as they feel superior in the situation.

### What is the best value that a mother can instil in her daughter?

Honesty. I think the most important thing in my relationships with my daughters is that we can trust each other. They trust me and I them, we can talk about anything, debate on things. I am always honest, but I do offer some constructive criticism, which absolutely never includes any insults or belittling. It is soothing and emboldening for a young woman to know she can always rely on you and that you are always there for her – honestly and sincerely. This gives her a true sense of security – and that goes for all relationships.





# 10 facts about women's intimate health

Thankfully, the topic of menstruation is no longer taboo. Girls and women discuss it openly, and even most men don't get embarrassed talking about it. This monthly bleeding has become commonplace and almost mundane, but we have still managed to gather some interesting facts and data about it that you might not have heard.

**1.** A woman has on average 450 periods in her life.

**2.** 28 May is the World Menstrual Hygiene Day. This specific date was chosen because the average cycle is 28 days and most women have their period for 5 days.

**3.** The first menstrual bleeding is called menarche. The average age is at about 12 years old, but it can happen earlier or later.

**4.** Women usually reach menopause at around 50 years of age.

**5.** A woman discharges about 1.2 dcl of menstrual liquid during her period. This is about half a cup and only 4 to 6 teaspoons of that is blood.

**6.** Menstrual liquid, often mistakenly called menstrual blood, contains cervical mucus, vaginal excretions, endometrial tissue, and some blood.

**7.** In 2018, the Academy Award for Best Documentary (short subject) was awarded to the film Period. End of sentence. It is about the challenges girls and

women in India face in accessing sanitary pads, and how they are confronting them, including making their own pads.

**8.** As many as 60% of girls and women in third world countries do not have access to sanitary pads for protection during their period. For school-aged girls, this means they miss class five days a month every month.

**9.** Tosama's tradition goes back 95 years, as we produced the first sanitary pads as early as in 1926.

**10.** Three quarters of all women experience inflammation or infection of their genitalia. 46% can mitigate the symptoms simply by switching synthetic pads for ones that have at least a cotton top layer. The most effective are pads that are completely made of cotton.

## LET'S EXPLAIN

### GLOSSARY

#### Digital tampon

A tampon that is inserted into the vagina with a finger.

#### Classic sanitary pad

A pad with an absorbent core that has not been compressed or thinned down. The top protective layer is fibrous or a net. The pad usually has a liquid lock and usually does not have wings. This type of pad is also suitable for women after giving birth.

#### Panty liner

A small, extremely thin pad, usually without wings. For days when you on your period, are experiencing a heavier white discharge, and for everyday protection of your underwear. Made from natural materials allowing the skin to breathe.

#### Applicator tampon

The tampon has an applicator made of two tubes for easier and more hygienic insertion into the vagina.

#### Tampon for swimming

A digital tampon with a hydrophobic medicinal lock in the lower part that prevents water from entering from the outside. It absorbs menstrual fluid during menstruation, but even if you aren't on your period and you don't trust the quality of the water, simply use it while swimming and remove it after coming out of the water. It is also safe for use by pregnant women.

#### Probiotic tampon

A digital tampon with a special

combination of lactic acid bacteria – lactobacilli. Also known as probiotics, these help maintain, regenerate, or protect the natural microflora in the vagina. The probiotics mitigate the symptoms of the disturbed balance, while the tampon absorbs menstrual liquid.

#### Ultra thin pad

Very thin pad, usually consisting of three layers: the top layer that comes into contact with the genitalia, the absorbent core, and the watertight layer. The absorbent core has been thinned down, while some pads have added super absorbent powders for extra absorbance that hold the liquid and prevent unpleasant odours from forming. They usually feature wings. Pads for the night-time have very high absorbency, while daytime pads have a normal absorbency rate. They also differ in length, with the night ones being longer.

#### Incontinence pad

A pad for people with bladder control problems. It has a special top layer that has been processed so that the urine immediately flows into the core and the outer layer does not absorb it. The core of an incontinence pad has micro-capsules that absorb up to 70 times their weight and turn into gel. They make the pad reliable, the skin stays dry, which reduces the chances of inflammation, while also preventing any unpleasant odour.

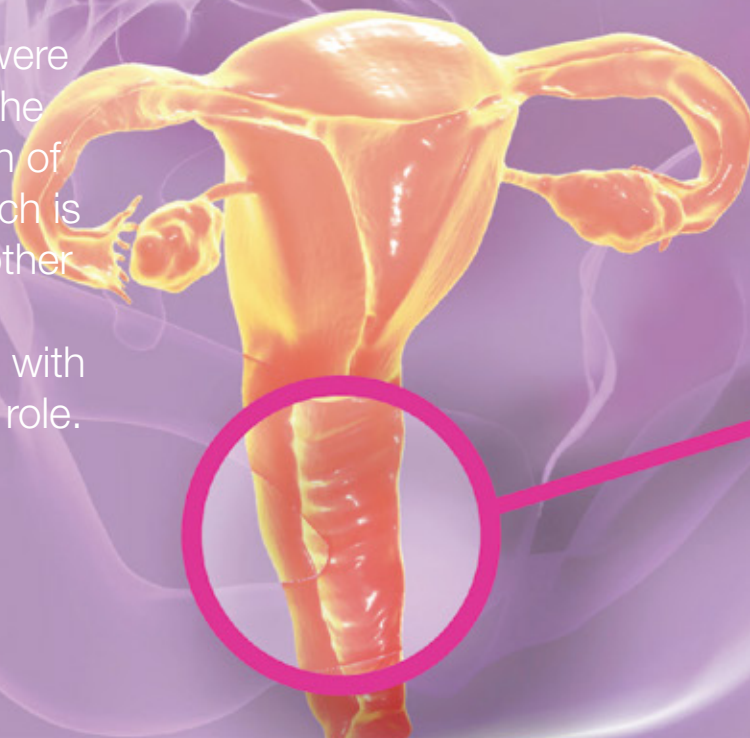




MAJA BERTONCELJ, Microbiologist  
ON PROBIOTICS

# Microorganisms make life possible

A decade ago, scientists dedicated an enormous amount of research to the study of our genetic code. One of the major global projects was the Human Genome Project. Upon its conclusion, the scientists were surprised to discover that the human body has only a fifth of its genome for protein, which is essential for survival. The other genes are coded in our symbiotic microorganisms, with probiotics having a special role. People cannot live without probiotics.

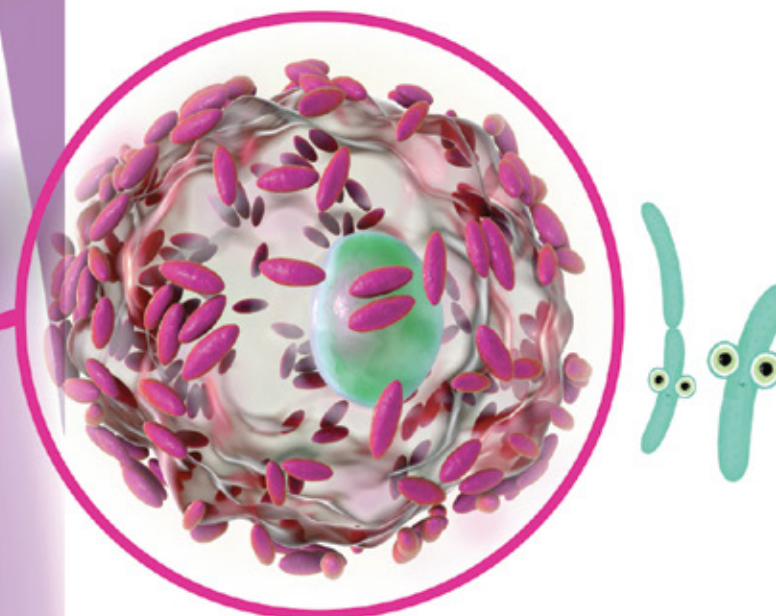


## Probiotics “for life”

Ever since then, we have thought of the body as a superorganism, or a set of organisms. This community of microorganisms, also called a microbiome, provides the human with the necessary protein, while the human offers the microbiome a safe haven and stable living environment. This frail balance, of which we are usually not even aware, must be nurtured and cultivated. The term probiotic originates from the Greek word meaning “for life”. The World Health Organization defined the probiotic as a living microorganism that provides the host health benefits.

The human body is naturally inhabited with probiotics that protect us from any causes of infection and disease. Different body parts are inhabited by different types (strands) of probiotics.

This means the microbiome in the vagina is different than the microbiome in the oral cavity or the digestive system. The microorganism balance in the vagina is homogenous and has therefore been thoroughly studied. It changes with the woman's age and is heavily affected by hormonal changes.



## Delicate balance in the vagina

A normal, healthy vaginal microflora has a complex microorganism ecology, in which probiotics are the predominant type, such as bacteria from the genus *Lactobacillus*. A healthy vagina normally also contains potentially harmful microorganisms. The lactobacilli create a healthy environment by producing lactic acid and thus maintaining an acidic pH in the vagina, which is 3.8–4.2 (often simplistically defined as  $\text{pH} < 4.5$ ). Maintaining this pH requires an important concentration of lactobacilli: there are about 100 million lactobacilli in one gram of vaginal fluid. As long as the probiotics and the other microorganisms in the vagina are in balance, the potentially harmful microorganisms are unable to multiply too much.

The absence of lactobacilli in the vagina can cause a microbiological imbalance and lead to different vaginal infections.

## Silent causes of imbalance

In addition to the systemic factors, which are harder to control (illnesses, stress, hormone swings, drops in immunity, changes during menstruation and pregnancy), the microflora balance in the vagina can also be disturbed by factors that may seem so simple that they are often not taken seriously or even ignored. These definitely include wearing synthetic underwear and sanitary pads along with hygienic and sexual habits. Excessive washing and dushing of the vagina and unprotected sexual intercourse can cause the alkalization of the vagina – its acidic environment being neutralized. Dushing is not beneficial to the vagina and can even be harmful, as the water washes away the protective mucus from the vagina,



destroying the acidic environment and weakening its natural defensive abilities. The harmful microorganisms multiply and cause inflammation. If the vagina is frequently strained with seminal fluid (sperm), which has an alkaline pH (7.2–8), this affects the otherwise acidic environment in the vagina – the pH changes and disrupts the normal microorganism balance. In addition, men can introduce harmful microorganisms into the vagina due to inappropriate hygiene, which causes inflammation.

## The first line of defence

The area of the external genitalia (vulva) is the first line of defence from genital infections. The skin in this area differs from the other parts of the skin on the body, as it is more moist, prone to friction, and also more porous. The area has a low pH and hosts a number of different microorganisms, ranging from beneficial to harmful ones (vaginal, urethral, intestinal). The harmful microorganisms often accumulate on the surface and the folds of the vulva. Their growth is predicated by moisture, sweating, menstruation, and hormonal swings.

## Close attention is necessary

The delicate balance of microorganisms requires special attention and care of the genitalia. On the other hand, excessive washing can also be harmful. Washing the area once a day with water and a gentle intimate soap will refresh the area, while not changing the environment that is beneficial to the probiotics. The use of alkaline soaps, deodorants, and antibacterial products is especially not advisable. You also do not need to wash the vagina itself, as this reduces the number of probiotics. It transforms the area into an inhospitable environment, the area dries out, and can enable harmful microorganisms to grow.



### NATURA FEMINA BY ELLEN INTIMATE FOAM

is made of natural ingredients, making it very soothing and preventing unpleasant odours. It contains lactic acid, which supports the natural pH balance in the genitalia, as well as sage, which is anti-inflammatory.



### NATURA FEMINA BY ELLEN INTIMATE PROBIOTIC CREAM

For issues with dryness, itching, and unpleasant odours in the vulva, we recommend the Natura Femina by ellen intimate probiotic cream. It helps maintain a natural microflora, moist environment of the genitalia, as well as softens the skin and outer layer of the mucous membrane. 1 g of the cream contains 100 million Lacto Naturel probiotics.

## During menstruation

This balance is especially vulnerable during menstruation. Menstrual liquid has a higher pH value than the usual one in the vagina, which alters the optimal conditions for probiotic growth. Its flow also causes probiotics to leech out. Women use different absorbent hygienic pads to absorb the menstrual liquid. Did you know that choosing the right materials can significantly help maintain the delicate balance? Natural materials, such as cotton, allow the skin and mucous to breathe, so that the pH value in the genitals does not change. On the other hand, synthetic materials can cause overheating, the skin begins to sweat. The human body also contains nutrients that the harmful bacteria use to multiply and survive. With the proper care and using natural materials, we can nurture probiotics that will not allow harmful bacteria to grow too prolifically. This will keep our superorganism healthy and strong.



100  
MILLION

### LACTOBACILLI

are in 1 g of the Natura Femina by ellen intimate cream

This combination of probiotics in the Natura Femina by ellen intimate cream is patented (Lacto Naturel®) and contains three different bacterial strains from the genus Lactobacillus, which are naturally occurring in a healthy vaginal microflora.



Maja Bertonec, B.Sc. Microbiology





# Introducing probiotics into the vagina is beneficial

Clinical studies have proven that introducing probiotics into the vagina for preventative purposes or in the case of a deficit can be very beneficial. The fastest and most optimal effect for the vaginal microflora can be achieved by applying the probiotics directly to the vagina. **Natura Femina by ellen tampons allow you to do this during your period, which is also the most effective way.**

## Disrupted microflora

Disturbances in the microflora are defined as vaginitis. The most common vaginitises are bacterial vaginosis and candidiasis, which are responsible for 80–90% of all vaginitis cases. The most common cause of candidiasis is the fungus *Candida Albicans*, which is otherwise normally present in the vagina, but its proliferation can cause problems. Three quarters of women experience candidiasis at least once, while as many as half of all women suffer from at least two episodes a year. Ten percent of women face the chronic form of the inflammation. A symptom of this type of inflammation often has a characteristic white clotted vaginal discharge, which is odourless. The discharge is accompanied by extreme itchiness, redness, and a burning sensation. The vaginal pH is normal. Bacterial vaginosis is essentially an altered vaginal microflora due to an excessive bacterial growth (their number is increased by a hundred to a thousand times) and probiotic loss. The increased vaginal discharge is heavy, a whitish yellow to pus green, has an unpleasant odour (usually reminiscent to the smell of fish) and causes itchiness. The pH is raised above 4.5. The bacterial inflammation is often accompanied by pain in the lower abdomen and can also affect the urinary tract and internal organs in the lower pelvis.

## How to re-establish the balance?

Vaginitis treatments entail medication therapy, if necessary: bacterial inflammation requires antibiotic therapy, while fungal inflammation is treated with antimycotic therapy. It is important to alleviate symptoms and remove all risk factors for recurring inflammation. At the same time, the normal vaginal microflora balance must be re-established using products that regulate the vaginal pH and/or introducing probiotics into the vagina.

CLINICALLY PROVEN



### NATURA FEMINA BY ELLEN TAMPONS

are available in three sizes – mini, normal, and super. Each woman should select the right tampon according to the intensity of her period. The dimension of the tampon does not determine the number of lactobacilli: each Natura Femina by ellen tampon contains the same number of Lacto Naturel probiotics.



### ACTIVATION OF LACTOBACILLI

- menstrual liquid
- body temperature
- time: approximately 90 minutes



**100**  
MILLION  
LACTOBACILLI

are in each  
Natura Femina by ellen  
tampon

**The probiotic combination in the core of the Natura Femina by ellen tampons is patented (Lacto Naturel®) and contains three different bacterial strains from the genus *Lactobacillus*, which are naturally occurring in a healthy vaginal microflora.**

**3x3x3**  
FOR THE  
OPTIMAL EFFECT

- three tampons a day
- three days in a row
- three menstrual cycles

The probiotics in the tampon are protected with a special fat capsule, which ensures its stability, but only allows them to be activated under certain conditions and penetrate from the centre of the tampon to the surface, where they attach themselves to the vaginal mucous. In order to be activated, the lactobacilli must have enough moisture and the right temperature. Once the tampon is soaked with the menstrual liquid and is warmed to the body temperature, the lactobacilli are activated. It takes about 90 minutes from the application to the activation.



MATEJA ROŠER, midwife  
ON INTIMATE CARE

# Four steps to intimate health

Intimate health depends heavily on the right care. Mateja Rošer, a certified midwife, advises every woman, regardless of age, to:

## 1. Wash the intimate areas correctly and not excessively

It is recommended to wash your intimate areas once a day; during your period aim to wash the area twice a day. Excessive washing is not advisable, as this further dries out the skin and mucous layer. Always wash only the external genital area, the vulva. Wash from front to back (i.e., from the vagina towards the rectum), as this is the only way to prevent the introduction of bacteria from the anus into the vagina and avoid discomfort. Never douche the vagina.

## 2. Use hygiene products that are specially made

Wash your intimate area with lukewarm water and mild products that don't alter your natural pH. The lactic acid bacteria (probiotics) produce lactic acid, making the pH in the vagina acidic and serving as protection from excessive proliferation of harmful microorganisms. Just like we take care of our face, hands, and body, we can use a suitable moisturizing cream to nurture the intimate area; using a probiotic cream can be very useful.

## 3. Wear soft and comfortable clothing and underwear made of natural materials

Your clothes should be comfortable

and not overly tight and your cotton underwear changed regularly (daily or several times a day if necessary). If you don't wear cotton underwear, use cotton panty liners and swap them out over the day.

## 4. Use cotton sanitary pads and tampons

Sanitary pads made of pure cotton with at least the top layer made of cotton and a core made of natural materials enable the area to breathe, have antiallergenic properties, and conform to the proper physiological pH of the genitals. The advantages of using cotton pads and tampons are noticeable after the first month of use. Let's not forget that proper intimate care is important for both women and men. With proper and regular care (before and after sexual intercourse), even men can avoid genital inflammation while protecting their partner from any harmful bacteria entering their vagina during intercourse.

## INTIMATE CARE



### NATURA FEMINA PANTY LINERS

The most intimate panty liners, thin, gentle, and discrete. For daily use, even for women who face common issues, irritation, and inflammation. Made of cotton, without added perfume and colorants.



### NATURA FEMINA INTIMATE MOIST WIPES

For daily hygiene, even during menstruation. Gently cleansing while also nurturing. They are made of viscose, contain lactic acid and camomile. Biodegradable, dermatologically and gynecologically tested.



# On values and the female nature

We invited fashion designer Nina Šušnjara to collaborate with Tosama, as she has been known to the public for over a decade for her passion to create for non-fashion brands. She has worked with brands, like Elan, Mömax, Jaguar, the City Municipality of Ljubljana, and others, as well as our brand Natura Femina in 2018. What is Nina's view of our joint project and what does beauty have to do with it?

Connect  
with



Photo: Klemen Razinger

## What do you believe in, what are your values?

The most important things to me are compassion, love, family, honesty, and loyalty. Life would be hard without these key "ingredients". These are values that make me feel secure and allow me to be the best version of myself.

## What kind of woman is beautiful to you?

To me, beauty is something unique and subjective. A beautiful woman is relaxed, unencumbered, and confident, living her life and balancing it well. If she manages to add a touch of style to all that, something magical and truly beautiful happens. Beauty is not just in the visuals, but is always complemented with the story behind it.

## How do girls and women today showcase their feminine nature?

I think each woman can show her nature by daring to be what she is. To be honest with herself and then with others.

## You worked with Natura Femina on creating this unique toiletry bag. What drew you to the project?

It was the name itself that drew me to the Natura Femina brand. It's a perfect name that encompasses everything I believe in. I also enjoy collaborating, because I know we are stronger together. The cherry on top in the project were the plethora of women who were involved in the designing and creating of the SNYR for Natura Femina toiletry bag. We proved that women can create a better world.



## Natura Femina combines the natural and the feminine from the name onward

Both women who are prone to gynaecological issues, as well as dynamic and active women who are aware of the advantages of 100% cotton can avoid discomfort by wearing Natura Femina hypoallergenic sanitary pads, panty liners, and tampons.



## NATURA FEMINA PADS AND PANTY LINERS

Pads with a top layer and absorbent core made of 100% cotton. Includes a liquid lock. The pads have not been bleached with chlorine and have no added perfumes or colorants. Available in ultra-thin panty liners and sanitary pads with normal and super absorbency.



## NATURA FEMINA APPLICATOR TAMPONS

Tampons made of natural cotton fibres. Their eight-groove shape means the tampon will open evenly during the expanding, which adds to the safety from leaking. The tampon is housed in a special applicator, which makes inserting the tampon simple and completely safe and hygienic even in situations when proper hand hygiene cannot be ensured. Available in mini and normal sizes.



KATJA BRNOT and ANDREJ ZABRET, textile engineers  
ON TOSAMA'S STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT

# Female-male compromises

Photo: Urška Vitali

Each new feminine care product that Tosama develops requires a lot of processes to take place. Starting with the idea, to the studies and research, looking for the most suitable materials, the test and then regular production: it can take a lot of time, during which a number of co-workers from all facets of the company can add their contribution. Strategic development plays an important role in the process. We talked to our associates from strategic development, Andrej Zabret and Katarina Brnot.

**Andrej, tell us, as a man, what is it like to be responsible for such an intimate part of the opposite sex' hygiene?**

To me, it is still a challenge after 22 years to understand women and their needs. If we regard technology and production as a male concept, something I am very familiar with, then I try to understand the female concept and somehow put myself in their shoes. Just like in a family, this also takes a lot of adjustments and patience and I am constantly practicing both.

**Katja, is the dynamic of male-female relationships reflected in your work?**

If there is something we disagree about, we are always aware that these differences are because of our genders and age. We have learned

that there are no stupid ideas: not ones that stem from years of experience, nor any new, completely crazy ones. We know how to make compromises, so we are able to achieve quite a lot.

**Can you let us in on the secret of your successful collaboration?**

In my previous employment position, I noticed I lacked some technical knowledge and experience – the company's internal knowledge. Andrej is good at both, so I can learn a lot from him. Whereas I bring fresh, new ideas to the team, Andrej can place them in the existing environment well.

**Development is the factor that determines a company's success to a great degree. Andrej, what is Tosama's place in the world today, where do we fit in?**

We were one of the first companies in the world that recognized the value of cotton products and that segment continues to expand. There is a wave coming from America to Europe and we believe we've managed to ride it very well; we are among the industry leaders, especially in the field of tampons. And tampons are a very difficult niche to find your footing in, as the ticket to enter is very pricy, takes a lot of knowledge and a huge investment.

**Katja, please explain what sets our products apart from those of the competitors, what is our advantage?**

We boast a constant good quality. We have a very long tradition and extensive knowledge of cotton processing and have applied it to our products since the very beginning. We have a great ability to adapt to our customers and a very large assortment of products. On the other hand, we also

offer the customers our knowledge; quite a few of our products have been patented.

**Andrej, what is the purpose of a patent, what does it mean for the company, and what does it mean for the users?**

A patent means protection for the company that prevents others from only copying our innovations and conquering the market with no investment. If possible, the improvements themselves, which constitute a significant progress, are protected in one of the ways offered by international intellectual property protection.

**Katja, what element drives Tosama's development, what is the main guideline for creating new feminine hygiene products?**

Our development and design are always guided by two requirements: the first is putting the uncompromising safety and health of girls and women who will be using the pads and tampons first; the second is our commitment to making the products as natural as possible. This dedication to health and the natural has been integrated in Tosama's strategy for a decade. This decision has been guiding most of the company's activities, and we are especially dedicated to it during development. We are the ones helping to completely satisfy our users: nature always knows what is best for health and women can only be healthy and content with natural feminine hygiene products. This is why we have chosen the best nature has to offer for our intimate care products: organic cotton.







# Vulva, the exposed part of the female genitalia

The most common issue facing women is inflammation of the external genitalia (vulvitis). It is caused by viruses, bacteria, yeast, and parasites and can also occur because of reduced skin resistance or hypersensitivity. Experts warn about potentially harmful female hygiene products made of synthetic materials and/or those with added chemical substances, such as colorants and perfumes.

Many studies have confirmed the effect sanitary pads have on the occurrence of dermatitis of the vulva. Experts believe that the surface of the pad can cause irritation as it comes into contact with the genitalia. The conditions under the pad—excessive moisture and conditions that prevent the air from circulating and the skin from breathing—allow the pathogen microorganisms to proliferate and cause inflammation. Certain chemicals that are added to pads can also cause inflammation after an allergic reaction.

## Contact dermatitis of the vulva

is an inflammatory skin disease that often develops on the external genitalia. There are two types, both occurring as a consequence of direct contact of the vulva with a substance that irritates and damages the skin or causes an allergic reaction. Irritative dermatitis is a non-allergic reaction of the skin to external irritation factors. The skin is affected in places where it was exposed to a specific substance. With all the friction, the skin of the external genitalia is prone to mechanical injuries in these areas.

**Allergic contact dermatitis** occurs when the skin comes into contact with an allergen to which it has become sensitised. Perfumes, colorants, and other additives in pads are the most common causes of allergic reactions. Excessive washing and/or douching can additionally irritate the skin, as well as soaps that foam too much or contain alcohols or perfumes. During a flair-up, there is increased discharge from the vagina, usually accompanied by itching and an uncomfortable stinging both in the vagina, as well as the external genitals, both often become red and swollen. Women often experience a stinging feeling during urination and sexual intercourse. The primary changes—redness and swelling—are followed by secondary changes: tiny nodes above the skin (papules), skin damage due to scratching and/or friction, which begins to ooze and often leads to deeper sores that turn into scabs. The protective hydrolipid layer on the vulva is punctured, the skin thickens, becomes dry, and loses its elasticity. Inflammation of the vulva requires treatment, as the reason for its occurrence must be removed and the symptoms must be relieved. It is especially important to treat the skin appropriately to increase the resilience of the genitals.

## HEALTH

### Under a pad made of synthetic materials

The risk of inflammation becomes high with increased moisture in the intimate area. Gland excretions, urine, and vaginal discharge (discharge, menstrual liquid, lochia after giving birth) raise the moisture level, which can increase up to 10 times under certain conditions and prolong the contact with the discharge. Synthetic underwear, tight-fitting clothing, and sanitary pads made of synthetic materials (polyester) do not allow air to circulate, causing the temperature and moisture level to rise locally, which causes a so-called greenhouse climate. The warm and humid environment under the synthetic pad weakens the defensive properties of the skin and mucous. This is a good environment for harmful microorganisms to multiply and cause inflammation. Mechanical injuries are also common and are rooted in personal hygienic and sexual habits, as well as direct contact i.e. skin-on-skin friction, friction of the skin against clothing, and friction of the skin against a sanitary pad. Lastly, stress, illness, and periods also weaken the organism's immunity. With all of these factors, the healthy balance of microorganisms in the vagina can be disrupted even quicker—the number of probiotics is decreased as yeast and pathogenic bacteria proliferates.

**Using cotton sanitary pads is recommended when treating vulvitis, as well as for preventative purposes, especially for women suffering from repeated inflammation.**



## A woman uses on average 32,000 pads during her fertile period

Women don't only use sanitary pads during menstruation, but also for everyday protection; many of us use them year-round. This means that if we use sanitary pads made of synthetic materials and/or pads that contain colorants and perfumes, we are constantly additionally exposing our genitals to the risk of inflammation.

## Check the materials of the sanitary pad on the packaging

Long-term exposure to sanitary products that absorb menstrual liquid and other discharge from the female genitalia requires caution. The manufacturers are the ones deciding on the materials they use for the pads and the additives they use. There are currently no regulations in Europe in the area of female sanitary products; no regulation determining the composition and limitations in using certain raw materials. Manufacturers stating the exact ingredients of the sanitary pad on the packaging are done on a voluntary basis. Always be sure to check the packaging for the materials the pads and tampons are made of and what chemicals they contain.

The least we can do is to choose products made of natural materials; ones that do not contain synthetic fibres, are not bleached with chlorine, and do not contain harmful additives (colorants, perfumes).



## Select sanitary pads made of natural materials

Pads are usually made of three layers: the top layer that is in direct contact with the genitals, the absorbent core, and the protective layer that prevents leaking.

The **TOP LAYER** is in direct contact with the external genitalia. It is very important that it is made of **COTTON**. This ensures that the pad keeps you feeling fresh and prevents irritation and friction. It does not cause allergies and alleviates symptoms of irritation.

An **ABSORBENT CORE** made of natural materials (cotton is best) ensures the air circulates and the skin breathes. It prevents the development of inflammation, especially if the top layer of the pad is also made of cotton. The core must have an appropriate absorbent capacity, so some pads have added super absorbent powders, and the premium ones have a cotton core with an increased absorbent capacity.

The **PROTECTIVE LAYER** must be made of a material that prevents leaks, but does provide air circulation. The best pads have a protective layer made of a biodegradable natural material.

Women who care about their health should consider choosing pads made of **NATURAL MATERIALS**. Make sure that the top layer of the pad that is in direct contact with the skin and mucous is made of **COTTON**. Choosing sanitary pads made of organic cotton also expresses our care for nature.

We'd like to present to you Natura Femina Organic pads, the newest achievement of Tosama's development and our greatest pride. They have been made by combining the best: premium materials, modern technology, and knowledge, certified with the Safety Channel patent.



## CHECK WHAT YOUR PADS ARE MADE OF



**GOTS is a certificate awarded by the ICEA certification organ and is the highest global standard for the production of ecological textile.** It proves that all the stages of ecologic fibre processing have been strictly prescribed and controlled. It confirms that all the colorants and other chemicals have been used in accordance with the strict regulations on toxicity and biodegradability.

It requires that any bleach used is oxygen-based and prohibits any use of chlorine, aromatic solvents, phthalates, and PVC.



**Do not be misled by the promotional claims on the packaging or fooled by images of cotton in ads.**



# Ladies, let's don ourselves in **white gold**

Millenia ago in Babylon, cotton was called “white gold”. The fact is that it really deserves that distinction because all of the positive characteristics of the plant and the benefits that wearing cotton has for the body.



does not alter the natural pH of the mucous and the skin of the intimate area (vulva and vagina)

a soft and absorbent natural material that is gentle on the skin

prevents unpleasant odours

decreases skin irritation and friction in the intimate area

enables air circulation and allows the skin to breathe

Despite the myriad of man-made materials, cotton continues to be the most prized material. It is kind to the skin, as it is soft and comfortable, breathes and prevents microorganisms from multiplying, absorbs moisture, does not harbour unpleasant odours, does not irritate the skin or cause allergies.

**This is why cotton is regarded as the best choice for clothing, and it's also priceless for use in female intimate care.**



Take your pick,  
you cannot miss -  
**cotton will always  
nurture your skin**

**JASMIN**  
organic



**Natural materials  
combined with  
absorbency**

The pad features a unique combination:  
a top layer made of 100% organic  
cotton and an absorbent layer made of  
a natural material with an increased  
absorbent power.

**NATURA**  
*Femina*



**Pads with the quality  
and softness of  
pure cotton**

The top layer and absorbent core of the  
pad are made of cotton. The pads are  
hypoallergenic and do not contain any  
colorants, perfumes, or other chemicals.

**NATURA**  
*Femina*  
**ORGANIC**



**Biodegradable  
pads made of  
organic cotton**

The top layer and the absorbent core are  
made of a 100% certified organic cotton,  
while the protective layer and pad wrapping  
are made of biodegradable Mater-Bi material.  
Has been awarded the GOTS certificate.

WHICH ONE  
WILL YOU CHOOSE?

Choosing Tosama sanitary pads is always the right decision. Our brands Jasmin organic, Natura Femina, and Natura Femina Organic feature pads made of natural materials; the top layers on all of them are cotton, while they have different types of core. We do not use misleading promotional babble, but rather openly state the materials and composition of our pads on the packaging of all our products and we back up our claims with the appropriate certificates. You can be sure that using Tosama pads is the best decision for you as well as the environment.

Our operations are sustainably oriented; we select materials, technology, and products that are safe for the users as well as the environment. By the jubilee year of 2023, when Tosama will be celebrating a century of the company, we want to decrease our plastic use by two thirds. The "GREEN VISION – TOSAMA'S DECISION" seal represents our efforts and enables us celebrate the goals we reach along the way to achieving our vision. For this reason, we have started placing it on all those products that are environmentally friendly, as well as those for which we have been carefully planning to decrease the number of ingredients with harmful effects on the environment and human health.





Prestigious  
Natura Femina Organic

# Modern woman in harmony with nature

**Natura Femina Organic** is the best we currently have to offer to the modern, conscientious woman. To develop the line, we applied all the knowledge we've gained in our nearly century-old tradition of making products for female intimate care and in our constant efforts to celebrate the female nature. That which makes the modern woman feminine, that which gives her nature the chance to showcase herself in her perfect beauty, that which can be encapsulated in a single word: **natural**.

Photo: Urška Vitali

Connect  
with



**Natura Femina Organic is just that, authentic, genuine, and trustworthy. And most of all – completely natural.**

As women, we are aware how important it is to take care of ourselves in a loving, conscientious, and thoughtful way. Our health is the reflection of many of our good decisions, which together combine to form our confidence, beauty, and well-being. Until we face issues in the intimate area – inflammation –, we usually do not even consider our choice of sanitary pads and tampons. Most of all, we expect them to be safe and reliable, which depends on the materials they are made of. This is why we should look for products that come into gentle contact with the genitals, that don't alter the natural defence mechanism of the vulva, preserve the microflora balance in the vagina, and do not have any harmful chemical additives.

**There is a single brand on the Slovenian market that meets all these demands: Natura Femina Organic.**

Natura Femina Organic **sanitary pads** are ultrathin, but extremely absorbent; their innovative core guarantees a quick and equal distribution of the liquid from the source to the central area of the pad.

Natura Femina Organic **tampons** are absorbent and reliable, as their patented eight-groove shape allows them to expand equally, while their soft surface and rounded tip ensure a gentle insertion and painless removal.

GIVE YOURSELF  
THE GIFT OF HEALTH

“

**Being a woman is something special – something beautiful and difficult at the same time.**

My female nature shapes me and enables me to be attractive, beautiful, strong, gentle, friendly, and compassionate; it allows me to show that I am also vulnerable, that I need help, support, and love.

I am all of these things: I am body and soul. And I am very well-aware that both are equally important for my greatest asset: my health.

**In my intimate health, I demand only the best and that is organic cotton.**

”



## **NATURA FEMINA ORGANIC ULTRATHIN PADS**

Completely biodegradable ultrathin pads with a core and top layer made of certified 100% organic cotton, without any colorants and perfumes.

Features a patented absorbent core and distribution channel system. The line also features digital tampons. Natura Femina Organic is GOTS certified by ICEA.





ACTRESS, HOST, AND INFLUENCER  
ULA FURLAN

For days when  
**everything**  
**is right and**  
**absolutely**  
**nothing is wrong**

Photo: Enja Brelih

## A TRIBUTE TO LIFE

### TO WOMEN

Hello and I wish a wonderful day to all women who dare to be ... broken, strong, sensitive, well-read, confident, playful, sometimes all over the place, and “too much”, other times “not enough”, which it never is. And never should be.

I also want to greet all those women who see us, complement us, fill us, inspire us, make us think, challenge us, and let us be.

And the men who accept, celebrate, love and nurture ... everything that is right with us and never wrong.

Know that everything about our lives, emotions, and bodies IS important. Even and especially when the body starts its cycle anew, when the sensations and the history of the past month is being shed to make space for a fresh new leap into life. This is why it is that much more beautiful, important, and right that in that most sensitive of periods, when the hormones are at their peak, the ovaries are pulsating, when the period is coming and happening, when a few days must be written off to pain, that you entrust your most intimate area to organic cotton. Cotton that is grown for Natura Femina Organic with ecologically friendly methods with positive environmental impacts. The plants themselves are not genetically modified either, the method does not involve pesticides, even the fields are cultivated following crop rotation principles.

Thinking, caring, and awareness of yesterday, today, and a better tomorrow. Natura Femina Organic pads and tampons are also certified, which means the entire chain has been awarded an international certificate.

Natura Femina Organic is a special brand. It is the result of Slovenian knowledge, ideas, tradition, and a special “achievement” of Slovenian women for Slovenian women and girls. I am grateful to be part of that story.

**HUGS AND KISSES,  
MY DEARS. TAKE CARE  
OF YOURSELF.  
AND OF YOUR BODIES.**

*Taken from Ula Furlan's Instagram profile*





WE ASKED GYNAECOLOGIST  
URŠULA REŠ MURAVEC

# Even young girls experience difficulties

Photo: archive of Uršula Reš Muravec

Uršula Reš Muravec, M.D., M.S.  
Dravlje Health Centre, Cesta na Poljane 24,  
www.neplodnost.com; info@neplodnost.com

## INTERVIEW

Even very young girls often face problems in the intimate area. Why does this happen and how can they alleviate their problems? We asked renowned doctor, gynaecologist, and obstetrician, Uršula Reš Muravec.

**What would you advise young girls – how should they care for their intimate area?**

Problems in the gynaecological region relating to intimate care are very rare among young girls, especially if they do not have any other problems: if they have a good immune system, they lead a healthy life, eat a balanced diet, get plenty of exercise and air, and if they practice safe sex. Girls that feel well and have no problems, can have a very simple intimate care: they should shower with lukewarm water, only wash the external genitals, once a day is completely fine, and should use intimate care products with a specially adjusted pH. More attention should be paid to intimate care if the balance in the intimate area is disrupted for any reason. This usually happens due to stress, changes in the pH levels of the genitals, like after menstruation or intercourse.

**What kind of issues do girls come to you with?**

Girls usually see a gynaecologist when experiencing a smelly discharge, changes in odour, itching, stinging, and similar. Once the doctor excludes any possible inflammation, girls can usually help themselves by using products from the pharmacy, while naturally adapting their intimate care. During this time, we recommend they wear only cotton underwear, no thongs or lace, and to use products that will help rebalance the vagina's natural pH. These are usually made based on formulations with lactic acid to establish an environment that is less suitable for pathological microorganisms to develop.



**What are the biggest mistakes women make in their intimate care?**

Girls are quite well-aware in general, but a lot of that depends on how informed they are. Some of the areas where women may experience problems involve excessive intimate care, especially excessive washing and rubbing intimate areas with a towel. Other causes for issues can also be using perfumed deodorants, fabric softener, hair removal products, and sanitary pads and tampons made of synthetic materials.

**What kind of attitude to menstruation does the younger generation have?**

If menstruation is presented to girls at the right time and in the right way, it is regarded as a normal physiological process in adolescence that becomes something routine with time.

In the past, women had fewer ovulations and menstrual cycles due to more frequent pregnancies, but today, with fewer children being born, they do not wish to have a cycle because of their lifestyle, sports activities, intercourse. By using new approaches to contraception, we can ensure the hormonal levels remain normal, but it is no longer necessary for the mucus to mature and scale off in the form of a period. This form of contraception can affect the length of the menstruation or the amount of menstrual liquid even for very strong or painful periods – dysmenorrhea. We can ensure that the hormonal conditions remain suitable to the age, which means menstruation is no longer necessary. You should remember, however, that with this method, the blood is not retained in the body, only that the mucous does not develop to the level to which bleeding occurs.

**What is the girls' preference: pads or tampons?**

The choice of sanitary products depends on the individual woman and her lifestyle. I have noticed that mature women and urban women tend to prefer tampons over pads, as they do not wish to alter their daily rhythm during menstruation. On the other hand, younger girls tend to stick to sanitary pads.





FROM YOUR FIRST  
PERIOD ONWARD

# How to care for your vaginal flora

## Menstruation

has always been regarded as a milestone in the life of a young girl, a step into adulthood. The first period, called a menarche, usually occurs between 11 and 16 years of age. It is normal for the regularity of the period, the length of the cycle, and the intensity of the bleeding to change considerably over time. All of this can differ from woman to woman and in general, what is regarded as normal is anything that is normal to any girl.



## PREVENTION

### The mucus is more sensitive in young people

As they start their periods, girls, now young women, must also adopt a good intimate care routine. Why is it important that it is deliberate and correct?

*“The vaginal mucous is not immunologically mature yet, so it is much more sensitive and prone to inflammation, the balance of the vaginal flora can be disrupted much faster,”* explains gynaecologist Uršula Reš Muravec.

Young girls should therefore ensure from their first period onward not to damage their intimate health. They must be aware that they can worsen the situation:

- with improper intimate hygiene,
- by wearing synthetic underwear,
- by using pads made of synthetical materials,
- with premature, too frequent, and unprotected sexual intercourse.

### Gentle intimate care

In terms of the **everyday intimate care**, the gynaecologist advises girls: “Shower with lukewarm water, wash only your external genitalia, once a day is quite enough, use intimate products with a special pH and wear cotton underwear and cotton pads and tampons.”

**During menstruation** continue with your usual intimate care, the only addition being that you wash your external genitals twice a day and after defecation. Be sure to choose the right sanitary products – these should be made of cotton – and switch them out according to the instructions: pads as needed, at least three times a day, while tampons should be replaced every four hours, never more than eight hours.



## Vaginal discharge

About 10% of women experience a physiologically increased vaginal discharge during ovulation, before menstruation, and during pregnancy, but it is a fairly common occurrence in young girls. This is because the vagina can excrete up to a teaspoon of discharge a day which is usually white or translucent. This can increase somewhat before ovulation and become more watery and elastic. It does not have an odour, but with all of the daily activities, contact with clothing, excreting, and sweat, the scent of the intimate region may not be very pleasant at the end of the day.

I am organic cotton



### JASMIN ORGANIC ULTRATHIN SLIPS

Panty liners for everyday use that allow the skin to breathe. The top layer is made of 100% organic cotton and the core is made of cellulose. The slips have not been bleached with chlorine and do not have any added perfumes or colorants.



### JASMIN ORGANIC ULTRATHIN PADS

Made of natural materials: the top layer is made of 100% organic cotton and the core is made of cellulose. For better absorbency, we've added superabsorbent beads to the core. The pads do not have any added perfumes or colorants and have not been bleached with chlorine.

The line also features tampons made of 100% organic cotton.

Photo: David Keinne



WITH MAJA ZUPAN

INTERVIEW

# Opportunities, personal growth, and downtime

Maja Zupan donned the crown of the most beautiful Slovenian when she was just 17 years old.

By becoming Miss Slovenia 2017, she also became the face of Tosama's Jasmin brand. Our collaboration has continued ever since. Maja utilizes her image and lifestyle to educate young girls and women that using sanitary pads and tampons made of natural materials is extremely important for their intimate health. She has really found her stride with this mission and has become a recognizable face of our online communication. But what is Maja like as an ordinary girl, how does she think?

**What do you consider to be the mission of the Miss Slovenia competition?**

It is a project that enables young, intelligent, and ambitious young women to take part in various training and business opportunities and helps them create a vision for themselves and realize their goals. It is a great avenue for personal and professional growth as well as being an unforgettable experience in one's life.

**What did you learn during the year you were the reigning Miss?**

I acquired tons of new knowledge in entrepreneurship, fashion, public speaking; I met so many new people and travelled around a lot. I gained more confidence, allowed myself to be different, to forge my own path, and think outside the box.

**Do you think it is possible for girls these days to feel good in their skin?**

The most important factor in this is our relationship with ourselves, as this determines our attitude towards the rest of the world. This is why I encourage the girls that follow me on social media to respect themselves, love themselves, and accept themselves just as they are because this is the key to true happiness and success.

**How do you relax – do you turn to nature?**

Yes, nature fills me with energy, relaxes me, and helps me find the balance between my stressful schedule and my inner peace, which I definitely need to function well and be as productive as possible. I enjoy long walks, hiking, cycling, and treasure spending time with animals.



# Menstruation and sports

During menstruation, the intense hormonal changes in the body can cause women to experience a number of difficulties.

The most common nuisances are mood swings, headache, fatigue, and breast tenderness.



## The first days are the hardest

Women who actively practice sports or recreational activities must be prepared for at least changes in their mood, but especially body fatigue in the first days of getting their period, as well as a poor general disposition, strained breathing, or even vertigo. The blood loss is the greatest during the first few days, which is why the oxygenation of the muscles is somewhat decreased.

## Final days of the period

The estrogen level increases, triggering the cervical mucus to thicken. This hormone affects the cardiovascular system by dilating the veins and increasing tissue circulation, as well as accelerating the fat stores in the liver and the muscles. All of this is said to simultaneously increase the physical capabilities. The workouts should therefore become easier again during the last few days of menstruation.

## Exercise and menstrual cramps

Physical exercise can have a beneficial effect on any cramps you may be experiencing. By moving, the blood flow in the body increases, which will lead the endometrium or the cervical mucus to scale off quicker and the pain will be lessened. It is important that as women, we listen to our body and adjust exercise during menstruation, but there is no need to forgo it completely.

## Can I go into water on my period?

Since the cervix is slightly expanded during menstruation, there is a risk for water reaching the cervical mucus through the vagina and causing inflammation. We have come up with a solution to this at Tosama. We have developed and patented tampons that utilize a special medicinal hydrophobic lock to prevent water from entering the vagina. This means the tampon cannot absorb the water from the bottom end, while it continues to absorb menstrual liquid from the top end. We recommend you swap it out every time you come out of the water. Jasmin sport aqua tampons have been calibrated to be used during swimming, as they prevent water from entering the vagina.

## When it is too moist down there

Prolonged moisture and excessive heat in the intimate area are not welcome, neither during menstruation nor between cycles. This area is even more intensely exposed to increased perspiration during exercise, as sportswear is often made of synthetic materials. The raised moisture level and temperature allow especially yeast to proliferate, which causes inflammation. Women can avoid these problems by taking a shower after their workout, patting themselves completely dry, and changing into dry clothing, preferably made of cotton. During the exercise, they should use panty liners and sanitary pads made of natural materials. Sanitary pads that have a top layer made of Tencel are particularly suitable for times of excessive perspiration because they absorb both sweat as well as menstrual liquid.



### JASMIN SPORT AQUA STOP TAMPONS

This tampon features a watertight medicinal lock on its bottom end, which prevents water from entering the vagina. The tampon comes in a normal size, but has an absorbency capacity equal to a mini tampon. This is important for women using the tampon even when they are not on their period. The short-term use of the tampon with a small absorbency won't dry out the vagina – but make sure to remove it soon after coming out of the water. Also suitable for pregnant women.



### JASMIN SPORT TENCEL PANTY LINERS

Innovative, ultrathin, and highly absorbent panty liners that will quickly absorb both perspiration as well as menstrual liquid. The top layer is made of Tencel, a cellulose-based biodegradable material. The fibres prevent moisture from being retained on the surface, and they are smoothed out so that microorganisms cannot multiply.



### JASMIN SPORT FACE & BODY WET WIPES

Suitable for face and body, as they do not contain alcohol. They contain calendula, which has anti-inflammatory properties, and panthenol, which soothes and moisturizes the skin. The wipes are gently scented for the perfect fresh feeling. Suitable for both sexes. Rinsing is not necessary after using a face & body Jasmin sport wet wipe.





#### JASMIN SPORT SET OF APPLICATOR TAMPONS

This set features a convenient selection of applicator tampons with three different absorbency levels. This is ideal for athletes who need them every day of their cycle – for heavy flow days as well as light flow ones. It contains 8 super absorbent tampons, 12 normal tampons, and 6 mini tampons. Created in collaboration with Miss Slovenia and the More Than Beauty brand.



LARA KALANJ

# The beauty queen crown and sports

INTERVIEW

Lara Kalanj was crowned the most beautiful Slovenian in 2018 and became the face of the brand Jasmin sport, which stands out with its innovative range and wide application for both genders. Since then, Lara has been actively collaborating with Tosama to participate in various sports events: she ran with us in the Ljubljana Marathon, she raised money for the Paediatric Clinic in the Castle Run, and donated steps for a good cause at DM's Run for better eating habits of school-aged children. How does this active athlete balance her many obligations?

**Was being crowned the most beautiful Slovenian an important milestone for you?**

The announcement that I won the Miss Slovenia 2018 title has been the most exciting thing that's ever happened to me so far. All of a sudden, my life turned upside down, in a positive sense of course, and I have been meeting extraordinary people who help me grow, overcoming different obstacles, and discovering new opportunities ever since.

**How are you able to find time for sports with all of these obligations?**

I was raised with physical activity and have always been an athlete, so it's not difficult for me to reserve a couple of hours a week for training, because I know that health is a priority. I cannot imagine my life without sports. The everyday efforts I put into working out

reward me with a good mood, positive energy, confidence, and more efficiency in all other areas. I think physical activity is a smart investment for everyone's future. Of course, busy schedules require a lot of motivation to get up and move, so without it, I could easily find some excuse and choose to take it easy.

**What has practicing sports given you, why does it make you happy?**

Over the years, sport has become very dear to me, as it gives me confidence, challenges me, and gives me the willpower and strength to beat my competitors and myself as well. I can shake off any tension when I am working out and this positively affects my physical and mental health, my endurance, as well as my everyday life.



# Everything you need to know about tampons

Women have been using hygienic tampons throughout history; some sources attest that the practice even predates the use of sanitary pads. Egyptian women used tampons made of papyrus, the Romans used sheep's wool, and the women in ancient Greece used rolls made of fabric. The first single-use tampons were introduced in the early twentieth century in the United States.

Tosama is the first and to this day the only Slovenian tampon manufacturer. We purchased the first tampon manufacturing machine in 1983 and have continued to expand our production capacities ever since: today, we produce a whopping two million tampons a day. By upgrading the production technology, we are also developing new shapes, sizes, and absorbency rates of tampons with a special emphasis on innovation and natural materials.

## 1. How do I choose the right tampon?

**A hygienic tampon must be safe and functional; in addition to absorbency, pay attention to other characteristics as well: the materials the tampon is made of, any additives, the shape and expansion direction, and safe ways of inserting the tampon.**

Tampon sizes means different absorbency rates and their shape determines the way they expand in the vagina. Tampons that expand (not only lengthen) have a better absorbency and are therefore more reliable, as they absorb menstrual liquid more evenly, which prevents leaking.

### Tampon absorbency

A tampon's main function is to absorb menstrual liquid. A woman expels up to 120 millilitres of menstrual liquid. The intensity of the flow fluctuates during a menstrual cycle. It tends to be lighter the first day, reaches its peak on the second

and third day, and then decreases again. It is important to choose tampons with different absorbency rates and adjust it to the intensity of the flow.

**Select the RIGHT tampon absorbency, NOT necessarily the highest one.**

An insufficiently absorbent tampon will not provide enough protection, while an excessively absorbent one can dry out the vaginal mucus, and can even damage it and cause microtears when removed.

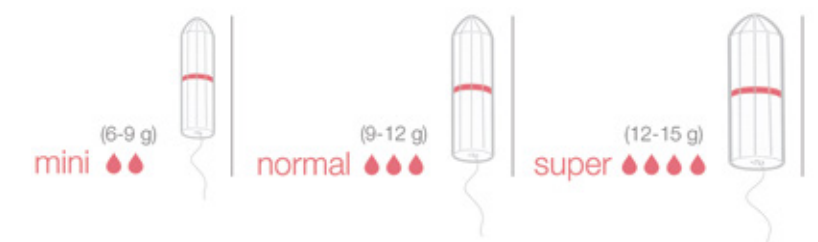
If you are not sure which absorbency is best for you, it might be smart to start with a mini tampon. Remove it after four hours and check. If it is the right absorbency, it will be almost completely saturated. If you feel any discomfort when removing the tampon, it probably did not get absorbed enough and still had a dry surface. If that is the case, choose a tampon with a smaller absorbency next time. When using tampons, you can protect your underwear with a cotton panty liner.

### Shape and expansion direction

As it absorbs menstrual liquid, the tampon expands. The tampon shape determines the direction in which it will expand – this can be in width or in length.

Tampons that expand in length as they absorb liquid can cause the users to have an unpleasant sensation; this kind of shape can also cause unwanted leaking. Tampons that expand in width, on the other hand, ensure optimal protection: they prevent leaking and absorb menstrual liquid evenly. Tampons that have eight parallel grooves perform the best, as they direct the liquid into the tampon's core and expand evenly. This kind of expansion increases its absorbency and reliability. Tampons come in different sizes. Larger tampons have a greater absorbency, but regardless of its size, the insertion should be painless. The tampon should glide into the vagina gently and painlessly, so it is important that it has a smooth surface and rounded top.

The tampon packaging usually has a graphic illustration indicating how much menstrual liquid a tampon can absorb. The unified European scale has the following levels:





## 2. How do I insert a tampon?

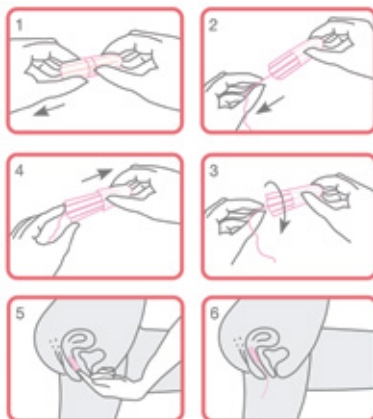
**Hygienic tampons differ from one another by the material, size, absorbency, as well as the insertion technique.**

**Tampons that are inserted using a finger are called digital tampons, while those that are inserted with a tube are called applicator tampons.**



### A digital tampon

is inserted with a finger. Hygiene is very important here, so be sure to wash your hands beforehand. After unwrapping the wrapper, remove the bottom of the protective packaging, but leave the top part on for a few more moments to protect the tampon top. Then slightly expand the bottom of the tampon with the string and make sure it is securely fastened, otherwise don't use the tampon. Take a finger, usually the index finger, and place it onto the expanded tampon bottom. Hold the string with the thumb and middle finger. Now remove the top of the wrapper. Place the tampon onto the vaginal opening and gently slide it about four centimetres deep into the vagina.



\* For a detailed demonstration of inserting digital tampons, see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IDHbw-aobY0>



### An applicator tampon

is an ordinary digital tampon that has been inserted into two tubes that are used to simply and safely insert it into the vagina. The biggest advantage of these tampons is that inserting it does not involve touching neither the tampon nor the genitals. This is especially handy if you find yourself in circumstances with questionable hygienic conditions. If you cannot be sure that your hands are clean, it is easy to switch out the tampon, because you will not come in contact with the body's intimate areas. The easiest way to insert the tampon is to squat or sit on the toilet with knees slightly apart. Remove the wrapping and hold the tampon by the bottom of the applicator tube and pull out the inner tube – you will hear a click. Hold the outer tube on the marked area and insert it into the vagina up to the finger. Push the inner tube into the vagina all the way. Then pull both tubes out; the tampon stays in the vagina and only the string is visible. The applicator has ensured it is placed on the correct place and deep enough.



\* For a detailed demonstration of inserting applicator tampons, see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GJH-NaySDwxU>

## 3. What is toxic shock syndrome?

**Toxic shock syndrome (TSS) is a very rare, but life-threatening complication brought on by a bacterial infection.**

It is mostly tabloids and scandal-prone media that keep listing tampons as the only reason for infection. Maja Bertonec, a microbiologist, rejects the claims that tampons are the only culprits for TSS. She adds that toxic shock syndrome is actually a very dangerous, sometimes even deadly infection. It is caused by bacterial toxins that are created by the bacteria *Staphylococcus aureus* or *Streptococcus pyogenes* under certain conditions.

TSS was first recorded in children. In the late 1970s and 80s, after a number of young women who were using a certain brand of ultra-absorbent tampons died, a lot of attention was focused on the link between TSS and menstruation. The sale of tampons with super-absorbent powders is no longer permitted and it has also been confirmed that proper tampon use prevents the colonization of pathogen bacteria. Toxic shock can occur in more than just women using tampons. TSS can also develop in everyone, including men, children, and in post-menopausal women (e.g., in burns, soft tissue infection, in post-operative infections ...). TSS is an acute disease characterized by fever, rapid drop in blood pressure, vertigo, rash-like burns on the skin and skin redness, headache, as well as diarrhoea and vomiting. It occurs in one to three cases out of 100,000.

### Why is TSS so rare?

In order for the disease to develop, all of the factors in the host-environment-pathogen disease triangle must be fulfilled at the same time. The rare occurrence of TSS is also supported by these facts about the most common pathogen *Staphylococcus aureus*:

1. 10–30% of women have the bacterium *Staphylococcus aureus* constantly present in the vagina as part of their natural flora.
2. Only 1–3% of the *Staphylococcus aureus* bacterium has the TSST-1 toxin signature.
3. The TSST-1 toxin is produced in the stationary phase of the bacterial growth, which happens after 6–8 hours, so the tampon is safe to use if changed every 4–6 hours.
4. Most adult women and men (90%) have antibodies for the TSST-1 toxin, which protect us from developing TSS.





## 4. Which tampons are safe for me to use?

Tosama's main concern is the safety of our users. This is why all tampons must pass stringent microbiological, physical, and chemical analyses. The purpose of these is so that we can prove they are safe and do not contain any substances that are harmful to health. We have patented the most important features that set Tosama's tampons apart from the rest. We have protected the innovative solutions that make our tampons more absorbent, more leak-proof, and easier to slide in and out of the vagina.

### Patented protection

**Hug** – the special intertwinement of the fibres on the surface of the cotton tampon ensures the tampon glides gently

**Four leaf clover** – a shape that ensures a faster absorption and even expansion of the tampon

**Butter Fly** – smooth surface that increases that the tampon slip

**Aqua block** – medical hydrophobic protection to prevent external liquids from entering

**Trust in use** – applicator shape that enables a reliable and hygienic insertion of the tampon

### Tampons made of organic cotton are best

All intimate care products must be made of the finest natural materials – including tampons. Cotton, especially certified organic cotton is deemed to be safe. This is because it does not alter the natural pH of the vagina that protects us from harmful microorganisms. It is also processed without any chemicals, so it does not introduce any harmful substances.



The GOTS certificate ensures that no toxic and persistent pesticides, harmful chemicals, and genetically altered organisms have been used in the processing of the cotton.

Tampons made of certified organic cotton are friendly both to the users as well as the environment. Organic cotton helps women prevent vulvo-vaginal inflammation and has been proven to prevent allergies and irritation, has been dermatologically tested and is biodegradable.

### Tampons are safe if women follow these rules:

1. Always check the packaging for the tampon materials and whether they contain any chemicals.
2. Choose a tampon made of natural materials – those that do not contain synthetic fibres, have not been bleached with chlorine, and do not contain harmful substances (colorants, perfumes, superabsorbent powders). A tampon made of organic cotton is the best choice.
3. The tampon must suit the intensity of the menstrual flow – never insert a tampon that is too absorbent.
4. The most important thing is to change out the tampon regularly enough – at least every 4–6 hours. Never insert a tampon for the entire day or night, even if your flow is very light.
5. Before inserting or changing the tampon, ensure proper hand hygiene or use applicator tampons.
6. Insert ONLY one tampon at a time into the vagina, never insert it too deep (to the top third of the vagina).
7. Always use a tampon with a string; before inserting it, check that the string is secured to the tampon.
8. Never forget to remove the tampon. If you suspect the tampon is stuck in the vagina, consult a gynaecologist.

## CHECK WHAT KIND OF TAMPONS YOU USE





# Taking care of yourself after giving birth

In addition to welcoming a new baby, the mother is faced with a changing body after giving birth. The breasts are filled with milk, tend to be painful to the touch and prone to swelling, the stomach and uterus are contracting, the vaginal area is swollen and can also be damaged, the hair may be falling out more, the skin is experiencing hormonal changes and may develop acne, even the shoe size can change.



**Self-care is one of the most important things a woman should do after giving birth.**

Regardless any the demands of the surroundings that a young mother should bounce back into her old shape, proper rest is the key factor for her health. Any rushing and undue strain can cause damage to the joint and tendons, open a sutured wound, cause urine leaks, or even postpartum depression. **At least the six weeks after the birth should be dedicated to the uterus and its tendons contracting, healing wounds, and breast-feeding;** any household chores, physical exercise, excessive socialization, or even professional responsibilities are not only inappropriate at this time, but can also be dangerous activities.



# LOCHIA

After the birth, the uterine cavity begins to cleanse itself and the discharge is called lochia. For the first few days, the discharge tends to be red, freshly bloody, and heavier; after ten days, the discharge turns a yellowish brown, which usually lasts four to six weeks. It is important to ensure good hygiene by regularly swapping out pads. Since women tend to be lying down a lot during this period, they should choose a product that is long enough to reliably protect them from leaking and is made of cotton.



## to.to MAMA POST-BIRTH PADS

Highly absorbent pads made of 100% cotton with a liquid lock for the first few days after the birth. They are extra long (40 x 10 cm) and extremely soft.



## to.to MAMA DISPOSABLE MESH PANTIES

Disposable mesh panties (sizes M and L) for securing the pad. The panties are stretchy, without sharp edges, and are easy to put on. The recommended use is after giving birth and surgery.



Lea Virant

“ I gave birth twice, so I am very aware how painful a cut perineum can be and how difficult it can be if you can't find a pad that is large and absorbent enough. It was only during my third pregnancy that I discovered how I can help myself after the birth. I added cooling pads and two packs of maternity pads at the very top of my hospital bag for after the birth. The third time will be the charm! ”

# EPISIOTOMY

is a surgical cut of the perineum between the vaginal and anal opening. The two-to-five-centimetre wound is usually sutured by a surgeon after the birth under local anaesthesia. It takes about four weeks to heal. Hygiene is crucial for successful healing (washing the area several times a day depending on the intensity of the lochia and after defecating, swapping out pads frequently and strict hand hygiene when switching pads). If the woman experienced tearing or an episiotomy during labour, it is sensible to use sterilized cotton sanitary pads, at least until the wound closes up. For pain management, sitting on an inflatable ring donut seat is recommended (clenching the buttocks before sitting down also helps) and cooling the perineum. Using ice should be avoided, because this kind of cooling can cause additional injuries. The perineum should therefore be cooled with specially designed cooling pads.



## NATURA FEMINA MATERNITY POST-BIRTH PADS

Sterilized sanitary pads made of 100% cotton, which are larger (40 x 10 cm) than all other ordinary pads. They have a liquid lock and have been dermatologically tested. We recommend them for use after an episiotomy and gynaecological operations.



## PERINEAL COOLING PAD

This cooling gel pad has a triple action: it has a cooling effect on the swelling, reduces pain, and absorbs the discharge. It offers a calming cool sensation for up to 20 minutes and is intended for single use.



# Incontinence doesn't have to shape your life

## On an emotional rollercoaster

People tend not to share their intimate lives with the entire world, but only with their partner, so developing urine incontinence can be an emotional rollercoaster. Of course, incontinence also affects sexuality, physical activity, and social life. The related fears, worry, and shame lead us to stay silent about it in public. All of this can rapidly eat away at our self-image, lessen our sense of self-respect, and deprive us of our strength and will.

Facing any disease is always stressful for anyone, at least in the initial phase when we are still coming to terms with the difficulties.

At first, we don't tend to consider the adjustments we are facing, nor about how we can help ourselves, which can lead to different emotional fluctuations.

**This is a normal emotional response**, because we do not know enough about the problem yet, we are worried about the treatment and the disease's effect on our future life.

## Finding help and support

In these moments, it is very important to find our inner strength, support from the partner and experts. We must learn how to accept this new nuisance, how to best handle the new situation so that our personal, professional, social life will be minimally affected.



We ask ourselves whether the situation is serious enough to see a doctor, even though the waiting times are so long? Could we just help ourselves? When first faced with the problem of urine incontinence, the most important thing is to do the research, undergo the related tests, and consult an expert. In the following phase, it is up to us: follow the doctor's recommendations, educate ourselves through various social media, get to know ourselves and our bodies, and try our best to adapt to the new situation. This way, we can do the most for our health, our well-being, and self-image, while also ensuring the quality of our social life and partnership.

## Common affliction

With age, we gain a lot of experience, wisdom, and connection, but also encounter some difficulties. Urine leaking and bladder weakness, called incontinence, is one of the more common problems. When facing this issue, it's important to make the right decisions:

- Choose and use the right products to make your life easier.
- Familiarize yourself with how the products work and utilize all of their positive characteristics.
- Learn about any possibilities to receive the products as part of your health insurance coverage.
- Stay active, also by regularly doing exercises for strengthening the pelvic floor muscles.

## What kind of products to choose?

The decision of what kind or what size of pad to use depends on the amount

and frequency of the urine incontinence, gender, activity, social inclusion in society, and other factors. After detecting initial issues with incontinence, for example when sneezing, laughing, or physical activity, choose the smallest and thinnest products. Pads prevent unpleasant odour and offer a sense of comfort.

## Is there a difference between sanitary pads for menstruation and for incontinence?

Incontinence pads and menstrual pads are not the same. They differ in the characteristics and amount of liquid they absorb. Menstrual liquid is thicker and leaks slower; a woman excretes about 120 ml of liquid in one menstrual cycle. The absorbency of sanitary pad is lower, generally up to 100 ml. In contrast, an incontinent person can discharge anything from a few drops at a time to as much as 500 ml of urine. This is why incontinence pads have a specific top layer that features a system of tiny, inwardly oriented funnels, through which urine quickly flows into the absorbent core. It contains special microcapsules that bond and retain the liquid. They prevent unpleasant odour and keep the skin dry, which reduces the risk of inflammation. The pads have different absorbency rates; the ones with the smallest absorbency are intended for urine incontinence by drops, while the ones with the greatest absorbency can retain over two litres of liquid.



### NATURA FEMINA SPECIAL INCONTINENCE PADS

A product line of pads with three sizes and absorbency rates; the 100% cotton core allows the skin to breathe. Features added microcapsules for greater absorbency that also prevent unpleasant odour.



### VIR SPECIAL INCONTINENCE PADS

A line of five anatomically shaped pads. The cellulose core has super absorbent beads for increased absorbency and preventing unpleasant odour.

Both men and women have needs we need to satisfy. **And no, we are not that different.**

## The 5 needs, a partner relationship must meet:

**1. Strength, support, and presence**  
Everyone wishes to have someone by our side and someone to talk to about anything.

**2. Affirmation and pride**  
We must affirm our partner, tell them how proud we are of them, because this increases trust and creates a happier relationship.

**3. Physical touch and closeness**  
Intimacy is a crucial element of any relationship; without it, a partnership is merely an empty shell. This includes sexual intercourse, hugs, kisses, conversations about intimate issues ...

**4. Fidelity and trust**  
Everyone wants to be the only one in a partner's life and wants to trust them completely; however, we must prove the same to them and show them this with our support, closeness, and understanding, when they need it.

**5. Friendship**  
It is important to share the stories of the day, the moments, thoughts, fears, hopes, wishes, and desires with them. This is a good way to create and retain closeness.

*Mateja Poš, psychosocial support (BA).*



# A tradition that connects generations

We are concluding our overview of female intimate care with a legend that is very much still living: Vir 80. This product symbolically and literally represents the foundation of all of Tosama's efforts for a high-quality, effective, and especially natural female intimate hygiene.

Even half a century ago, Vir 80 was giving people exactly what our newest products provide today in the most updated version: user and environmentally-friendly materials, reliability, comfort, and especially the promise that their use is unconditionally safe.



#### **VIR 80**

has accompanied generations of girls and women and its popularity is preserved from generation to generation. Women with very sensitive skin of the intimate area remain loyal to it, because the pad does not contain colorants, perfumes, and other synthetic additives. Young mothers rely on its purity and natural composition from the first hours after giving birth onward, and its softness is very nurturing to the intimate area after gynaecological operations and during problems in the intimate region.



**98 years**  
developing and  
producing  
**medical products**

**45 years**  
developing and  
producing  
**hygienic  
tampons**

**95 years**  
developing and  
producing  
**sanitary  
pads**



## FROM THE LEGEND TO MODERN INNOVATION

Over fifty years ago, Tosama chose what many in the field of intimate care have only been realizing in recent years: natural materials. This is because they have been proven to be the best for female health, for their well-being during menstruation, the skin and mucus of the intimate areas after it, as well as for the environment.

Especially “natural” is the feature that greatly describes both modern Tosama as well as our new, innovative products. Women who have placed our trust in us, choose products that represent the latest trend in the intimate care market, while also ensuring top quality and a sustainable orientation. By choosing the brands Vir, to.to, Jasmin or Natura Femina, they confirm that the trust of the generations is justified.





*Natura Femina Organic is nature's gift to women.  
In Tosama, we only choose raw materials  
that are best for both – women and nature.  
What will you choose?*



Natura Femina



NaturaFeminaOrganic

[www.naturafemina.si](http://www.naturafemina.si)

[www.tosama.si](http://www.tosama.si)