



The global feminine hygiene market is expected to reach \$33.9 billion by 2027.



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## Forward Thinking: Women's Wellness

The latest launches in women's wellness products designed to meet specific issues and fluctuating needs.

Self-care has been on the rise with a focus on women's wellness. Once taboo, period care and menopause are now being discussed with a variety of new products and services launching to address women's specific issues and fluctuating needs. According to the IMARC Group<sup>a</sup>, the global feminine hygiene market reached \$25.2 billion in 2021. It is expected to reach \$33.9 billion by 2027 with a CAGR of 5%. Femcare innovation is coming from better-for-you, natural ingredients, products that address hormonal changes during menstrual cycles and products that address perimenopause and menopause symptoms.

### Femcare

Feminine hygiene is important, and like other personal care categories, women are looking for better-for-you products that use natural ingredients. Femcare brands are responding with new launches that are pH balanced,

<sup>a</sup><https://www.imarcgroup.com/feminine-hygiene-products-market>

natural and are formulated without parabens. Summer's Eve recently launched the Spa collection in two products, Spa Luxurious Wash and Spa Intimate Skin Serum. The Spa Luxurious Wash "gently cleanses with a creamy, shimmery wash that is infused with a calming chamomile fragrance blended with essential oils balanced to match the intimate area's natural pH range." The Spa Intimate Skin Serum "can be applied to the external vaginal area to comfortably hydrate, smooth and soften delicate, intimate skin. It is gentle, safe and pH balanced and is formulated with skin-loving ingredients, such as vitamin E, aloe and coconut oil."

Always debuted Always Intimate Skincare, a pH balanced and gynecologist tested line. The Cleanse Refreshing Wash and Cleanse Sensitive Wash are "a pH balanced wash for your vulva" made without parabens, dyes, silicone or glycerin. The Refreshing wash is lightly scented while the Sensitive Wash is fragrance-free, and both contain vitamin E and amino acids. The brand also offers Refresh Cleansing Wipes, which are free of fragrance, alcohol, parabens, sulfates and dyes. The wipes are formulated with hyaluronic acid, calendula extract and botanical fiber. Vagisil extended its Scentsitive Scents line with new washes and wipes. The Intimate Wash is available in Coconut Hibiscus and Rosé All Day. The Spring Lilac is offered in Feminine Dry Wash and Mini Wipes. Peach Blossom Mini Wipes are also new. The washes are hypoallergenic and have no parabens or MIT preservatives, while the individually wrapped wipes are hypoallergenic and pH balanced. Alikay Naturals, a Black woman-owned, natural hair and skin care beauty brand, launched Her feminine healthcare line. It includes four SKUs: Foaming Feminine Wash and Feminine Refreshing Spray, each in Sensitive Formula and Normal Formula. The products are formulated with natural extracts including rose water, aloe vera and coconut oil.

An interesting femcare brand is Cheeky Bonsai, which originally launched on TikTok. The brand used social media to help women better understand their bodies and normalize discussions about women's vaginal health. In April, the brand launched its three UTI products at Target. The UTI Strips are an at-home kit that "detects leukocytes, or white blood cells, and nitrites to see if an infection is present in the urinary tract" and gives results in two minutes. Bye Bye UTI Drink Mix is a hibiscus lemonade flavored powder that dissolves in water and combines D-mannose, cranberry, antioxidants and electrolytes to support urinary tract health. The UTI Pain Relief tablets contain "an analgesic and phenazopyridine hydrochloride that numbs the pain in the lower urinary tract" and



*Summer's Eve Spa collection is pH balanced and designed to give consumers a relaxing spa experience; courtesy of Summer's Eve.*

helps relieve common symptoms such as urinary pain, discomfort, burning and urgency.

## Shaming Menstruation

Culturally, menstruation has been traditionally seen as embarrassing and distasteful and not discussed. However, thanks to the younger generation and social media, the menstruation stigma is being lifted. For example, the generic #menstruation tag<sup>b</sup> has 750.3 million views, while the #periodtok tag<sup>c</sup> has 360.1 million views as of June 3, 2022, according to TikTok. Pinterest Predicts' 2022 report<sup>d</sup> identified "Mindful menstruation" as a growing trend driven by millennials to educate themselves on their menstrual health, such as cycle phases and period care. "Period care" saw a +3x increase in trending search terms, while the term "menstrual cycle chart" increased by +95%. Many women suffer from dysmenorrhea, painful menstrual periods with cramps. However, often our society is dismissive of women's discomfort. Spain is proposing legislation to allow women to take several days of "menstrual leave" from work each month. It could extend to five days for women with disabling

<sup>b</sup>[www.tiktok.com/tag/menstruation](https://www.tiktok.com/tag/menstruation)

<sup>c</sup>[www.tiktok.com/tag/periodtok](https://www.tiktok.com/tag/periodtok)

<sup>d</sup>[business.pinterest.com/en-gb/pinterest-predicts/2022/mindful-menstruation/](https://business.pinterest.com/en-gb/pinterest-predicts/2022/mindful-menstruation/)



*Cheeky Bonsai's UTI line launched on TikTok to help women better understand their bodies and normalize discussions about women's vaginal health; courtesy of Cheeky Bonsai.*

periods who suffer severe cramps, nausea, dizziness and vomiting. Menstrual leave is currently only offered in Japan, Taiwan, Indonesia, South Korea and Zambia.

### Period Poverty

Unfortunately, not all people can afford or have access to necessary menstrual products. Period poverty affects over 22 million people in the United States<sup>e</sup>. According to a U by Kotex 2021 study<sup>f</sup>, two in five people have struggled to purchase period products, a 35% increase from 2018. Additionally, nearly seven in 10 (68%) people agree that period poverty is a public health issue, yet only 4% of Americans are aware of a local resource where free or reduced cost period supplies are available. To raise awareness and address menstrual equity, Harvard University is exhibiting the Out for Blood: Feminine Hygiene to Menstrual Equity show from April 4, 2022 to October 1, 2022. The exhibition is designed as “a worldwide movement for menstrual equity [that] strives to end cultural stigma, to address

period poverty and to develop toxin-free, sustainable products. Menstrual equity activism centers on class and race, as well as gender. The movement fosters acceptance of all menstruating people.”

Visitors are encouraged to bring a period product, which will be donated to Love Your Menses organization in Boston, MA. Not specific to period care, but relevant to women's bodies and reproductive rights, Goop has created the Hands Off My Vagina candle. In response to the possibility of Roe v. Wade being overturned, Goop is donating \$25 to the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) Foundation Reproductive Freedom Project for each candle sold.

### Period Care

Brands are addressing hormonal shifts and the different phases of the menstrual cycle with a variety of new period care products such as supplements, skin care and candles. Flo has expanded beyond its well-known PMS gummies with the launch of the O Positiv brand, which is described as “a wellness destination for each aspect of a woman's life, [with] products that help boost immunity and aid digestion, as well as fight PMS symptoms.” Loyal started as a vaginal health products brand and has evolved to “a collection of all-natural, whole-body health products, uniquely designed to balance pH and support happy

<sup>e</sup>[www.forbes.com/sites/forbeseq/2022/02/01/new-year-same-old-fight-its-2022-yet-more-than-half-of-the-population-is-still-paying-the-price-for-a-natural-bodily-function](https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbeseq/2022/02/01/new-year-same-old-fight-its-2022-yet-more-than-half-of-the-population-is-still-paying-the-price-for-a-natural-bodily-function)

<sup>f</sup>[www.pnewswire.com/news-releases/new-study-by-u-by-kotex-shows-35-increase-in-period-poverty-since-2018-301297210.html](https://www.pnewswire.com/news-releases/new-study-by-u-by-kotex-shows-35-increase-in-period-poverty-since-2018-301297210.html)

microbiomes.” Loyal recently launched the Balanced Goods Myo & D-Chiro Inositol with ashwagandha supplement, which is meant to help prevent hormonal disruptions. The product is designed to naturally regulate whole body imbalances like infertility, PCOS, endometriosis, heavy periods, anxiety and depression. The brand also introduced a line of teas to address a variety of symptoms. For example, the Happy Biome (Lavender Lemon) tea supports flora, pH balanced microbiome and regulates hormones, while Motor Bloat (Peppermint) tea supports healthy digestion and a flatter tummy.

Amareta, a hormonal cycle-based, clean beauty brand was an industry disruptor. Recognizing that hormones impact women’s complexions over the course of a typical menstrual cycle, in 2018, the brand formulated a skin care regimen that works with women’s fluctuating hormones. According to the brand, most women experience three distinct phases over the course of a cycle: a luteal phase, a menstrual phase and a follicular phase. U.K. brand FEWE is self-described as a “female-founded, fully inclusive menstrual cycle care company.” The company states it is “the first full cycle-care brand, matching skin care products to each phase of the menstrual cycle.” Products in the line address menstruation (Flow), the follicular phase (Soar), ovulation (Transform) and the luteal phase (Reset). Similarly, feminine care brand Moons launched Phases, the brand’s first-ever candle collection that provides “aromatherapies for each phase of the menstrual cycle—luteal, follicular, ovulatory and menstrual.” The Luteal Phase candle is earthy with sandalwood, oak and sage, while the

Follicular Phase candle features bergamot, thyme, white tea and chrysanthemum notes. The Ovulatory Phase candle highlights blood orange, grapefruit, cedar and bergamot and the Menstrual Phase candle contains mineral notes, linen, eucalyptus, sea salt and mandarin.

An odd and entertaining launch to address hormonal fluctuations during pregnancy was Burger King’s Pregnancy Whoppers in Germany. According to a German Burger King survey<sup>g</sup> about pregnancy cravings, 58% of expectant mothers say they are familiar with the phenomenon and 76% say that resistance to cravings is impossible. In response, on May 8, 2022, Burger King launched nine limited-edition Pregnancy Whoppers made from the food cravings and combinations, such as cucumber with jam, pickles with whipped cream, banana and eggs, fish fingers and apple sauce, and fries with strawberry ice cream.

## Menopause Beauty

Like menstruation, menopause has also been historically taboo. Until recently, there were no conversations about menopause and very few products to address common symptoms, such as hot flashes, vaginal dryness and dry, dull skin. A 2019 AARP study<sup>h</sup> found that 70% of women aged 40 and older want to see more perimenopausal and menopausal beauty and personal grooming products.

<sup>g</sup>[www.facebook.com/roastbrief/videos/in-the-run-up-to-mothers-day-grabarz-partner-developed-special-pregnancy-whopper/739991783825557/](https://www.facebook.com/roastbrief/videos/in-the-run-up-to-mothers-day-grabarz-partner-developed-special-pregnancy-whopper/739991783825557/)

<sup>h</sup>[press.aarp.org/2019-10-15-Boomer-and-Gen-X-Women-Feel-Ignored-by-Beauty-and-Grooming-Product-Makers-AARP-Survey-Finds](https://press.aarp.org/2019-10-15-Boomer-and-Gen-X-Women-Feel-Ignored-by-Beauty-and-Grooming-Product-Makers-AARP-Survey-Finds)



Moons Phases candle collection addresses each phase of the menstrual cycle. Ovulatory and Menstrual candles shown; photo by Trent Haaland courtesy of Moons.



Womaness creates innovative menopause products developed for women by women such as supplements, skin care and sexual wellness products; courtesy of Womaness.

According to a Female Founders Fund 2020 report<sup>1</sup>, about one billion women worldwide are expected to be in menopause by 2025, which is a \$600 billion opportunity for businesses. Menopause supplements and beauty products have been surfacing to address an unmet and overlooked demographic.

Products marketed for menopause began emerging in 2020 with launches like State Of and Avon Adapt Sync. Womaness, “a collection of modern, innovative menopause products developed for women, by women that offer solutions from head to toe (and everything in between),” launched in 2021. The brand offers a variety of products ranging from supplements to skin care to sexual wellness products. The products are sold online on the brand’s website and Amazon, as well as in select Target stores. In May 2022, Womaness entered select Ulta Beauty stores and online as the first menopause brand to be part of The Wellness Shop.

O Positiv debuted Meno, a women’s supplement to support the effects of menopause. The product features ashwagandha, chasteberry, black cohosh, vitamin B6 and D3 and is designed to combat hot flashes, night sweats and mood swings. Doctor Seaweed’s Weed & Wonderful is the “world’s first” seaweed-based, all-natural supplement to help women manage the symptoms of menopause. Similarly, Hum Nutrition’s Fan Club supplement is designed to help support women who are currently going through perimenopause and menopause. Phenology, a new science-based brand backed by Hologram Sciences, dropped a line of menopausal products including ingestible supplements, topical products that cool during a hot flash, a moisturizer for menopausal skin and an at-home hormone testing lab. Prai Beauty offers a Prime Time Rescue

Meno-Soothe Serum that “addresses the skin issues that emerge throughout perimenopause and menopause.” Mojo Wellbeing by Unilever’s in-house incubator, The Uncovery, makes three perimenopausal products, Hot Flash Redness Reducing Serum, Hot Flash Quick Cooling Spray and Replenishment Collagen Restoring Serum. Bonafide introduced Silvessa, “a proprietary hair and skin care system specifically formulated to meet the unique needs of women at all stages of the menopausal transition, from those just entering perimenopause to those who are menopausal.” The system includes a Strengthening Hair Serum, Hydrating Skin Serum and Nourishing Daily Capsule. Stella is a “Menopause app for on-demand personalized symptom relief that you can trust.” The service creates a 12-week plan and users can track progress, listen to guided meditations and join weekly online events with expert Q&As, mindfulness and exercise classes. At the beginning of 2022, Amyris, Inc., a synthetic biotechnology company, acquired MenoLabs, LLC, a women-founded company to treat menopause symptoms. In addition, Amyris, Inc. announced a partnership with Naomi Watts on a new menopause brand in the pipeline.

### The Future Is Flowing

Thanks to the younger demographic and social media, females are empowered to discuss taboo topics such as menstruation, vaginas and vulvas without embarrassment. Traditionally, women over 40 have been an overlooked demographic, and now women are making unapologetic perimenopause and menopause products to address their specific needs. From mass market feminine hygiene brands to indie brands, feminine health is being discussed and products are launching to meet women’s specific issues and fluctuating needs depending on age.



<sup>1</sup>[blog.femalefoundersfund.com/suffering-in-silence-the-biases-and-data-gaps-of-menopause-e5f131b4b581](https://blog.femalefoundersfund.com/suffering-in-silence-the-biases-and-data-gaps-of-menopause-e5f131b4b581)