

# WOMEN'S HEALTH

## Women And Health Care Providers: Different Perceptions And Knowledge About Monthly Periods

(NAPSA)—A recent survey by the Association of Reproductive Health Professionals (ARHP) found some intriguing answers to questions about how American women and female health care providers feel about monthly periods.

It appears women and their health care providers—who were 90 percent female in the survey—are interested in skipping monthly periods but have different perceptions about it.

While they agree extending, skipping, or eliminating the monthly period is desirable, most women (73 percent) have never heard of using birth control pills to do so. In contrast, over 80 percent of clinicians have heard of it.

Women and health care providers also disagree on the necessity of monthly periods. Half of women and only seven percent of health care providers think one is necessary every month.

“This survey shows a stark contrast between what clinicians know and what the general public knows,” says Linda Andrist, Ph.D., RNC, lead author of the study. “Health care providers have been using birth control pills for years to safely suppress menstruation. Now that we have a product women can ask for by name, we need to be prepared to educate our patients on menstrual suppression and all safe and effective methods of contraception.”

Almost 60 percent of clinicians and 75 percent of women agree that men benefit by not having the monthly interruption of a menstrual period.

Almost 80 percent of women and over 85 percent of health care



**A study asked women and their health care providers what they thought about monthly periods.**

providers think more research should be done on menstrual suppression and 90 percent of clinicians and 89 percent of women reported that long-term health effects have the greatest influence on prescribing or taking oral contraceptives for menstrual suppression.

“Women and health care providers think menstruation is a natural event and should not be treated like a disease; however, having the choice of not menstruating every month appears to be an intriguing option for women. Women and health care providers should know that menstrual suppression isn’t for every woman, but it is safe and effective based on our clinical experience and the latest research,” says Dr. Andrist.

The survey was supported with an unrestricted educational grant from Barr Laboratories, Inc. Results are available at [www.arhp.org/menstruation/](http://www.arhp.org/menstruation/).