



## **Menstrual Suppression**

### **What is menstrual suppression?**

Some girls and young women have problems with hygiene or have other issues that go along with having periods. For adolescents, menstrual suppression means using hormonal medication to reduce or not have periods.

### **Is menstrual suppression right for me?**

Menstrual suppression could be helpful if you have painful periods. It could also be helpful if you have heavy periods or if you have a hard time managing the bleeding that goes along with your period. There are a number of health condition for which hormone use is indicated and can be effective. These include conditions such as recurrent functional ovarian cysts and endometriosis as a few examples. It is some times more convenient to not have periods; for example, if you are traveling or you have an athletic activity. Menstrual suppression may also improve acne or menstrual migraines.

### **How do you suppress menstruation?**

There are many ways menstrual bleeding can be reduced or stopped using hormonal medication: pills, injection, patch, intrauterine device, or vaginal ring. Some methods stop your period while others allow you to have less frequent periods and control when you bleed. If you choose to suppress your periods with pills, it is important that you take them every day.

### **When should you call your provider?**

Call your doctor if you are having abdominal pain, chest pain, heavy bleeding, eyesight or vision changes, or severe leg pain.

### **Is menstrual suppression safe?**

Suppressing your period usually does not cause any health problems. Sometimes you can have spotting or irregular bleeding the first several months while your body adjusts to a hormonal medication. You should talk with your doctor about benefits and side effects of different hormonal treatments. If you get pregnant, you might not know. Look for other signs of pregnancy like fatigue, nausea, or breast tenderness and take a pregnancy test if you are worried. None of the methods protect you from sexually transmitted infections so condoms are recommended.

### **Does menstrual suppression affect pregnancy in the future?**

Some but not all medicines used for menstrual suppression prevent pregnancy. Make sure you ask your doctor whether the type you are using will help prevent pregnancy if you are sexually active. When you stop using the method you can become pregnant if you have sex, so it is important to take as directed.