

# We're not sick – we're **women**

## Menstrual suppression:

In 2003, the FDA approved Seasonale, the first birth control pill created to reduce the frequency of a woman's menstrual cycle to only four periods each year instead of the usual monthly period. To achieve this, Seasonale exposes women to 9 more weeks of estrogen and progestin every year than a regular birth control regimen. Advocates of Seasonale claim there is no medical necessity for regular menstruation, and that menstrual suppression improves a woman's health.

No long-term studies have looked at how menstrual suppression can affect fertility.

*NYT 14/10/03*

It's entirely possible, however, that more problems could be discovered after years of use by large numbers of women.

*LA Times 01/23/03*

a group of researchers is urging caution because no studies have been done on the long-term effects of suppressing menstruation.

*Pittsburgh Post-Gazette 24/06/03*

The Food and Drug Administration's clearance of the pill, called Seasonale, may help the drug bring in sales of \$16.2 million in Barr's 2004 fiscal year, which began in June, according to research from Wachovia Securities.

*Philadelphia Inquirer 06/09/03*

It's not clear whether there are any long-term risks associated with those additional weeks of hormones.

*National Post 18/03/03*

# Blood Money

*just who's bleeding who?*