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Founder of Toronto-based  
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**Shawna Page**

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# Shawna Page

Searching for the right supplements proved frustrating and confusing, so she started her own company

By Laura Budd

**B**ecause of the lack of natural options available to women, Shawna Page decided to create her own company to provide healthy supplements for Canadian women. As founder and CEO of femMED Supplements, Shawna put together a dedicated team to develop a line of 15 formulas to help women take control of their health and live happier, more productive lives.

Among the treatments, formulas for menopause, perimenopause and PMS help keep bones and breasts healthy, provide a restful night sleep, deal with declines in energy and libido levels, and improve the overall appearance of hair, skin and nails. The products are manufactured at a pharmaceutically licensed facility in Edmonton, Alberta, and they are not tested on animals. Label readers will be happy to know that the supple-



ments do not contain any artificial flavours, colours, sweeteners, preservatives, fillers, corn, dairy, egg, gluten, or yeast.

In a recent conversation, Shawna spoke about her professional background, her life philosophies and the future for femMED:

LB

**What is your career background?**

SP

I graduated with a major in Biology and minor in Math from the University of Toronto. Upon graduation I entered investment banking at the Institutional Equities desk of Merrill Lynch Canada. After seven years on the Sales & Trading side, having increasingly senior roles, I developed the Marketing Division. In 1997, I became Chief of Staff at TD Securities at Toronto Dominion Bank, leaving in 2007 to launch the femMED brand.

LB

**How did you assemble the team to launch femMED?**

SP

The journey started with three people determined to fill a gap in the marketplace and create the first and only user-friendly line of the finest natural supplements designed for women only. My husband Steven Page and our partner Rob Segal brought incredible knowledge and expertise in business and marketing. We nailed the concept, the DNA of our brand, the look and feel of our packaging, and then set our plan in motion. We conferred with Dr. Alvin Pettle,

## cover story

a guru in integrative medicine, who volunteered to Chair our Medical Advisory Team of doctors, naturopaths, formulators, master herbalists, pharmacists, and representatives from various other disciplines, so that we had a broad base of great minds to tap into.

LB

**What affected your decision to develop femMED?**

SP

Born and raised in Toronto, I am the eldest of four daughters and 14 granddaughters. My son was the first boy born on my side of the family in 46 years. We are a close-knit family of girls, so it's not surprising that I ended up in women's health. The best thing in my life is my family — immediate and extended. Married for 18 years, Steven and I have three wonderful children and two dogs. We have a strong sense of family values.

LB

**How do you maintain balance in your life and budget your time?**

SP

I try to maintain a healthy work-life balance and succeed 90 per cent of the time. Being an entrepreneur and driving a new business forward sometimes creates unmanageable timelines. I typically work before the kids get up for school, all day, and at night. I always have dinner with my kids.

LB

**What is your philosophy on health and wellness?**

SP

I am 43 years old and have lived a healthy lifestyle for 20+ years. I'm a huge believer in natural medicine, particularly as it relates to prevention of disease. A healthy diet, daily supplements and exercise allow me to take control of my health.

LB

**Do you have a specific exercise or dietary regimen?**

SP

I love to walk and have a personal goal of 20-25 km per week, using a treadmill during inclement weather. I use weights with a trainer. As for diet, I eat tons of fruits and vegetables, buying organic whenever possible. I limit dairy and red meat to

once a week. I rarely eat anything white and I stay away from processed food. The rule with my kids is, "if you can't pronounce the ingredients, don't eat it!"

LB

**How have femMED products been received?**

SP

Truly unbelievable. Starting with Shoppers Drug Mart believing in us, every retailer and supplier along the way has validated our business concept. We have met with no resistance whatsoever and, beginning in early 2009, we will be launching our products in other drug store and specialty chains, grocers and mass retailers across Canada.

LB

**What are your future plans for femMED?**

SP

To expand across Canada in early 2009, and enter the US. market shortly thereafter. Once we have broad North American distribution of our supplement line, we want to layer on women's all-natural, personal-care products, including hair and skin care, and feminine hygiene products. We're staying true to our mandate of educating women on the benefits of natural products and earning the right to become known as the trusted experts in the category.

LB

**Explain how the Women's Natural Health Summit came about. And, can we look forward to additional presentations?**

SP

We instinctively knew that women have a tremendous thirst for knowledge and understanding of the natural approaches to wellness. To test this theory, we created two Women's Natural Health Summits, which were led by two of our Advisory Team doctors — Dr. Alvin Pettle and Dr. Yoel Abells. The response was incredible — 1,400 women registered — and we've received an enormous amount of emails from women asking for more sessions. Our plans are to conduct these Summits in 2009, for consumers as well as professionals, with a view to taking them across Canada. ■

You can stay tuned to future product and seminar developments by checking the website at femmed.com.