



Research Article

PROMOTING MEASURES TO MENSTRUAL HEALTH AND HYGIENE

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ABSTRACT

Menstruation is generally considered as unclean in the Indian society. Isolation of the menstruating girls and restrictions being imposed on them in the family, have introduced a negative attitude towards this phenomenon. Menstrual health problem are over 355 million menstruating women and girls in India, 28 yet millions of women across the country still facing the problems and make them to comfort and experience with menstrual health. Girls do not consistently have access to education on puberty and menstrual health. In India, 71% of girls are report of menstruation to the mother to their first period. 29% girls often to their mothers for information and support, but 70% of mothers consider menstruation is dirty. Almost 88% of women and girls in India use of homemade alternatives, such as an old cloth, rags, hay, sand, or ash. Women and girls are lacking to access of appropriate sanitation facilities. There are 63 million adolescent girls living in homes without toilets. Despite national efforts to improve sanitation, women and girls lack appropriate facilities and community support to manage their menstruation privately and in a safe manner.

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INTRODUCTION

Menstruation is a common phenomenon unique to the females¹. The onset of menstruation is most of the changes occurring among the girls during their adolescent years. Adolescent girls constitute a vulnerable group during their menstruating period, particularly in India female child is neglected one². Menstruation is still regarded as something unclean or dirty in society. Every year approximately 10 % of women worldwide are exposed to genital infections including urinary tract infections and bacterial vaginosis, and 75 % of women have a history of a genital infection. Specifically, the common risk factors for vaginal infections include pregnancy and poor hygiene (both perineal and menstrual hygiene) (WHO, 2014)³.

Menstrual hygiene related practices of girls during menstruation are of considerable importance, as it is a health impact on terms of increased infections to reproductive health problem and such consequences⁴. Good hygienic practices such as the use of sanitary pads and proper maintenance of washing the genital area are essential during menstruation.

An Overview on Menstruation

Menstruation is the periodic blood flows as the discharging from the uterus also called menorrhoea, the time during of menstruation occurs is referred to as menses. The menses occurs at approximately 4 week intervals to compose the menstrual cycle⁵. The process in women of discharging blood and other usage of material from the lining of the uterus to be processed for smelly, at the intervals of about one lunar month

from puberty until the menopause, except during pregnancy. A cycle discharge of blood secretions, and tissue debris from the uterus that cause in non-pregnant age at the intervals that is to be considered in represent a readjustment of the uterus⁶.

The effective, hygienic management of menstruation was essential for women and girls to participate in society with dignity and comfort. Effective menstrual hygiene management includes access to clean absorbents, with facilities to change the cloth materials, clean or dispose the used things, and also access to soap and water for cleaning the body and for absorbents. Such studies across low and middle income places have reported that more than 50% of girls have inadequate menstrual hygiene management, with higher proportions to report in the rural areas⁷.

Menstruation also known as a period or monthly regular discharge of blood (known as menses) from the inner lining of the uterus through the vagina. The first period usually begins between 12 to 15 years of age, in that time is known as menarche⁸. Menstruation stops after the end of certain age occur menopause, which usually occurs between 45 and 55 years of age. Periods also stop during pregnancy and also during the initial months of breastfeeding period⁵⁻⁶. Up to 80% of women reported to having some symptoms prior to menstruation. Common signs and symptoms include acne, tender breasts, bloating, feeling tired, irritability, and mood changes. These may interfere with normal life, therefore qualifying as premenstrual syndrome, in 20 to 30% of women. In 3 to 8%, symptoms are severe⁹.

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Menstrual Cycle

Menstrual cycle provides important body chemicals, called hormones, to keep you healthy. A cycle is counted from the first day of period to the next period.

A menstrual cycle starts with the first day of the period and ends with the start of the next period. An entire menstrual cycle usually lasts between 24 and 28 days, but the length may vary from cycle to cycle, and may also change over the years. Cycle length changes between menarche (when first puberty) and menopause (when periods stop permanently)¹⁰.

Phases of Menstrual cycle

Menstrual phase

Menstrual phase begins on the first day of menstruation and lasts till the 5th day of the menstrual cycle. The period the shedding of the uterine lining. Levels of estrogen and progesterone are low.

The Follicular Phase

This phase also begins on the first day of menstruation, but it lasts till the 13th day of the menstrual cycle. The time between the first day of the period and ovulation. Estrogen rises an egg prepares to be released.

Ovulation

On the 14th day of the cycle, the pituitary gland secretes a hormone that causes the ovary to release the matured egg cell. The release of the egg from the ovary, mid-cycle. Estrogen peaks just beforehand, and then drops shortly afterwards.

The Luteal Phase

The time between ovulation and before the start of menstruation, when the body prepares for a possible pregnancy. Progesterone is produced, peaks, and then drops.

The Secretory Phase

The uterine lining produces chemicals that will either help support an early pregnancy or will prepare the lining to break down and shed if pregnancy doesn't occur¹¹.

Menstrual Hygiene

Women and adolescent girls are using a clean menstrual management material to absorb or collect menstrual blood that can be changed in often as necessary for the duration of a menstrual period. Menstrual hygiene is a clean sanitary act to follow to maintain health and prevent diseases or ailments related to female reproductive tract¹².

Menstrual Health Practices

Diet: During menstrual period, the girls having a problem are there. So that period, the girls need to be avoid certain foods, it can cause bloating, water retention of stomach and upsets. So we have to take soft and spicy foods to digest easily. Such that foods are, fatty foods, alcohol, carbonated beverages, caffeine and salty foods. Also taking of such remedies like relieve pain or any problem, for this is ginger tea or mint tea or lemon juice with hot substances. And such soft food items are papaya is rich in vitamins, almonds, drink more juices, and then drink more plenty of waters. Green leafy vegetables are containing more fiber and iron substances.

Exercises: The mild exercises is during your period is more convenient to relieve pain. The researcher suggests that exercise is an effective method to reducing menstrual pain and may also reduce for pain relieve also. Mild exercises such as walking can also be effective in during period to make them to more strenuous activity. Yoga is also one of the gentle exercises to reduce mental stress and also helps to prevent menstrual symptoms.

Hygienic practices: Hygiene is the most important measures and observance of health care. Hygiene refers to the set of practices associated with the preservation of health and healthy living. Keep your body clean and neat. Use toilets in a proper way. Wash your hands after usage of bathroom. Never allow for dust accumulation. Open for free ventilation. Wash our clothes regularly during menstruation more attention to hygienic placement. Take the bath twice a day. Proper techniques should be following during the period. Used napkins should be wrapped it with paper and put it in a separate dustbin¹⁴.

Alternative and Complementary Therapies

There are many alternative methods to improve the experience of menstruation. Some of the supported measures by good evidence of improve women's sense of wellbeing.

Physical Therapies: Researcher suggests that some physical therapies reapplied such that local heat application, acupuncture and acupressure are helpful for reducing menstrual pain and cramps. Physiotherapy may also be helpful for lower back pain also.

Yoga and Mindfulness Meditation: we are more tensed and stressed in menstrual period, we likely to suffer severe symptoms of premenstrual symptoms and experience poorer quality of life. Regular relaxation may be helpful in reducing severe premenstrual symptoms. Yoga is used for meditative health and wellbeing. Some women may find to yoga only helpful for reducing menstrual pain¹³.

Home Remedies to Relieve Menstrual Pain

Applying heat: Applying heat to your abdomen and lower back may relieve the pain. In such more study focused on 147 women in 18 to 30 years old are having painful menstruation. And also regular menstrual cycles also need to be found that a heat patch has to be applied at 104°F (40°C) was as effective than ibuprofen.

Massaging with Essential Oils: Massage therapy is also one of the most reduces full therapy for about 20 minutes to help to reduce in menstrual pain. In more studies looked at 23 women with period pain caused by endometriosis. The researchers found that massages are significantly reduced pain immediately. Massage therapy for menstruation is also involves to pressing specific points to relieve the pain by hand method¹⁴.

Promoting Measures

Government Scheme for Menstrual Hygiene Practices

In India, so much of government schemes were provided for promoting measures of menstrual hygienic practices. They are, Menstrual Hygiene Programmed 100% Biodegradable Sanitary Napkins 'Suvidha' to Be Available at Rs 2.50/Pad. The ministry of health and family welfare scheme. Menstrual hygiene for adolescent girls scheme. Accredited social health

activist .Information education and communication material scheme. National health mission for decentralized procurement of sanitary napkins pack¹⁵.

Guidelines on Menstrual Hygiene Management

The Guideline for menstrual hygiene management is to be effective and efficient to the persons, and identifies the role of various identification of stakeholders. The Technical Guides, in particular things to be provide specific inputs for creating an effective communication of intervention, while also enabling the choice of the most suitable disposal option of menstrual waste¹⁶.

1. Change your sanitary napkins at least 2 -3 times a day.
2. Wash and dry the used clothes to under and sun to dry and minimize the chances of infections.
3. Take a bath regularly in a menstruation period. So that only clean and neat appearance will be happen
4. Before or after using the toilet (front to back), technique should follow to the during periods. So that only prevent infection.
5. Wrap your used napkins and carefully dispose to them.
6. Use antiseptic hand wash to wash our hands, while changing pads or tampons.

Health Education

Proper hygienic measures should follow in menstruation Proper maintenance of personal hygienic practices also To avoid any other infection like urinary tract infection, vaginitis and endometriosis To take measure for alternative medicines.

Summary or Review Need for Further Research

From this review it is apparent that studies on the international front are many, but there are relatively less Indian studies on the prevalence of menstrual health. The number of studies found in South India over this topic are especially sparse. This review indicates that, the prevalence of menstrual health in adolescent girls with menstrual problems.

Research literature supports the necessity for early identification of menstrual problems in adolescent girls with menstrual health of suitable intervention. It is the importance of the guideline specific to the Indian context are developed for the screening and monitoring of adolescent girls. Appropriate screening for the menstrual problems, promotion of well being and physical activity among with menstrual health is likely to contribute to better to overall outcome.

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