

Menstrual hygiene and menstrual products.

Menstruation or period is a normal process by which the the lining of the uterus or womb is shed by the tissue and blood inside the uterus coming out through the vagina. This normally happens once a month. Taking care of yourself during the period is very important.

You should practice menstrual hygiene during your periods.

1. Wash your hands before and after using menstrual products.

2. Discard used disposable products properly. Do not flush them in the toilet or just throw them outside.
3. Change sanitary pads every few hours
4. Change tampons every 4 to 8 hours strictly. Use the lowest absorbency tampons.
5. Clean menstrual cups everyday and after the period is finished sanitize the menstrual cup.
6. Wash your period underwear.

If you experience foul smell , severe pain or heavy bleeding during your period please meet your doctor.

There are various products available

in the market for use during menstrual bleeding. These include disposable pads, washable pads, menstrual cups and tampons. It is important to know how to use these products and learn about the safety and hygiene .

DISPOSABLE PADS.

These are the most commonly used products . You should use soft cotton type pads not super absorbent pads. You must change the pads every 4 to 6 hours even if the period is light. Wearing pads for long periods result in rashes and foul smell.

WASHABLE PADS

These pads are made of washable cotton on one side and synthetic material on the flip side. It also comes with a pouch for storage. You should wash them with a mild detergent and dry them properly. They can be reused for 60 times. You should change them every 4 to 6 hours. However you need access to soap and water to clean them and space to dry them. Also it is difficult to carry the dirty pads.

MENSTRUAL CUP.

This cup is made of rubber or silicone. It is important for you to find the right size and fit. This might

need some trial and error. The proper method of insertion and removal must be followed. You have to remove them after 6 to 12 hours. Wash and clean them with soap and water after every use and reinsert immediately. After your periods are finished you must boil the cup for 5 to 10 mins and store in a clean pouch till next use.

TAMPONS.

These are single use products. Wash your hands before and after using the tampon. Insert the tampon into the vagina. It may come with or without an applicator . There should be no chemicals in the

tampon, no perfumes and they should be government approved tampons. Remove your tampons within 4 to 8 hours. Never wear tampons for more than 8 hours and use the one with the lowest absorbency.

TOXIC SHOCK SYNDROME.

Thus is a dangerous complication with the use of tampons. It occurs if the tampon is kept inside the vagina for more than 8 hours or there is an infection in the vagina or the tampon is not clean. It presents with fever, pain, vaginal discharge.

Please contact your doctor immediately. More severe

symptoms like dizziness, fainting, vomiting may occur in which case you must go to the hospital casualty as this is an emergency. In all cases you must take out the tampon immediately

General health care is important. You should wear light breathable clothing during your periods. Drink plenty of fluids. Track and monitor your period. Visit a doctor for an yearly check up which includes a pap smear, pelvic check up and breast examination.