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Review of Assessment of Menstrual Hygiene Practices Among Medical Students



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ABSTRACT

Menstruation is a natural process occurring in the female body during reproductive age. The activities performed during menstruation such as usage of menstrual products, disposal of used products etc are very important aspect to individual as well as to the society. Maintaining good menstrual hygiene practices results in safe and hygiene menstruation in females. Assessment of menstrual hygiene practices among medical students is done by using different statistical method with the assumption that they healthcare professionals will have the basic knowledge about safe menstruation. Different medical fields are considered such a nursing, medical and dental students. A descriptive cross-sectional studies are considered for assessing menstrual hygiene and concluded about their knowledge about menstrual hygiene.



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INTRODUCTION

Menstruation is the process of release of blood and blood related matters through the vagina by degradation of the endometrium. Selection of good menstrual hygiene practices provides safe and healthy menstruation to the society. Menstrual hygiene practices include selection of good menstrual products, suitable disposal of used menstrual products. In India there several awareness programmes are initiated by governmental and non-governmental organisations.

Poor menstrual hygiene management results in serious health risk to individuals such a urinary tract infections and the spreading of serious deadly diseases like hepatitis to the public. In our society several taboos are present about menstruation. Consider menstruation as a dirty process and isolate menstruating women from normal activities. These taboos prevent females from their needs during menstruation and it affects inversely their mental health. Medical students are health care professionals and these studies are used to know about what is their basic knowledge about menstrual hygiene practices. Medical professionals have a major role in our society in providing information.

ASSESSMENT OF MENSTRUAL HYGIENE PRACTICES AMONG MEDICAL STUDENTS

In this review mainly 4 areas are considered; they are

- (1) The knowledge among girls before the age of menarche, and the source of their information.
- (2) Attitude of society towards menstruation
- (3) Menstrual hygiene materials and their proper disposal
- (4) Menstrual hygiene practices

The studies say that half of the population do not have the pre menarchial knowledge. In the society they are various sources of information regarding menstruation are present such as mothers, friends, relatives and social medias. Most of the studies say that mothers are considered as the primary source of information about pre-menarchial knowledge and social medias and teachers are also the sources of information.

In our society menstruation is culturally defined as the indicator of girl's maturity, marriage, and sexual activity. The attitude of society towards menstruation is varies culturally and religiously. They are several numbers of menstrual taboos are present. Such as do not enter into kitchen, prohibition to religious place, and read religious texts, entering into pooja room, do not touch the men, separation in the house etc and society had a traditional celebration at the time of menarche. The practices of menstrual taboos are more in rural population when compared with urban population. Giving proper education about, menstruation and menstrual hygiene practices among the society is the only solution for changing this attitude towards menstruation.

There are several menstrual hygiene materials are present such as sanitary napkins, cloth, menstrual cup, tampons etc. Every material has its own advantages and disadvantages. In our society sanitary napkins and cloth are more commonly used. among these two products sanitary pads are commonly used when compared to cloth. Women using cloth reuse them after washing, cleaning, drying. If these reusable materials are not properly sanitised it causes serious risk factors to health. The social taboos in society restrict women to dry them indoors, away from sunlight and at the same time locally prepared sanitary napkins are also causes side effects. In nowadays government provide various schemes for providing sanitary napkins to school students.

Disposal of these materials are also an important factor. Sanitary napkins used are disposed mainly by, napkins are wrapped in paper and bury in ground, public dustbin, flushed in toilets, burning etc. Incorrect disposal of these used sanitary materials causes serious side effects to environment also to the public health.

Good menstrual hygiene practices are important for health of public as well as individual. Majority of girls change their sanitary materials 2 to 4 times in a day depend upon the the menstrual flow and most of the girls clean the genital area with soap and water and some percentage of girls use water as a cleaning agent. Majority of students clipping their pubic hair once in a month. Giving proper awareness regarding menstrual hygiene practices helps to decrease number of infectious diseases such as urinary tract infections etc. And this helps to maintain menstrual health.

CONCLUSION

May 28 is celebrating menstrual hygiene day with the theme of “Making menstruation a normal fact of life by 2030”. Providing awareness about good menstrual hygiene practices include selection of good menstrual products and the disposal of used products is important in our society. Poor menstrual hygiene practices leads to serious health risks to society and individuals. To ensure good menstrual hygiene in our society we need to train the health care professionals and conducting awareness programmes about menstrual hygiene management among normal peoples. This helps for considering menstruation as a normal process.

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