

Lesson plan 4: Menstrual Hygiene Management**1 hr 20 minutes****Lesson Description**

The focus of this lesson is to share information about menstrual hygiene, the key components of menstrual hygiene management and discuss on the good and bad behaviors practiced during menstruation.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this session participants will be able to:



1. Explain the term Menstrual Hygiene Management.
2. Describe the importance of Menstrual Hygiene Management.
3. Distinguish between good and bad practices regarding Menstrual Hygiene
4. Identify different types of pads

Materials

- Projector
- PowerPoint slides
- Newsprint paper
- Documentary
- Marker
- Masking tape
- Meta Cards Sticky Notes
- Commercial and homemade pads

Preparation

- Write the learning outcomes on flip chart paper.
- If using the PowerPoint, prepare the files and projector for display.
- Prepare poster images or PowerPoint images of good and bad practices

Introduction**5 minutes**

1. Tell the participants about case study of Sangam:

Case Study

When Sangam first got her period seven years ago, at the age of 10, she was kept in a dark room for seven days. "I was not allowed to look at the sun, touch any male family member nor even hear their voice," said Sangam, who lives in an area near Kathmandu, the capital city of Nepal. "I could not even go to the bathroom and had to make a pot my latrine for seven days. "She missed a week of school, she said. As per her family rules, the girl's confinement to a dark room for seven days only applied to her first two menstrual cycles. These days, at 17, the restrictions are fewer but Shrestha still feels punished during her period. "I am not allowed to enter the kitchen or touch any material from it," she said with a frustration on being depended up on others, even to take foods. She is neither allowed to touch any holy objects. Many women and girls spend their periods in an animal shed or a separate shed built outside their homes.

2. Discuss with the participants that similar to the case study (story of Sangam), girls/ females tend to face various problem during menstruation. Also inform participants that they will be discussing more on the session and present the learning outcome of the session.

Menstrual Hygiene Management

20 minutes

1. Ask the participants, “What do you understand by menstrual hygiene or menstrual hygiene management?”
2. Summarize views of participants and present it as per the definition of MHM below:

The United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and the World Health Organization (WHO) define **Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM)** as

- the articulation, awareness, information and confidence to manage menstruation with safety and dignity using safe hygienic materials, together with
- adequate water and agents and spaces for washing and bathing and
- disposal with privacy and dignity

Menstrual

- Pertaining to menstruation
- Biological process causing cyclical discharge of blood, endometrial tissue and mucus via the vagina for 3 to 7 days over a 28 day period

Hygiene

- Conditions, practices & behaviors conducive to maintaining health and preventing diseases

Management

- Utilization of available resources to achieve predetermined set of goals)

3. Inform participants that they are going to do a group work on importance of menstrual hygiene management. For this, participants will be divided into 3 groups and in their group, participants are to discuss and note the point in newsprint paper.
4. Also inform that they have 5 minutes for the activity, and divide participants into three groups.
5. Provide newsprint paper and markers to each group and ask to discuss.
6. As groups finish their work, ask each group to present their discussion.
7. Summarize the responses from groups and add if any information is missing. Also add more information that with these importances, since 2014 May 28th is celebrated as world MHM day.

MHM importance:

- To get relieved or manage from odour, pain, discomfort and other menstrual disorder
- To prevent uterine infection (reproductive tract infection),
- To prevent Endometriosis, a menstrual disorder, contributes to infertility
- To eliminate school absenteeism rates due to dysmenorrhea (painful menses),
- To allow women and girls to live a dignified life,

- To have a clean environment

Good and Bad Practices of MHM

25 minutes



1. Inform participants that if MHM is of that importance than they are going to discuss more on what are the prevailing practices.
2. Also inform that for the activity, you are going to divide the participants into 2 groups. In the group, participants are to write the prevailing good and bad practices being followed in the community.
3. Divide participants into 2 groups. Assign one group with topic of good practice and the other with bad practice.
4. Provide Meta cards and markers to each group and provide 10 minutes time to complete the task.
5. Let participants share their ideas on large group by asking two groups to face the each other. Ask a group to read out a point and than ask other group to read out other point that is contrasting to the idea of first one. Continue the process till groups finish their points.
6. Add if any information should be given or added and correct the information if needed.
7. Sum up the ideas from the participants

Trainer's note:

Good practices of menstrual hygiene

- Regular bathing and changing clean clothes
- Regular changing of the underwear
- Use of pads and regular changing
- Drying reusable sanitary pad/cloths exposing to direct sunlight on rope for lesser contamination
- Proper wrapping of the disposable sanitary pad before disposal or incineration
- Drinking sufficient waters and hot drinks like hot water, soup, etc.
- Sunbathe during winter is helpful (pain relief)
- Yoga and light exercise during menstruation is helpful
- Eat more nutritious food
- Cleaning vagina regularly
- Checking expiry date of commercial pads
- Storing re-usable pads safely for next use

Bad practices of menstrual hygiene

- Restrictions on washing clothes or bathing, some for the whole of their menstrual period

- Restrictions on eating or drinking a diverse range of foods and drinks such as sweet, salty, acidic or sour food, eggs, pineapple, coconut water, ice drinks, peanuts, bean sprouts and others
- Having to stay in a separate hut/ place far from the family
- Drying the sanitary napkins under shade or over rusty iron materials
- Not changing pads for longer time
- Washing re-usable pads in unsafe place with high chances of contamination

Types of pads

20 minutes



1. Ask the participants, “What do you use during menstruation to absorb blood?”
Expected answers: commercial sanitary pad, napkin, cloth, homemade sanitary pad
2. Tell them, “Now we are going to explore the types of pads available so they can choose between the types of pads available as per their need and feasibility.”
3. Tell them, “We are going to debate on two types of pads that is homemade pads and commercial pads (reusable pad/ homemade sanitary pads and non-reusable pads/commercial pads).”
4. Inform participants that they will be divided into two groups and in their group, they will be provided a topic (homemade pads or commercial pads) and participants are to discuss about advantage of pads in their group and write key points on their given topic and choose a group leader. Also inform them, that they will have 5 minutes time for the activity.
5. Divide the participants into 2 groups and provide a topic written meta-card to each group and ask to start at once.
6. Once they are done with writing, ask a group to present a point and the other group to debate on it with their point and continue until the groups are done with the written points.
7. Summarize the views of participants and also add information that both types of pads have advantages of its own and if needed add more.
8. Ask participants that now they know the advantages of each one they can choose pads according to their own feasibility.

Review

10 minutes



1. Tell all of the participants to stand in the middle of the room
2. Post meta cards written with “Agree” and “Disagree” on two sides of the wall.
3. Share the participants a sentence about practices of MHM from the list below.
4. Tell them if they agree or disagree with the following sentences they should move to the respective corners and present their views why they agree or disagree
5. Summarize the activities

Agree and disagree game

- Women should not enter the kitchen during menstruation

- Women can carry heavy loads at the time of menstruation
 - Women should bath regularly
 - Sanitary pads should be dumped along with the other garbage
 - Fruits tree should not be touched during menstruation
 - Menstruating girls should not drink plenty water
 - Menstruation is the case of burden
 - During menstruation, pickles should not be touched
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Reflections on Lesson

Trainer's note:

Menstrual hygiene is crucial for the health, education, dignity of girls and women. Equipping adolescent girls with adequate information and skills on menstrual hygiene and its management helps to empower them with knowledge which enhances their self-esteem and positively impacts on academic performance.

MENSTRUAL HYGIENE MANAGEMENT

Menstrual Hygiene has remained a taboo subject - stigmatized even amongst practical engineering circles used to dealing with unmentionables such as excreta and shit. Women and girls make up 50 % or more of users of WASH. It seems strange then that water, sanitation and hygiene services ignore the needs of half the population that menstruate on an average for 3000 days over their lifetime.

Menstruation is a normal biological process and a key sign of reproductive health, yet in many cultures it is treated as something negative, shameful or dirty. The continued silence around menstruation combined with limited access to information at home and in schools results in millions of women and girls having very little knowledge about what is happening to their bodies when they menstruate and how to deal with it.

A study from UNICEF revealed that 1 out of 3 girls in South Asia knew nothing about menstruation prior to getting it while 48% of girls in Iran and 10% of girls in India believe that menstruation is a disease (WaterAid 2013, Menstrual Hygiene Matters).

There are also health issues to consider apart from the above-mentioned social issues. Poor protection and inadequate washing facilities may increase susceptibility to infection, with the odour of menstrual blood putting girls at risk of being stigmatized.

It is assumed that the risk of infection (including sexually transmitted infection) is higher than normal during menstruation because the blood coming out of the body creates a pathway for bacteria to travel back into the uterus. Certain practices are more likely to increase the risk of infection

	Menstrual absorbent	Advantages	Disadvantages
Hygienic	Locally made reusable napkins	Can be used for 6-12 cycles; more cost effective than disposable options; income generation opportunity; environmental friendly as degrade on disposal	Not always absorbent enough or the correct shape; requires adequate laundering in a private space with a water supply and soap and sunlight to dry.
	Commercial reusable sanitary napkins	Can be used for up to 12 cycles; cost-effective, yet more expensive than locally made; environment-friendly compared to disposable napkins; a high standard and hygienic product quality	Costs may be prohibitive to potential users; requires adequate laundering in a private space with a water supply and soap and a sunlight place to dry; not widely available

	Commercial disposable sanitary napkins	Often available, except in remote locations; range of sizes and types available in some locations; Well-designed through research and development	Costs are prohibitive to many potential users; generate a lot of waste and not environment-friendly; Need to assure proper disposal.
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Following are the advantages and disadvantages of different pads

Advantage of using non-reusable sanitary pads

- Easily available in nearby markets and shopping centers.
- Easy to use
- Comfortable
- Reliable and sterile
- Odor free
- Easy to carry or pack

Limitation of non-reusable sanitary pads

- Costly and difficult to afford by all
- Problem in disposing
- Sometimes difficult to dispose of it in field
- Not an environment friendly product (because sanitary pads were prepared by using the raw materials like paper, pulp, cotton, etc.)

Advantage of reusable pads

- Can be used again and again
- Save money
- Available in the household level
- Environment friendly
- No problem for disposal

Limitation of reusable pads

- Can cause negative health impacts (causative agent for uterine cancer) if not cleaned and dried in sunlight
- High chance of leakage so not appropriate for a long time
- Problem to carry the used pads
- Problem to wash the pads if away from home for a long time as users need somewhere private with a water supply and soap to wash and dry the clothes
- Does not control odor
- Problem in water scarce areas as it requires washing