

# Knowledge, Practices and Restrictions Related to Menstruation Among Dental Students

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**Abstract:** Menarche is an important milestone in the life of a girl which signifies the onset of fertility in a woman. To understand the health consequences and importance of menstrual hygiene practices among adolescent girls, it is important to study the current practices about the same so that future interventions can be planned accordingly.

**Keywords:** Knowledge, Practices, Restrictions, Menstruation.

## 1. Introduction

Menstruation is a normal, recurrent physiological event. It is one of the most important changes occurring in girls during adolescent years. Mothers, teachers and friends are primary source of information related to menstrual awareness. Essential menstrual hygiene practices during menstruation are change of hygienic pads every three to four hours, daily showering especially in instances of dysmenorrhea, adequate washing of genitalia after each voiding of urines/faces, continuing normal routine and daily activities, maintaining a balanced diet with plenty of fruits and vegetables rich in iron and calcium.

The first menstrual is often horrifying and traumatic to an adolescent girl because it usually occurs without her knowing about it. Most striking is the restricted control, which many women and girls have their own mobility and behaviour during menstruation including the myths, misconcepts, superstitions and taboos concerning menstrual blood and menstrual hygiene. Primarily poor personal hygiene and unsafe sanitary conditions result in gynecological problems

The taboos and socio-cultural practices related to menstruation, such as not being allowed to visit holy places and entering kitchen, not allowed to share beds, avoid eating some foods, makes them feel socially ostracized. Government of India is now making efforts in this direction, the menstrual hygiene scheme was launched in 2011, due to which the front-line functionaries get incentives to mobilize adolescents, provide them with information as well as encourage menstrual hygiene and use of sanitary products.

Due to impermissible and unaccepted pursuit of the topic in society the girls are constrained to whisper menstruation related

information, which is not so called meant for discussion in public surprisingly not even with family members because menstruation is generally considered as morally impure in the Indian society. Hence the girl's life is full of misconceptions, mal-practices and challenges making the life miserable. This wide gap of information may sometimes leads to potentially fatal ill effects, including reproductive tract and urinary tract infections, contributing to the burden of morbidity. Menstrual practices are also affected by religion and region, each religion has its own beliefs but overall the practice of myths and restrictions remain the same. The problem is multifactorial and widespread and there is need to educate our teenagers so that they grow up into mature and healthy women. I have conducted the survey among dental students with the aim of assessing the prevailing knowledge about menstruation, hygienic practices and associated consequences of menstruation related problems,

The objective of the study is to compare the knowledge and attribute towards menstruation among dental students.

- 1) Based on age group
- 2) Based on year wise

## 2. Methodology

### A. Permission

Permission was taken from the head of the department. Department of public health Dentistry. Questionnaire is explained and informed consent was taken prior to study from study subjects.

### B. Study design

A cross sectional questionnaire based study was conducted among students of Mamata dental college, Khammam.

### C. Pilot study

Questionnaire format are distributed among 30 students to know reliability of questionnaires.

### D. Inclusion criteria

All interns, final year students, 3rd year students, 2nd year students and 1st year students who are present during the day of

survey are included in the study. The duration of the study was from 31-05-2019 to 4-06-2019.

**E. Exclusion criteria**

Students who were absent during the day of survey were excluded.

**F. Study procedure**

The study was conducted among 251 dental students. Questionnaires were distributed to 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th year students and interns during their working hours that is from 9:00 am to 4:00pm. Questionnaire include personal data and questions.

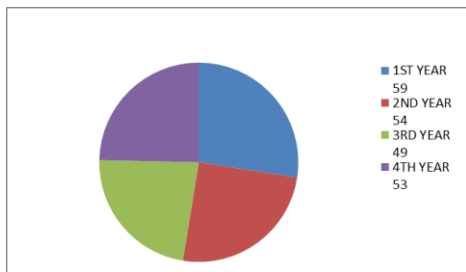
**G. Statistical analysis**

After the data is collected through Questionnaire, they are entered in excel sheet and sent for analysis

**3. Results**

A total of 251 dental students were included in the study. The study was conducted among female students belonging to various academic portions and response rate is 100%

*Chart 1: Distribution of study participants in various academic portions:*



	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	4	1.6	1.6	1.6
No	201	80.1	80.1	81.7
3	46	18.3	18.3	100.0
Total	251	100.0	100.0	

For the statement, did you know about menstruation before attainment of your first menstruation at the onset of puberty. Majority of the students (80.1%) answered NO, WHILE (1.6%) answered YES. Hence statistical significance was observed (P-0.009).

	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative Percent
Positively	132	52.6	52.6	52.6
Negatively	46	18.3	18.3	70.9
Neutral	73	29.1	29.1	100.0
Total	251	100.0	100.0	

For the statement, how do you believe menstruation is viewed within society. Majority of the students (52.6%) answered Positively and (18.3%) answered Negatively. Hence statistical significance was observed (P-0.001).

	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative Percent
<11	159	63.3	63.3	63.3
11-13	73	29.1	29.1	92.4
>13	12	4.8	4.8	97.2
4	7	2.8	2.8	100.0
Total	251	100.0	100.0	

For the statement, Generally, at what age does menarche occurs. Majority of the students (63.3%) answered < 11 Years, while (2.8%) answered None of the above. Hence statistical significance was observed (P-0.018).

	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative Percent
Chocolates	74	5.6	5.6	5.6
Leafy greens	49	19.5	19.5	25.1
Whole grains	123	49.0	49.0	74.1
All the above	65	25.9	25.9	100.0
Total	251	100.0	100.0	

For the statement, which is the best food to consume during periods. Majority of the students (49.0%) answered whole grains, while (5.6%) answered chocolates. Hence the statistical significance was observed (P-0.023).

**A. Discussion**

In this study, I sought to determine the knowledge, practices and restrictions related to menstruation among dental students. It was observed in the study that 55.4% girls believed it to be a physiological process. Similar research done detected that around 53.4% knew menstrual bleeding originated from the uterus and 1.6% did not know source of menstrual bleeding. Indeed, the mother was the primary provider of information about menstruation and related hygiene. Moreover 80.1% girls did not receive information about menstruation before puberty. Although all participants used disposable sanitary products and 93.2% cleaned their genitalia after urination, the practices of menstrual hygiene did not attain the standards described by UNICEF. About 58.2% of girls changed sanitary pads every 3 to 4 hours.

Research conducted among dental students showed that only 21.1% used disposable sanitary pads. In addition, girls did not participate in ceremonies or social activities with family during menstruation. About 43.8% are forced to practice restrictions during menses. Nevertheless, this study succeeded in providing useful information about menstrual health care issues among dental students. Health education should be developed to empower girls with significant awareness so that they shift to appropriate health practices.

**4. Conclusion**

The overall results from the study conclude that menstrual hygiene practices were poor among girls they had to face restrictions and social taboos related to menstruation. Education to girls about the facts of menstruation, physiological implications, significance and proper hygiene practices during

menstruation is the need of the hour. It is also required to bring them out of traditional beliefs, taboos, misconceptions and restrictions. Focus group discussions, mass media campaign schools are required ns and inclusion of sex education in schools are required to overcome taboo aspect of menstruation. All mothers should be encouraged to break their inhibitions about discussing with their daughters regarding menstruation and menstrual hygiene. The awareness of menstrual hygiene needs to be spread in the society. Menstrual hygiene scheme run by Government of India should be implemented effectively and regular evaluation of the same is required.

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