

**Civil Society Organizations working on Menstrual Hygiene Management**

**FACT SHEET ON Menstrual Hygiene management.**

**INTRODUCTION**

Menstruation is one of the very early signs of the onset of puberty in girls. It is a normal healthy part of a woman's life. It is not an illness neither is it dirty or shameful.

**DEFINITION**

Menstruation is the monthly bleeding that passes through the vagina. Menstruation is also called period because it happens every 21 to 35 days.

**SOME OF THE SYMPTOMS THAT COMMONLY OCCUR BEFORE OR AT THE ONSET OF MENSTRUATION**

- Body is full
- Backache
- Enlarged or painful breasts
- Depression
- Tiredness
- Headache
- Nausea or feeling of vomiting
- Lower abdominal pain/cramps
- Irritability or easily getting angry

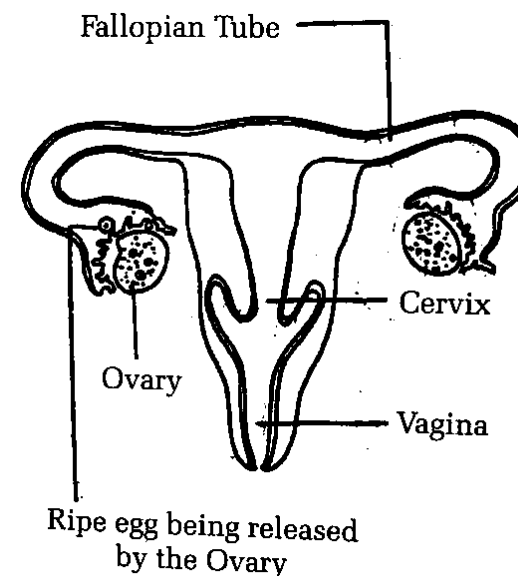
**FEMALE REPRODUCTIVE CYCLES (MENSTRUAL CYCLE)**

- A girl is born with thousands of egg cells (ova) in her ovaries.
- During the years that a woman menstruates, she usually releases one egg per month. A woman can never use up all her eggs. As a woman gets older, egg production and menstruation will stop. menopause.
- The first time a girl sees her period, she is said to have gone through menarche or reached puberty. At

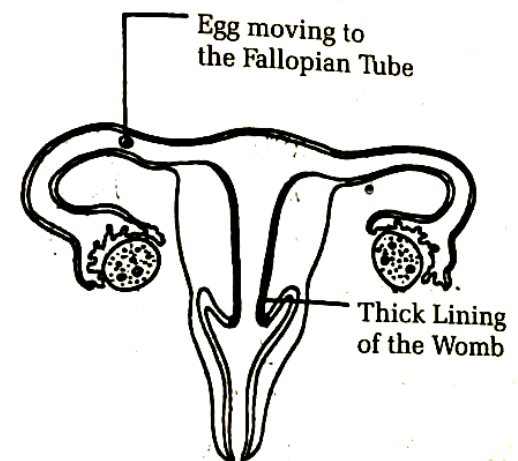
puberty, a girl's ovaries begin to release one egg per month.

- The egg is released about fourteen days before the start of the next period. In a young girl it is however difficult to predict when the egg will be released.
- Each month an egg in one of the ovaries begins to ripe.
- This happens between days 5 and 7 of the menstrual cycle (day 1 of the cycle is the first of menstrual bleeding).
- From days 7 to 11 the lining of the uterus starts preparing to receive the ripe egg.
- From days 11 to 14 the egg ripens in the ovary and is released. This event is known as Ovulation (it usually occurs 14 days before the next period in a girl with 28 days circle).
- The finger-like structures of the fallopian tube (egg rope) draw the released ripe egg into the tube to be fertilized.
- If fertilization does not occur, the egg disintegrates and the prepared lining of the uterus peels away as the egg disappears.
- The lining of the uterus peels away through the vagina in the form of blood. This process is called menstruation or menstrual period and it lasts between 3-7 days.
- After menstruation the womb starts all over again rebuilding it's lining in preparation for receiving a fertilized egg.

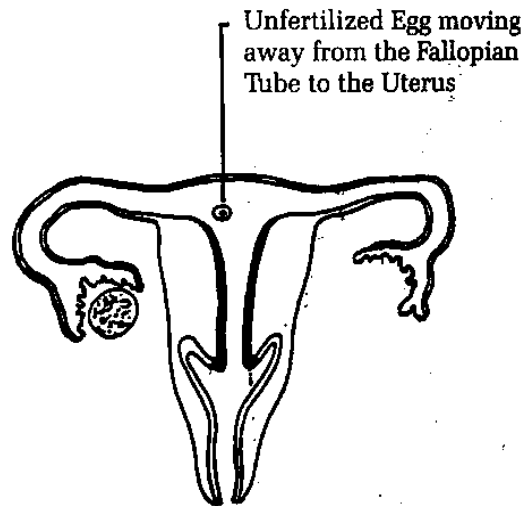
**DIARAM SHOWING PROCESS OF MENSTRUATION**



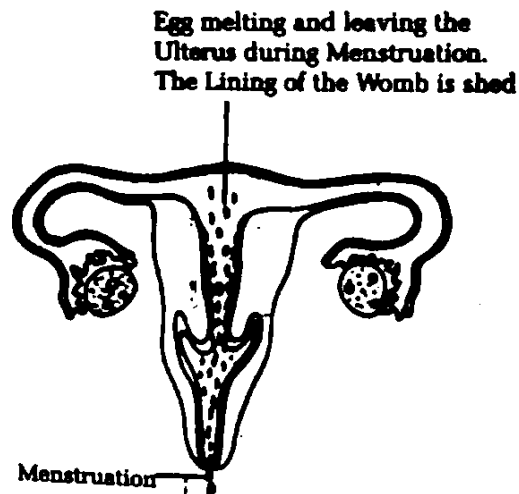
**STEP 1**



**STEP 2**



STEP 3



STEP 4

### COMMON MENSTRUAL PROBLEMS

- Abdominal cramps/pains:** These abdominal pains experienced during menstruation. This can also be called dysmenorrhea.
- Inter-menstrual bleed or spotting:** This is when bleeding occurs before the next expected period.
- Heavy Menstruation:** This is when the menstrual flow is excessive and comes in clots. It is not common in adolescents.
- Small/Scanty menstruation:** This is when the menstrual flows is minimal in quantity or flow.
- Stoppage of menstruation:** This is when menstruation stops. It can be temporary (e.g. in pregnancy or due to a hormonal disorder) or permanent as in menopause. Another name for this is amenorrhea.
- Long/Prolonged menstruation:** This is when the menstrual period exceeds the normal duration and lasts for more than 7 days

### MANAGEMENT OF MENSTRUAL PROBLEMS

- When students have Abdominal cramps/pains, teachers should let them know that the following measures can provide them with some relief
  - Putting a warm pack on the lower abdomen and back
  - Drinking hot pap, tea, water or other hot beverages
  - Using tablets such as Paracetamol or aspirin to relieve pain (caution must be taken in ulcer patients)
  - Doing some exercise such as walking, swimming, pelvic press or stretching exercise

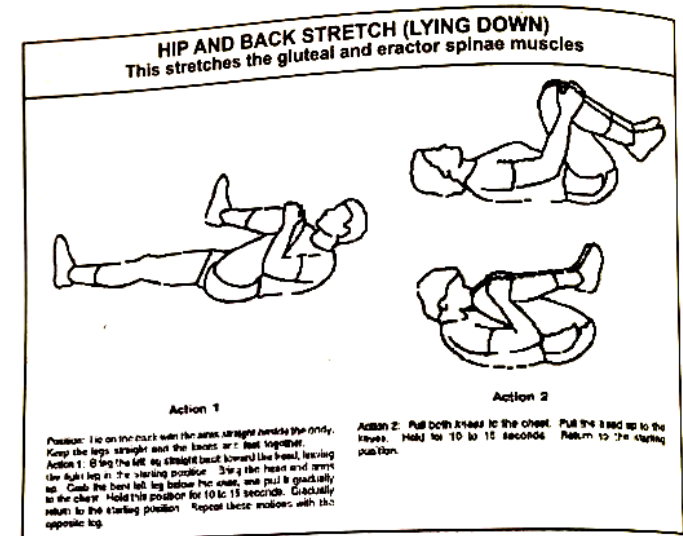
### EXERCISE TO RELIEVE PERIOD PAIN

#### a) Pelvic Exercise

- Lying on the floor face down, palms on the floor beside the shoulders
- Raising the head and shoulders off the floor until the arms are outstretched
- Repeating these several times

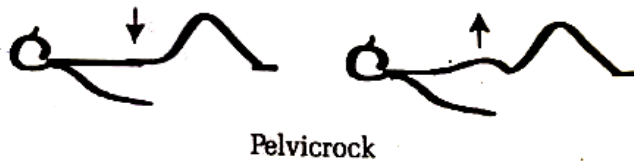
#### b) Crouch

Lying on the side, knees drawn up to the chest and head tucked under to touch the knees



### a) Pelvic Rock

- Lying on the floor face down
- Stretching arms behind the back to Grasp the ankles
- Bending the knees and bringing the feet up to meet the hand, in this position, the legs, hands and shoulders will be off the floor. Gently rock sideways in this position.



### a) Stretching

Standing with the back against the wall with as much of the body as possible touching the wall. Students should try to feel as if their heads are drawn upwards making them as tall as possible.

### HOW TO KEEP CLEAN DURING MENSTRUATION

- Changing pad at least three times a day or when soaked
- Changing underwear/pants daily, wash and dry
- Having bath in the morning and evening
- Eating plenty of fruits and taking plenty of water
- They should not use powder or perfume on the vulva as it can cause an allergy or infection
- Doing mild exercises to reduce the pain and to keep healthy.

- If there is pain, a drug that relieves pain can be taken i.e. paracetamol

### REASONS FOR KEEPING CLEAN DURING MENSTRUATION

- To prevent germs from entering the body and causing illness
- To avoid body odour
- To keep healthy

Do you...

...need more Information on MHM

Please call or send an SMS to: **0706-7829295** or

Send an email to [info@cydi2k.org](mailto:info@cydi2k.org)