Peer Educator Reference Book-FAQs

NATIONAL HEALTH MISSION
राष्ट्रीय स्वास्थ्य मिशन

RKSK
Rashtriya Kishor
Swasthya Karyakram
राष्ट्रीय किशोर स्वास्थ्य कार्यक्रम

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List of Contributors

Shri C.K. Mishra
Additional Secretary & Mission Director, NHM, Government of India

Dr. Rakesh Kumar
Joint Secretary, RMNCH+A, Government of India

Dr. Sushma Dureja
Deputy Commissioner, Adolescent Health Division, Government of India

Dr. Zoya Ali Rizvi
Assistant Commissioner, Adolescent Health Division, Government of India

Dr. Sanjiv Kumar
Executive Director, NHSRC

Dr. Satish Kumar
Advisor (Public Health Planning), NHSRC

Technical Experts

Adolescent Health Division, MoHFW – Ms Anshu Mohan, Dr. Manika Sharma

NHSRC-TST (Adolescent Health) - Ms Vartika Sharma, Dr. Priyanka Salil Kochar and Dr. Nisha Singh

UNFPA- Mr Venkatesh Srinivasan, Mr Rajat Ray and Dr. Jaya

UNICEF- Dr. Mario Mosquera, Ms Alka Malhotra and Ms Arupa Shukla

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Introduction

Adolescents (253 million) comprise nearly one-fifth (22 percent) of India's total population (Census 2011). Of the total adolescent population, 12 percent belong to the 10–14 years age group and nearly 10 per cent are in the 15–19 years age group. Adolescence is a very promising phase of life. Government of India recognizes the need to provide the best possible support and care to adolescents in the country so that they realize their full potential in life. Compulsory education at least up to 14 years of age, opportunities for higher education and learning vocational/professional skills, access to health care and protection from coercion or violence are some ways in which our government is committed to provide an enabling environment for adolescents. Our constitution grants its children some special rights and to meet these rights, Government of India has brought in several policies, programmes, schemes and legal acts to protect and promote their health and well-being.

The health and well-being of the adolescent population is a key determinant of any country's overall development. Supporting adolescents in reducing barriers to access education, health and opportunities for growth and development will help India realize its demographic bonus, as healthy adolescents are an important resource for the economy.

The **Adolescent Health Strategy** is one such initiative in this direction. The adolescent health strategy has six priorities:

1. Sexual and reproductive health
2. Mental and emotional well-being
3. Healthy lifestyle
4. Violence-free living
5. Improved nutritional status
6. Substance misuse prevention

Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Karyakram (RKSK) or the **National Health Programme** has been introduced under the **National Health Mission (NHM),** the flagship programme of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India. The programme has a range of services for adolescents to be delivered through both service delivery points and outreach activities. This means that an adolescent can access these services at the health facilities and through the service providers available in the community.

Some of the interventions under the programme are:

- Adolescent Friendly Health Services
- Menstrual Hygiene Scheme (MHS)
- Weekly Iron Folic Acid Supplementation (WIFS)
- Peer Education

Respecting the rights of adolescents to privacy, confidentiality, non-judgemental attitude, non-discrimination and acceptance of their health needs as any client of health, is the key to this programme.

In order to reach adolescents within the community irrespective of their age, sex, culture, caste, religion, marital status or social status, within the ambit of Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Karyakram (RKSK) Government of India has introduced a new intervention named **'Peer Educator Programme'**. This will facilitate the following:

- Promote learning from trained peers
- Promote support seeking through these peers
- Help reduce fears or barriers experienced otherwise by adolescents
- Help to establish information and support network among adolescents across the country

- Increased access to scientific and reliable sources of information.

The **Peer Educators (PEs)** in the programme are adolescents between 15 and 19 years of age who will be selected by members of VHSNC based on their educational qualification, communication skills, motivation and interest to lead such an activity. The process is facilitated by ASHAs. After the selection process, these PEs will undergo six days of non residential training concerning various components of RKSK. These trained PEs will be the most important link between the service providers and the adolescents in the community and hence will be the key to the success of the RKSK.

Module I

Peer Educator Programme

Session 1: Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Karyakram and Peer Education

Introduction

Adolescence is a promising but delicate phase of life when children need the utmost care and support to realize their full potential. Yet, some of their concerns often go unnoticed. Our culture inhibits an open dialogue between adolescents and adults like parents and teachers, especially on personal subjects like those related to bodily changes, love, marriage and relationships. In such matters adolescents are found to be more comfortable with their peers. During this phase, adolescents also experience frequent mood swings. The feeling of isolation and likelihood of being misunderstood by elders and parents is relatively high.

We recognize that every adolescent (irrespective of sex, age, caste, religion, marital status), like any adult, has the right to access information, counselling and services on concerns that may impact his/her health, education, safety and overall well-being. Hence, **Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Karyakram** under the National Health Mission aims to reach out to this special group through their own peers who can be trained on a range of issues and concerns that may be perplexing adolescent minds. The approach adapted will take care to maintain privacy, confidentiality and a non-judgemental attitude towards the adolescent seeking help. The approach will focus on enhancing the skills and capacities of adolescents by providing them with information, counselling, curative and preventive services.

What is Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Karyakram?

The Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Karyakram covers six broad issues as priority for adolescents. These issues are Sexual and reproductive health, Mental and emotional well-being, Healthy lifestyle, Violence-free life, Improved nutritional status, Substance misuse prevention.

The focus is on building the skills and capacities of adolescent girls and boys to resolve their health concerns through rights-based access to service of choice (information, counselling, curative, preventive and/or referral for legal aid in case of violence).

What is the Adolescent Education Programme?

The Adolescent Education Programme aims to reach adolescents in a friendly way through trained adolescent PEs from the community. The programme will:

- Promote learning from trained peers
- Promote support seeking through these peers
- Help reduce fears or barriers experienced otherwise by adolescents
- Increase access to scientific and reliable sources.
- Help establish an information and support network among adolescents across the country

What is Friendly Health Service?

'Friendly' adolescent health service is the one that:

- Respects adolescent clients
- Ensures their privacy while discussing problem/s with the service providers
- Tries to minimize waiting hours
- Maintains strict confidentiality about the concerns of the adolescent client
- Does not stigmatize them
- Does not make judgements about their behaviour
- Promotes adolescent health check-up to lead a healthy future
- Helps adolescent clients identify the root cause and take positive steps to avoid such situations in future

Explain the need for peer education

- During adolescence, one spends or likes to spend maximum time with one's peers.
- Adolescents make friends fast and in large numbers.
- There is a bond with friends that becomes much stronger than other relations. Adolescents trust the wisdom of friends more than that of the elders including parents.
- If one has to seek help, one approaches a friend who may also be uninformed or may have incorrect information, which could be dangerous.
- A friend who is informed and trained is an asset.
- This is an effort by the government to reach out to all adolescents in the community through trained PEs who are trusted friends and will be an asset to any adolescent in the community.

Who are Peer Educators and how can they help us?

Peer educators are adolescents between 15 and 19 years of age from your own community/village. Each village (1,000 population) is expected to have four PEs to interact with the boys and girls of the community. To ensure coverage of adolescents both in schools and outside, two PEs (i.e., one male and one female) will be selected to work with adolescents in school, and similarly, two PEs will be selected to work with adolescents who are out of school.

The trained PEs will help adolescents in the communities learn about different issues that are important for their health and development. The interactions will help adolescents clarify their doubts on various topics and resolve their concerns through scientific facts. PEs can also help adolescents access medical or legal help if required without breaching confidentiality.

Role of a Peer Educator, 'A Trusted Friend'

- To identify and reach out to adolescents between 10 and 19 years of age



irrespective of gender, caste, religion or marital status

- To respect every adolescent and assure him/her that you are his/her friend
- To build a rapport in the community and win the trust of peers
- To inform and educate adolescents about the Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Karyakram (RKSK)
- To seek support from respected members of the community and parents to carry out his/her role



Adolescents knowingly or unknowingly spend more time with their friends and peers. Self-initiated interactions with adults are minimal. Some adults look at peer influence with concern while some take the help of peers to reach out to their children. Friends can be good or bad, informed or misinformed, and so their influence may be positive or negative. However, the Adolescent Peer Educator Programme endeavours to utilize the positive aspect of peer influence.

Adolescent peer education is a process whereby well trained and motivated adolescents carry out informal or organized educational activities with their peers (those similar to themselves in age, background or interest). This is carried out over a period of time through either small group interactions or through one-to-one interaction or even when someone seeks help to resolve an issue. It aims at developing knowledge, attitudes, beliefs and skills among peers on a range of issues relevant to them and enables them to be responsible for and protect their own health. It can be conducted in a variety safe settings like schools, playgrounds, a friend's house, Aanganwadi centre, Panchayat Bhawan, a tea stall and/or any place where adolescents gather for recreation/leisure. An adolescent health PE has the potential to become a good friend to his/her peers. As a PE one should remember that 'trust' and 'confidence' are the pillars of peer education.

What are the qualities of a PE?

A PE is a 'trusted friend' who helps adolescent friends learn about issues pertaining to adolescent health that they otherwise are not comfortable discussing with adults or service providers. This trusted friend will never breach trust, will provide privacy, maintain confidentiality and will not have a judgemental attitude towards the adolescent friend seeking support. It is very important to maintain the confidentiality and trust of adolescents of all age groups by never disclosing anybody's concern to anyone else. One should also never make fun of any adolescent but try to support or protect those who are being targeted. Some of the other qualities of a PE are given below:

- Ability to keep abreast of new information and knowledge
- Ability to listen and communicate effectively
- Ability to deal with emotions and difficult situations
- Ability to express emotions
- Adaptive and flexible nature
- Ability to encourage and provide support
- Ability to lead by example
- Ability to look at things from various perspectives
- Sensitivity to gender issues

How can I become a good PE?



As a PE or a true friend one has to cultivate the acquaintance of more and more adolescents in the community and try to reach a large number of them with one's message. This can be effective only if one is able to win their trust as a true friend. Some knowledge about the adolescent and being sensitive to his/her likes and dislikes irrespective of his/her social, educational or economic background would help bring people closer. This further reinforces trust between two people. As a true PE, one should not discriminate against any friend and always try to include all those in the larger youth group who are otherwise excluded in the community. Remembering the names of peers is a step towards this. This shows that you value them and their friendship.

How can I start my work as a PE?



- As a first step, you need to identify adolescent girls and boys in your community or in a given area. ASHA *didi* will help you in this.
- Establish contact with the adolescents and their families and introduce yourself and the purpose of your work.
- Reach out to adolescents who are out of school or those from marginalized communities. Include all irrespective of religion, caste, class, gender and marital status. Be respectful to them. Record their name, age, education and livelihood, if any.
- Ask for their contact details, address and phone number if they have a phone.
- Form small groups of adolescents with 15–20 members in each. Once a group is ready, you can start your sessions with this group. You will go through 8 modules which will be covered over a time period of 15 weeks (conducting one session a week for each peer group). Once 15 sessions with a group are completed, you can initiate similar sessions with a new group and meet the previous group once in two weeks or as required. You can also take the help of some of the members of the previous group in reaching out to new adolescents.
- With the consensus of group members select one volunteer member to assist you in coordinating the group in your absence. He/she will have the contact details of all group members and will convey messages like session days and timing to all members and gather them for the group session. Each group member can act as a volunteer in rotation so that everyone has a chance to practise leadership.
- Fix a date and timing for group sessions for each of your groups.
- During the introductory session take the assurance of all members that they will attend all 15 sessions. With the consensus of all members, give the group a name. This will help group members share ownership of the group they belong to.
- Both male and female PEs along with their PE coordinator (ASHA *didi*) should contact the village *Sarpanch* or *Mukhiya* and other well-known people like the school principal to provide a clean and safe space for your group sessions such as the *Panchayat Bhavan*, the local school, the AWW centre or even a peer's house. The PEs can decide separate days or timings for their group sessions and inform their groups accordingly.
- Along with the ASHA *didi* ensure that the space is easily accessible for group members and is safe and acceptable to the community members, so that group members do not face resistance

from parents in visiting the place. The *Panchayat Bhavan*or the local school would be ideal. Invite your peer mentors (ASHA *didi*, AWW *didi*, teacher or others as assigned) to join you as this will provide credibility to your work.

- Though most of the sessions are to be conducted separately, with the support of the ASHA *didi* or AWW *didi* or teacher or any person assigned, the male and female PEs can collaborate and organize a joint session, cultural programme, quiz or debates between the male and female members of the two groups on the issues learnt.
- Put up a 'Question Box' for adolescents to put their queries into. You can fix a date to open the question box and answer queries with the help of the ASHA/ANM *didi*. Inform all group members in the locality about the day the queries will be answered. The question box is like a post box where everyone can put in letters but only an authorized person can collect all letters. It is therefore locked from outside.



How shall I introduce myself?



It is important to introduce yourself and your purpose clearly to avoid any confusion among adolescents and their families. Tell them your name and share your address and/or telephone number. Inform them about the Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Karyakram show your badge/cap or an identity that has been provided by the State Health Department. Inform them briefly about your work and how and when you will be contacting them for sessions. Also inform them that, if necessary, the adolescents can contact you for help. Inform the village *Sarpanch/Mukhiya* or other elderly people before starting your work. You can also invite the village elders for an introductory session and invite your mentors to help you with this.



What is my role as a PE with respect to my peer group members and community?



As a PE, you will be required to play various roles in the community and among your peers. Some of them are listed below:

- Build a rapport with adolescents, tell them that you are new, but may be of some help to them and that you can also put them in touch with the right people if any help or service is required.
- Invite them for sessions or try to establish informal dialogue with them.
- Share your name, work and contact details.
- Conduct weekly sessions as given in the Resource Book (15 sessions over a period of 15 weeks).
- Help adolescents clarify myths and misconceptions with regard to health and protection issues.
- Set up a question box in front of the *Panchayat Bhavan* and school for adolescents to post their concerns and queries regarding their health. During the first session introduce the 'Question Box' and inform members that no adolescent is expected to write his/her name in the query as answers will be discussed in a group session. During these days the ASHA/ANM *didi,* AWW *didi* or any other informed person will be available to help answer the queries. Even if by mistake someone writes his/her name, the PE or the invited guest will not disclose the name. The queries posted are confidential and the adolescent peer educator team is committed to maintain the confidentiality of the person. All queries, if required, will be neatly typed with answers for the group members to learn from them. The posted queries will be destroyed after they are answered and recorded.

- Provide referral service with regard to medical or protection needs of adolescents in crisis.
- Maintain confidentiality all through.
- Organize awareness activities on issues with the help of group members, and ASHA, AWW, teachers or any person assigned as coordinator/facilitator/ mentor) and other respected members of the village.
- Inform mentors, the village elders, police or child protection officer if you come to know of cases of violence (like child marriage, domestic violence, eve teasing, molestation etc.) in the community, especially against children and adolescents.
- Help victims of violence reach medical care and counselling and gain access to legal aid.

Who will guide me in my work?

You are not alone in completing this task. You will be supported by the ASHA *didi*, teacher, counseller, ANM *didi*, AWW *didi*, a teacher or any other informed person in the community, who has been oriented on your role as a PE. They will be your mentors and are named peer mentors.

Introduce yourself to your peer mentors, who can be contacted any day with their permission and you can also invite them for the introductory session with your peer group. They can help you in addressing queries posted by the group members in the question box. You can contact them any time you need any support. The role of the PE mentors is to do the following:

- To support PEs in carrying out their duties
- To help PEs reach out to adolescents (especially those out of school and most marginalized)



- To help PEs introduce their work to village elders including the *Sarpanch/ Mukhiya*
- To help PEs get a safe space in the community to conduct groups sessions and peer group interactions, such as the *Panchayat Bhavan*, the local school or the AWW centre, that is easily accessible, safe and acceptable to community members
- To help PEs resolve any problem in carrying out their work
- To ensure correctness of messages being delivered by PEs
- To help adolescents clarify myths and misconceptions and answer queries posted by them in the question box
- To provide referral to adolescent clients brought by the PEs, if necessary
- To help PEs maintain a daily diary of their work and report at the end of every month

How will I conduct sessions with identified peers?

You can carry out your role in the following manner:

- Formal group sessions
- Informal small group interactions

- One-to-one interactions

You need to conduct group sessions as given in the PE Activity book over the 12 months. You are expected to take one formal group session once a month. You will also be provided with a checklist to keep track of topics discussed with each of your peer groups.

You can coordinate two groups (if possible) with 15–20 members in each simultaneously every month.



How am I expected to report to the PE coordinator about my work?



You are required to meet the PE coordinator every week and fill out some forms. These are easy to fill, and in case you have any difficulty your PE coordinator will help you complete it. You will be provided with the forms by your peer mentors.

The forms are as given on the next page.

A. For One-to-One Interactions

Date/Month/Year

S. No.	Name of adolescent/ stakeholder reached (To be kept confidential)	Sex (M/F)	Age	Issue/Problem discussed	Referral slip issued, if any
1.	*Sagar*	M	15	*Effects of smoking*	No
2.	*Anil*	M	17	*RTIs and STIs* *Pain during urination*	Yes

B. For Group Interactions

Date/Month/Year

S. No.	Venue	Name of Participants	Sex	Age	Issues discussed	Referrals, if any

C. Weekly/Monthly Compilation Sheet

Month and Year

Week	Days							
	M	T	W	T	F	Sa	Su	Total
Week 1								
No. of adolescents reached in the age group 10–14 years (male)								
No. of adolescents reached in the age group 10–14 years (female)								
No. of adolescents reached in the age group 15–19 years (male)								
No. of adolescents reached in the age group 15–19 years (female)								
No. of group sessions conducted								
No. of adolescents referred for AFSH services (male)								
No. of adolescents referred for AFSH services (female)								
No. of cases of GBV reported (male and female) • Child marriage • Sexual abuse • Domestic violence (including torture for dowry) • Corporal punishment								
No. of community awareness and advocacy campaigns organized								
Week 2								

D. Action Plan/Content Check List for Peer Educator
(to be maintained for one or more peer groups being facilitated by each PE)

Peer Group: (Name of the group as chosen by the group members)

Sessions/Topics to be covered by Peer Educator through Group Sessions (Those covered should be ticked and those not covered can be crossed)

Pubertal changes	Menstruation	Nightfall	Personal hygiene
Gender identity	Respecting diversity	Under-nutrition and anaemia	Risk factors for health conditions related to life style
Dealing with peer pressure	Preventing substance misuse (alcohol and smoking)	Managing emotion and stress	Minimizing risks to prevent accidents and Injuries
Child marriage	Preventing adolescent pregnancy	RTIs and STIs	Preventing HIV and AIDS
Responding to violence against children/adolescents	Preventing gender-based violence (violence against adolescent girls and women)	Knowing our rights and entitlements	Community sanitation and hygiene

Pre and post-session information:

1. About Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Karyakram, MoHFW
2. Introducing Peer Educators and Peer Mentors (ASHA, ANM)
3. Informing about providers and service delivery points (including referral service) to seek services and help if required

Who can I contact?

Name	**Contact No.**

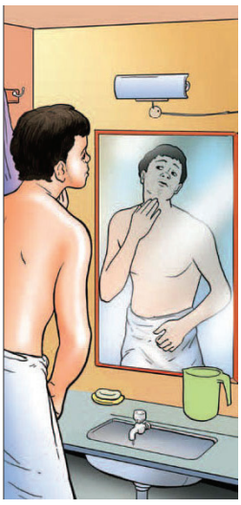


Growing Up

1. Pubertal Changes
2. Menstruation
3. Genital Hygiene

Growing Up

When do pubertal changes start in boys?



Pubertal changes (physical and sexual maturation of adolescent boys and girls) may start appearing from 10 years of age (largely height or weight gain); however the secondary sexual characteristics like growth of genitals i.e. penis, enlargement of scrotum and testes, appearance of facial and pubic hair usually start between 11 to 14 years of age. The age for growth spurt varies from one adolescent to another. If an adolescent and his/her parents feel that the pubertal changes are too early or delayed, they should consult a ANM or doctor.

Can pubertal changes occur early? When should one consult a doctor?

Yes, in some adolescents pubertal changes may occur early. Pubertal changes among girls before the age of 8 years or its absence by 13 years and among boys before the age of 9 years and its absence by the age of 14 years may be a cause of concern. In such cases, consultation with a doctor is important to get the right advice.

Are adolescents moody? Why do they behave strangely?

With physical changes, adolescents also go through changes in thinking abilities and emotions. It is normal for them to experience frequent mood swings. At times they may sound uncaring and disrespectful to older people, especially parents. One can help them by being understanding and sensitive to their needs. Talking to adolescents helps but they need patience and care.

What is nocturnal emission/ nightfall?



Formation and discharge of semen can occur during mid-adolescence and manifests as nocturnal emission. It signifies reproductive maturity for an adolescent boy. Nocturnal emission, also known as nightfall, is normal and does not require any form of treatment. Still many adolescent boys are stressed about this and go for treatments that may be extremely harmful to their health.

What causes nocturnal emissions/nightfall?

There may be several reasons for nightfall that may or may not be linked to sexual fantasy or arousal. Nightfall may occur due to pressure on seminal vesicle by urinary bladder or it may be involuntary ejaculation.

Is nocturnal emission harmful?

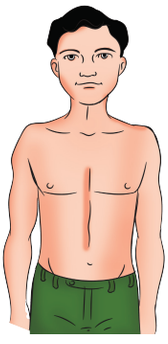
It does not represent loss of manhood or sexual weakness; it is essentially harmless and does not require any treatment. Adolescent boys need to be reassured so that it does not become a cause for embarrassment or undue worry. As the body continuously produces semen and sperms, the loss through nocturnal emission is replaced.

How and whom to contact to get rid of concerns related to nocturnal emission?

Nocturnal emission is a natural process and hence does not require any treatment. Its occurrence / frequency will gradually decrease as one attains maturity. If one still has doubts about it, one should consult the doctor at the nearest hospital/dispensary.

Is breast development normal in boys?

In some boys, growth in breasts can become prominent;this is normal and will subside eventually on its own. However, if they are too prominent the condition is called 'gynaecomastia' and needs treatment. Sometimes extreme obesity can also lead to apparent increase of male breast tissue.



What should be the size of the penis?

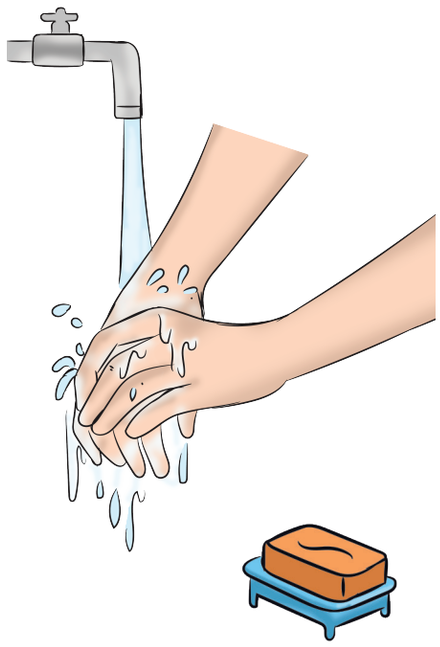
Concerns about the size of penis and testicles are common among boys, especially in relation to sexual abilities. The size of the penis has no relation to sexual performance. The penis doubles in length and width during adolescence with most rapid growth taking place between 14 and 16 years. The width or length of the penis varies from person to person. The average penis size (when flaccid)is 3–4 inches in length and 1 inch in diameter. The penis may also have slight curvature to left or right, which is normal. The size of the two testicles may also vary and the left one generally hangs lower than the right.

Is it normal for adolescents to fall in love?

Yes, adolescents often fall in love. They may feel attachment for a friend or a person of the opposite or same sex. It is natural to have special feelings for someone. It is important for adolescents to understand that such relationships are based on mutual consent, trust, commitment and respect. It is good to express your feelings to the person you feel for but always in a respectful way. One should also be prepared to accept the other person's decision to not be friends with dignity and decency. Boys should know that when a girl says 'No' it means 'No'. One should learn to respect the personal space of a girl/boy as may be the case.

Feelings during adolescent years may change over time as one grows into an adult. This is also normal and one should learn to accept it. Adolescents should try and understand one another and help each other pursue their educational or professional dreams.

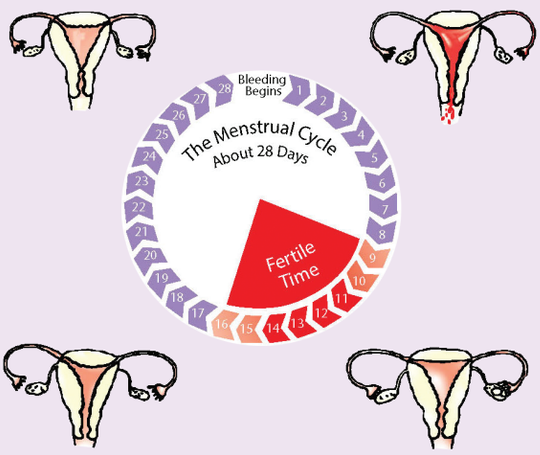
How can we keep our genital areas clean?



Washing the penis and testicles: The penis should be washed gently with normal water every day.If soap is applied it should be a mild one, as harsh soaps cause soreness. Adolescent boys having foreskin should pull it back gently and wash underneath. If the skin under the foreskin is not washed correctly, smegma (a natural lubricant keeping the penis moist) may begin to gather and cause bacterial growth emitting a bad smell. In acute cases, the penis head may become red and swollen causing pain, irritation and discomfort. Deodorants or talcum powder should be avoided as they may collect under the foreskin. For circumcised adolescents care should be taken while cleaning the penis; washing the penis gently with normal or warm water once a day is sufficient. One should not forget to clean thebase of the penis and testicles as sweat and dirt may cause irritation.

What is menstruation?

Menstruation is a normal physiological process that starts between 12 and 14 years in a female and continues till late 40s or early 50s. It is commonly referred as 'period' or 'monthly cycle'.



How does menstruation take place?

During the menstrual cycle, the inner lining of the uterus grows and thickens. At the same time, the female egg is growing in the ovaries. When the egg matures, it leaves the ovary and the non-fertilized egg breaks. The thickened lining of the uterus is shed. This is menstruation.

When do pubertal changes start in girls?



Pubertal changes (physical and sexual maturation of adolescent boys and girls) may start appearing from 9 years of age (largely height or

weight gain); however the secondary sexual characteristics like development of breasts, development of hair on external genitalia. Development in size of uterus, ovaries along with physiological changes like menstruation usually start between 11 and 13 years of age. The age for growth spurt varies from one adolescent to another. If an adolescent and his/her parents feel that the pubertal changes are early or delayed,they should consult a doctor or ANM.



What should adolescent girls do to overcome fear, pain and discomfort during menstruation?



- Adolescent girls should not feel ashamed or guilty of having menstruation; they should follow their daily routines with a bit of extra nutrition and hygiene during these days.
- The pain in the lower abdomen and heaviness is common and can be eased by having hot water bath, use of hot bottle, hot drinks, antispasmodic medicines and light exercise like walking, stretching etc. This will help improve blood circulation and lessen pain.
- One should use sanitary napkins to prevent staining of clothes and irritation/ itchiness in pelvic area/genital area. In case sanitary napkins are not available, one can use clean old soft cotton cloths, washed and dried in the sun. Napkins should be changed at least three times a day.
- Sanitary napkins can be disposed by dumping them into a deep pit, burning or wrapping in paper and putting them in the waste bin for garbage processing.
- One should have bath daily and clean genital area with water and mild soap.



From where can one get disposable sanitary napkins?



In some states, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare supports menstrual hygiene among adolescent girls (10-19 years) in rural areas through schemes. Under this schemes, the price of sanitary napkins are subsidized at Rs. 6 per pack (six pads in each pack). These are available with the Asha didi in your village. Besides this, many states are also providing napkins at their level by distributing them through ASHAs/AWWs.

- All chemists and general stores keep sanitary napkins. You can choose and purchase from a wide range to suit your need, comfort and budget.
- The Adolescent Friendly Health Services at the sub-centre, PHC and CHC as well as the ANM, ASHA and Anganwadi *didis* provide counselling and services on menstrual management.



Can a girl take bath during her menstrual cycle?



Yes, bathing during menstruation is important to maintain hygiene. Menstruation is not 'unclean' or 'polluting'. If managed hygienically, girls can carry out all activities including schooling, outdoor games, cooking, preparing pickles, and perform regular duties with comfort and dignity.



Does the onset of menstruation mean that a girl is ready for marriage and pregnancy?



The onset of menstruation signifies internal changes in the adolsent girl. It does not mean that the girl has the overall maturity to carry the pregnancy and give birth to a child. **A woman should not have**

her first pregnancy before attaining at least 20years of age. In our society, child marriage is very common and adolescent girls are at high risk for unplanned and unsafe pregnancies.



What should a girl do if her breasts are not well developed?



It is normal to have small or flat breasts. It is also normal that the size of the two breasts may vary initially but this is not a cause for concern. One should not worry unnecessarily. In case of excessive worry, consult a ANM/doctor.



How can we keep our genital area clean?



Washing the external female genitalia: The genitalia should be washed using normal water; if soap isused, it should be mild (such as a glycerine soap). A slight vaginal smell is normal and can be checked naturally by maintaining hygiene.

Who can I contact?

Name	Contact No.



Health & Nutrition

1. Undernutrition
2. Anaemia
3. Lifestyle Health Conditions

Module III

Health and Nutrition

What is under-nutrition?

A diet with low levels of essential nutrients like proteins, carbohydrates, fats, vitamins and mineral elements like calcium and iron causes under-nutrition which could be long-term chronic (stunting) or acute short-term (wasting).

Why do adolescents need nutritious food?

- Nutritional need is higher during adolescence than in childhood or adulthood.
- Girls and boys gain up to 50 per cent of their adult weight and more than 20 per cent of their adult height, and 50 per cent of their adult skeletal/bone mass during adolescence.
- Ensure calcium levels in bones.
- Balanced nutritional habits during adolescence prevents weak/brittle bones, obesity, heart disease and diabetes later on in life.
- Girls require additional iron supplementation to make up for the blood loss during menstruation and calcium to strengthen bones.
- Good nutrition supports timely sexual maturation.

What are the signs of under-nutrition and what could be its consequences if not treated?

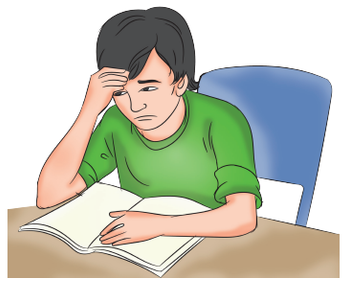
The signs of under-nutrition are:

- Fatigue
- Dizziness
- Poor concentration in studies or other work
- Dry skin
- Spongy bleeding gums
- Thin and soft nail
- Weak immune system (falling sick often)
- Fragilebones that break easily





The consequences can be:



- Impaired memory/ memory loss/ forgetfulness
- Poor school performance

What is anaemia?



Anaemia refers to low haemoglobin level in the blood. A common cause of anaemia is iron deficiency. Iron is very important for production of haemoglobin (found in RBCs), which carries oxygen from the lungs to different parts of the body. Since all human cells depend on oxygen for survival, anaemia can affect many body functions. The haemoglobin level in adolescents should not be less than 12 gm/dl.

Common reasons for anaemia among adolescents are:

- Insufficient intake of iron, folate and foods rich in vitamin C
- Hookworm infestation
- Loss of blood through menstrual bleeding in adolescent girls
- Frequent episodes of malaria/illnesses

Signs and Symptoms of anaemia:

- Weakness
- Dizziness
- Fatigue
- Pale skin, nails, etc.
- Shortness of breath
- Cold hands and feet
- Lack of appetite

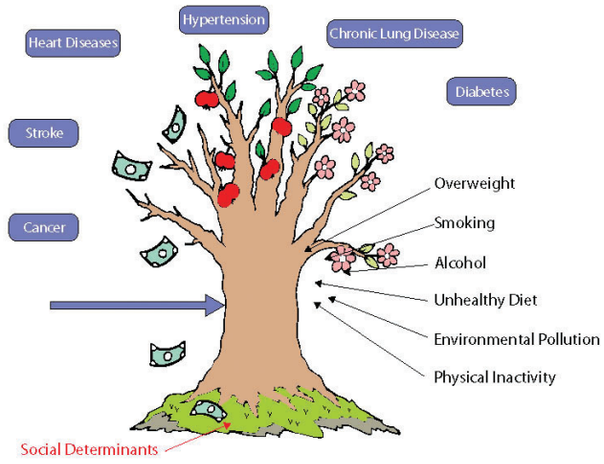
How can we prevent anaemia?

Anaemia can be prevented if you:

- Eat iron-rich foods. If you are non-vegetarian, foods like meat, chicken, eggs are high in iron. vegetarians could have iron-rich foods like spinach, bajra, beans and oil seeds like kalonji.
- Take blue IFA tablets weekly that is being provided in schools and ANCs. Maintain a gap of at least 30 minutes between meals and intake of IFA tablet
- Do not take tea/coffee with meals or for at least one hour after taking iron tablets and meals
- Maintain personal hygiene and sanitation
- On some days food can be cooked in iron utensils
- Cooking on slow fire and in covered pans helps reduce nutrient loss (such as in a pressure cooker)
- Wear footwear to prevent worm infestation; take a course of deworming medication in case worm infestation is suspected
- Prevent breeding of mosquitoes to protect from malaria and other mosquito-borne diseases

What are the risk factors to lifestyle health conditions?

Lifestyle health conditions also known as non-communicable health conditions are caused due to risk factors associated with changing lifestyles. The adolescents and youth in particular, spend a lot of time before computers, televisions, on mobile phones and social media, which results in a sedentary lifestyle with very little physical activity. Adolescents are also easily influenced by messages from media and advertising to follow a lifestyle that may not always be healthy. The key risk factors are unhealthy diet (foods with low or no nutritional value) including packaged and processed foods, physical inactivity (sedentary lifestyle), consumption of tobacco and alcohol.



What diseases can one acquire due to risk factors associated with lifestyle?

Most common lifestyle diseases include obesity, diabetes (high blood sugar), hypertension (high blood pressure), heart disease etc.

What is an unhealthy diet?

An unhealthy diet consists of foods with low or no nutritional value. These foods are also known as junk food and include items like aerated drinks, chocolates, chips, noodles, oily food as *samosas*, food made of processed cereals like *maida* and packaged foods. Junk food is high on the 3Ss (sugar, salt and sour tastes), which provide empty calories and increase one's appetite.

How does an unhealthy diet affect one's health?

An unhealthy diet is low on nutrition and high on calories. Intake of an unhealthy diet may hamper adolescent growth and development and may make adolescents vulnerable to many lifestyle diseases.



How can physical activity and sports help prevent lifestyle health conditions?

Physical exercise is important for both adolescent girls and boys. Girls should equally be encouraged to participate in outdoor games and regular physical exercise. Physical activities like sports and exercise help burn calories more efficiently. The key to health is to burn what you eat. If you are consuming more than what you are using, you will end up being overweight or obese. Hence, one should try including a good physical exercise or sport like cycling, football, running, swimming etc., to balance calorie consumption.

Who can I contact?

Name	Contact No.

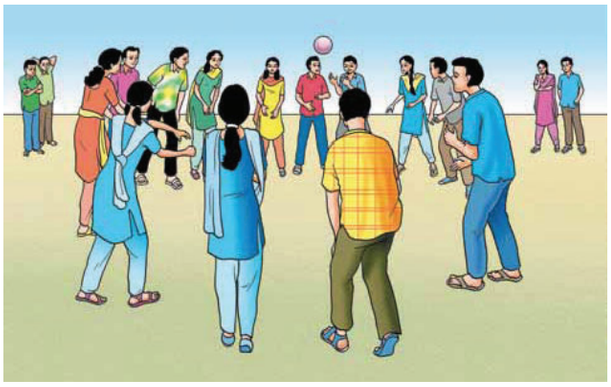


Healthy Mind for Healthy Behaviour

1. Healthy Behaviour
2. Healthy Mind

Module IV

Healthy Mind for Healthy Behaviours



How does one maintain an active body and mind?

Physical activities like exercise, yoga, dance, martial arts, outdoor games like football, basketball running etc., help us build stamina, fight fatigue and obesity and support the growth of bones and muscles. They also add to our confidence level. One can also explore new games and ways to support learning abilities.

One can pursue hobbies like music, poetry or painting and keep up with current events by reading the daily newspaper and listening to news programmes. These activities encourage our thinking and learning abilities, keeping us stress free, confident and happy.

How can we help girls engage in outdoor games and recreational/fun activities?

Many adolescent girls are not allowed to participate in outdoor games and activities. Elders fear that they are not safe outside their homes. This is not good for their physical health, self-esteem and self-confidence, which are important components of healthy growing up. As responsible members of the community, we should ensure that girls are not teased or harassed physically or verbally. Parents should seek help from the community members and police to act against the perpetrators. This will contribute to community and government's efforts to make public places safe and friendly for girls. Inform participants that while growing up we need to take special care of ourselves but girls should not feel shy/afraid to report such incidents to their family members.

Is it okay for boys to cry or be soft-spoken?

Yes, a boy or a man can cry to vent his feelings. He can be soft-spoken or shy as well. Being rude or insensitive is not macho. It is normal that some boys may have soft voices or like to cook or design; things generally linked with girls. Taking on different gender roles does not mean that a boy is not male. The same is true for girls who are outspoken or like to dress like boys or play games more linked with boys. It is wrong to label such adolescents as 'sissy' or 'tomboyish'.

What is peer pressure?

Peer pressure is influence that a peer group, observers or individuals exert which encourages others to change their attitudes, values or behaviour to conform to the group's norms.

Is peer pressure always negative?

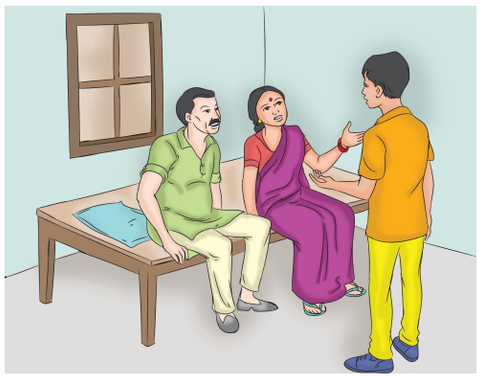
No. It is not always negative. Peer pressure can also be positive such as pressure to volunteer for a helpful reason, respect elders or excel in academics. You can make a difference by creating positive peer pressure, especially when you feel negative peer pressure around you.

What can be done to handle peer pressure?

Be Assertive: This means being able to stand up for ourselves and say what you feel. It includes expressing thoughts, ideas and feelings, saying 'No' without feeling guilty/fear, setting your own priorities i.e., choosing how you spend your time, asking for what you want, being able to stand up for what you believe in.

How do you talk to your peers, parents and family to deal with pressure?

- Be honest and open when communicating with your parents. Tell them that you feel pressurized to do things that seem wrong or risky and don't know how to deal with it.
- If you cannot communicate directly with your parents, try to communicate with someone in the family who understands you, maybe an older sibling, uncle, aunt, etc. with whom you have a good relation.



What is substance misuse and who can (mis)use it?

A drug is a chemical substance which when consumed by the body, alters its function physically and/or psychologically (excluding food and water). It could be a pharmaceutical preparation or a naturally occurring substance (like *bhang*) used primarily to alter the physical and mental functioning of an individual.

There are two types of users:

1. Experimenters: Begin using drugs largely because of peer pressure or curiosity and usually confine their use to recreational party settings
2. Compulsive users: Devote considerable time and energy or money into getting high, talk incessantly about drug use and become experts on street drugs

Substance misuse: It refers to the excess use of and dependence on a stimulant, depressant, chemical substance, herb (plant) leading to effects that are harmful to the individual's physical and/or mental health or the welfare of others.

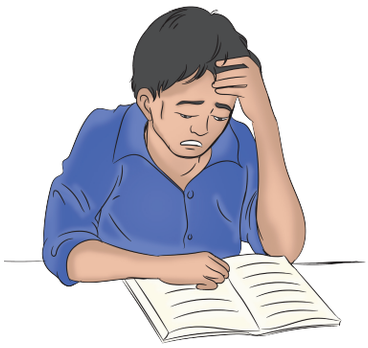
Addiction: Repeated use of substance to the extent that the user (addict) is periodically or chronically intoxicated, shows a compulsion to take the preferred substance/s, has great difficulty in modifying his/her behaviour and exhibits determination to obtain the substance, like *bhang,* alcohol, tobacco by almost any means.

What are the symptoms of a drug user?

If someone is using drugs, you might notice changes in how the person looks or acts. The most obvious signof addiction is the strong need to have a particular drug or substance. The adolescent user may:

- Lose interest in studies and school

- Have an unexplained change in personality or attitude such as sudden mood swings, irritability and anger
- Have trouble concentrating on work or studies
- Have an unexplained need for money and start stealing or selling belongings
- Appear fearful, anxious or suspicious for no reason
- Have tremors, slurred speech or impaired coordination



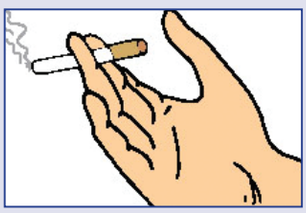
My friends pressurise me a lot to indulge in substance misuse. What can I do?

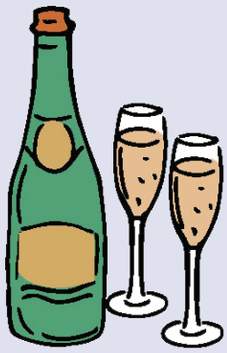
Learn and practice saying 'No'. Do not feel guilty for refusing something that you are forced to do. Good friends never force one to do anything one is not comfortable with. If you feel there is risk of physical harm in saying 'No', you should not hesitate to leave your friend's group or to take the help of elders.

My friends say that tobacco and alcohol will make me an adult. Is this true?

No. To be an adult you should be able to take responsibility for your actions and under the influence of alcohol no one is able to do so.

What are the commonly known and used substances and their short-term and long-term effects?

Substance	Short-Term Effects	Long-Term Effects
Tobacco It consists of the crushed and dried leaves of the tobacco plant. It is one of the most commonly used drugs. Forms of tobacco: Cigarettes, smokes, sticks, butts, gutka, beedi, hookah.	The user's pulse rate and blood pressure increases. Activity in the person's brain and nervous system initially speeds up but then slows down. The appetite decreases.  	Blood vessels in the heart and brain are narrowed; person develops shortness of breath and cough. Cancer of the lungs, mouth, larynx, oesophagus, bladder, kidney or pancreas is more likely.

Substance	Short-Term Effects	Long-Term Effects
Alcohol It is another commonly used drug made through fermentation of fruits and/or grains. It is a depressant that slows down the activity of the central nervous system. 	At first, the person feels relaxed and less inhibited but gradually the person's reflexes will become slower. The person may experience mood changes. If the person drinks a large amount of alcohol on a single occasion (binge drinking), the respiratory system may slow down or even stop, causing death (acute alcohol poisoning). Hangover may occur. (Severe discomfort in the form of headache, low blood sugar levels, dehydration and irritation of the lining of the digestive system occurs the next day).	A person who drinks heavily on a regular basis may develop: • Inflamed stomach or pancreas • Severe damage to the liver • Certain cancers of the gastrointestinal tract • Heart disease, high blood pressure • Brain and nerve damage Repeated use of alcohol makes the user periodically or chronically intoxicated and the user has great difficulty in modifying his/her behaviour and exhibits determination to obtain the substance.

What are the common reasons for stress during adolescence?

Adolescence is a stressful phase for many. The reasons could be any of the following: fear of exams and career plans, concerns about physical changes, falling in love, getting admission in a good school/ college, pressure by employers, pressure by friends, unfair behaviour of elders, risk of violence etc., and trying to maintain good relations with everyone during this process.



How can we resolve problems?

Problem solving enables a person to deal constructively with problems in his/her life. Problem solving enables a person to deal constructively with problems

in his/her life. Problems left unresolved can cause mental stress and can affect one's body with fatigue, headaches etc. In such situations it is better to try and resolve the issues by talking to different people like peer educators, parents, relatives, doctor, teacher, social worker or an older member of the community.



What are healthy ways to manage stress?

- By managing your time, identifying your strengths and limitations, saying'No' to pressures and avoiding topics that can lead to arguments and stress.
- Alter stress situation by being assertive, expressing your feelings rather than bottling them up.
- Engaging in fun activities such as music, sports, dance, yoga etc. help in dispelling stress.
- Take help from friends, parents, teachers or other elders. If you present your case properly, they will understand your situation and help you.

What are conflicts and why do they occur?

Conflict refers to some form of disagreement arising within a group when the beliefs or actions of one or more members of the group are either resisted or unacceptable to one or more members of the same group. Conflict is a natural part of our lives and very common during adolescence, as adolescents think differently and have different perspectives.

What are some peaceful ways to resolve a conflict?

- Stop the argument when you feel you are getting angry and may say something that you will regret later.
- Stay calm and take deep breaths.
- Listen to the other person's point of view.
- Look for a compromise; think of possible solutions that satisfy both sides. Remember compromise is not a win-win situation always.
- Ask someone else to help (teacher, parents, other friends, etc.).

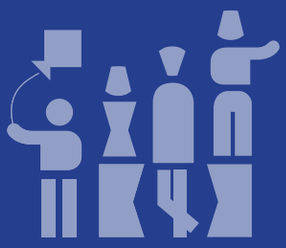
What is anger?



- If conflict is left unsettled it causes anger
- Anger is a negative emotion that can be managed in two ways: bottling it up inside or letting it out.
- It is important to acknowledge, accept, manage and appropriately express feelings rather than being overwhelmed by their strength.
- When anger comes out, it can harm oneself, damage friendships, interfere with learning, disturb family relationships and limit participation in group activities/ team work.

Who can I contact?

Name	Contact No.



Adolescent Sexual & Reproductive Health

1. Transmitted Infections
2. Pregnancy & Contraception
3. Termination of Pregnancy

Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health

What are the signs of Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)?

Symptoms in Males	Symptoms in Females
Remember, in case of unprotected sexual intercourse, get yourself tested. You need not wait for symptoms to appear. Common Symptoms are: • Discharge from penis (green, yellow, pus-like) • Pain or burning during urination • Swollen and painful glands/lymph nodes in the groin; blisters and open sores (ulcers) on the genital area • Warts in the genital area • Rash on limbs • Itching or tingling sensation in the genital area • Sores in the mouth • Heaviness and discomfort in testicles There are no symptoms for HIV infection, it can only be screened for and confirmed through a test.	Remember, in case of unprotected sexual intercourse, get yourself tested. You need not wait for symptoms to appear. • Irregular bleeding • Constant lower abdominal/pelvic pain • Abnormal vaginal discharges (white, yellow, green, frothy, bubbly, curd-like, pus-like and odorous) • Swelling and/or itching of the vagina • Burning sensation during urination • Sores on genital parts • Painful or difficult intercourse The infection in women may be some times asymptomatic until much later There are no symptoms for HIV infection, it can only be screened for and confirmed through a test.

What are the consequences of leaving STIs untreated?

Untreated STIs can lead to some serious health consequences including PID, infertility and even cancer. Untreated STIs can also lead to complications during pregnancy and in newborns and death in case of syphilis. STIs like HIV cannot be treated but can be managed on timely diagnosis

How does one get infected by RTI, STI or HIV infection?

Reproductive Tract Infections (RTIs) may occur either due to poor personal hygiene or unprotected sexual contact. Not all RTIs are sexually transmitted. Some infections are due to poor sanitation and hygiene that includes using unclean toilets, sanitary pads, improper cleaning of genitalia during daily bath and for girls especially during menstruation.

Remember, even the first unprotected sexual encounter can lead to STIs and HIV infections.

Can RTIs occur as a result of use of unclean toilets?

Yes, unclean toilets may be one reason for an RTI but it is not the only reason. RTIs can also happen dueto unprotected sexual contact with an infected person. Some of the other non-sexual factors leading to RTI are using unclean sanitary pads, improper cleaning of genitalia, and unsafe abortion.

What is HIV and what is AIDS?

HIV	AIDS
HIV stands for Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) that causes AIDS. HIV attacks the body's immune system that helps the body fight off infections and other diseases. Over a period of time, HIV gradually destroys this ability of the body, making people more susceptible to different infections like tuberculosis and diarrhoea but with weak immunity to fight them. H = Human (only found in humans) I = Immunodeficiency (weakens the immune system) V = Virus (a type of germ)	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) is the stage wherein HIV infection has brought the immunity of the body to a very low level, when an infected person becomes susceptible to different minor but possibly fatal serious infections. A = Acquired (to get something that you are not born with) I = Immuno- (the body's defense system, which provides protection from infections) D = Deficiency (a defect or weakness, lack of something) S = Syndrome (a group of signs and symptoms in a disease)

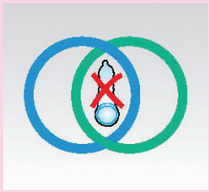
Does HIV kill a person?

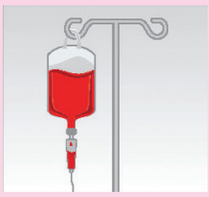
HIV does not kill a person but leads to a condition wherein body immunity becomes extremely low and in such conditions the body is not able to fight against the infection. This condition is called 'AIDS'. But with timely treatment (known as Antiretroviral Therapy, ART), nutritious food, physical exercise, healthy lifestyle and positive attitude towards healthy living one can delay AIDS.

What are the different modes of transmission of HIV?

Modes of transmission

Unprotected vaginal and/or anal sex with an HIV infected partner





Transfusion of HIV infected blood and blood products

Use of HIV infected needles, like sharing needles with HIV infected drug users





From parents living with HIV to their unborn child

HIV is NOT transmitted through


Hugging


Sneezing


Being bitten by a mosquito


Shaking hands


Using public toilets

Sharing or eating food in same utensils, or using objects handled by people with HIV





Spending time in the same house, school or public place with a person who has HIV infection

How can HIV infection be prevented?

HIV infection can be prevented through:

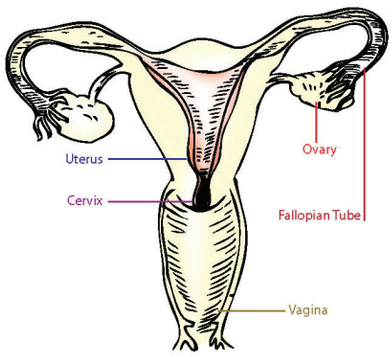
- Correct and regular use of condoms
- Being faithful to partner
- Abstinence from sexual intercourse (or sexual contact) without condom
- Transfusion of blood obtained from authorized blood banks
- Use of disposable syringes and needles
- Not sharing injecting equipment during drug use
- HIV positive pregnant women can prevent transmission to her unborn child by undertaking PPTCT therapy.

What are the signs and symptoms of HIV infection?

A person does not know about HIV infection without getting tested.

How does pregnancy happen?

Pregnancy happens when a male and female have sexual intercourse. During intercourse, the mature egg is fertilized by a sperm cell. The fertilized egg then travels down the fallopian tube into the uterus. This is conception and marks the beginning of pregnancy.



Female Reproductive Organs

When pregnancy happens, a woman's menstruation stops as the uterus has the fertilized egg implanted in it.

What is contraception?

Contraception is a method by which pregnancy/conception is prevented.

Why should a couple use contraception?

Couples should adopt contraception to prevent unwanted pregnancies and to plan their family.

Who should be responsible for practicing contraception, man or woman?

Both partners need to mutually decide on the method of contraception considering the suitability, advantages, risks associated and convenience for the user. Contraception is not the sole responsibility of the female partner.

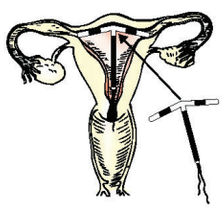
What are the different contraceptive methods for men?

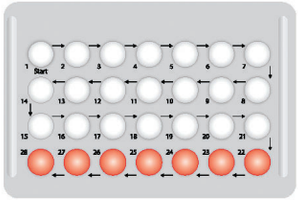
The contraceptive methods available for men are condoms, which are simple and easy to use and also provide protection against RTI/STI and HIV infection.



What are the different contraceptive methods for women?

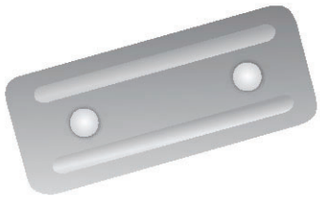
Contraceptive pills (OCPs) and intra-uterine devices (IUDs) like Copper T (only for those with one or more children) are available at government hospitals. Other methods are available (female condoms, injectables) for female contraception are available.





What is emergency contraception?

Emergency contraception is a way to prevent pregnancy within 72 hours of unprotected sex.



Unprotected sex may happen due to non-use of any contraceptive device, incorrect use of condom, tearing of condom, sex under the influence of alcohol and drugs and in cases of forced sex, sexual violence/assault (date rape, sexual abuse etc.). It is available in the form of a pill and is available with the ASHA *didi* and at all government health facilities. It should be taken as soon as possible after unprotected sex – and definitely within 72 hours. Consuming this pill after 72 hours may not prevent pregnancy.

Note: ECP is not to be consumed on a regular basis or as an OCP.

What are the best contraceptive methods for adolescents and young couples?

Condoms: Condoms are available for both men and women, but more commonly and at cheaper price for men.

- **A male condom** is a sheath or covering made to fit over a man's erect penis. Most commonly available brand in the public health system is 'Nirodh'. A condom prevents semen (carrying sperms) from entering the vagina and hence prevents fertilization of the ovum by the sperm.
- **A female condom** is closed at one end and is inserted into the vagina with the help of fingers with the open end outside the vagina. This creates a physical barrier for the semen ejaculated into the vagina from coming incontact with the ovum.

Both male and female condoms also provide protection against STIs including HIV. This makes it the most suitable contraceptive for adolescents and youngcouples. But condoms need to be used correctly and consistently.

- **Hormonal contraceptive pills:** OCPs are a combination of hormones that can be

taken every day to prevent ovulation in women. Some of the commonly available OCPs are Mala-D, Mala N. Consistent regular use is necessary for is success.

Other methods (only for those with a child):

- **Intra-uterine contraceptive device (IUCD):** This is a device which can be placed inside the uterus of a woman that prevents the fertilization of egg.This method is not suggested for unmarried women and those without any children.

What are safe sexual practices?

That means there is no or minimum risk of unwanted pregnancy or transmission of infections through sexual route. This includes the following:



- Masturbation- Commonly understood as self-stimulation of sexual organs with hands for sexual pleasure. It may be practiced alone or with a partner. There is no scientific evidence for its negative effect on health or fertility etc. However among adolescents, preoccupation with masturbation may slow down other activities like study, play, social interaction etc.
- Holding hands, touching, kissing, cuddling are some safe ways to show affection and love.
- Correct and consistent use of condom (condom provides triple protection–from unwanted pregnancy, STI and HIV)
- Use of suitable contraceptive method
- Being faithful to partner
- Abstinence from sex (delay sexual debut)

What is safe abortion or MTP?

In India Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) has been legalized through the MTP Act which came into force in 1972. Any woman above 18 years of age, irrespective of marital status, can opt for an abortion. In case of minors (below 18 years of age), a written consent from parents or guardian is necessary. Safe abortion is the procedure performed by certified doctors in a certified clinical or hospital setting only (authorized under the provisions of the MTP Act). It is legal in India. The MTP Act gives well-specified grounds for abortion that include failure of contraception, pregnancy due to sexual violence like rape, if continuation of pregnancy poses a threat to the life of a woman, risk to physical health and mental trauma to woman, or when there is a substantial risk that the child, if born, would suffer from deformities and diseases. as per the guidelines of the Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act, the law that provides the legal framework on safe abortions in our country, Abortion in India can be done till 20 weeks of pregnancy but the opinion of a second doctor is necessary between 12 and 20 weeks.

When is abortion unsafe?

An abortion is unsafe when done at uncertified clinics or hospitals and by an untrained person/doctor and it has serious risks like partial abortion, damage to internal organs, excessive bleeding and may prove fatal as well.

What are the different methods to terminate a pregnancy?

Pregnancy can be terminated surgically or non-surgically depending on the gestation of the pregnancy, but under the strict supervision of a trained and certified doctor.



When can a woman have the next pregnancy after a miscarriage or induced abortion?

The recommended minimum interval before the next pregnancy is 6 months. This will help reduce risks of adverse effects on the mother and child.



When is abortion illegal?

Abortion can be illegal if

- Performed by an untrained and uncertified person
- Performed in an uncertified clinic or hospital. The Government of India has certified select clinics and hospitals based on availability of necessary infrastructure – to provide safe abortion services.
- Duration of pregnancy is above permitted 20 weeks of gestation or without the opinion of a second doctor if gestation period is between 12 and 20 weeks
- It is conducted based on the sex of the foetus (female foeticide)

Also, pregnancy can be terminated only through government-approved clinical methods. Termination of pregnancy through non-clinical methods (like those performed at home, using force etc.) is illegal as it can jeopardize the health of the woman and may even cause excessive haemorrhage and damage to internal organs, such as puncturing or tearing of the uterus. Long-term complications include chronic pain, pelvic inflammatory disease (PID) and infertility.

Note: Termination of pregnancy after determining the sex of the child is a criminal offence on the part of both the doctor performing and the couple and their family members supporting such an act.

Who can I contact?

Name	Contact No.

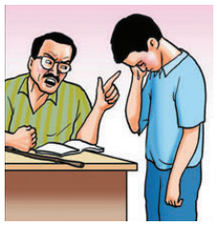
Responding to Violence

Is violence common amongst adolescents?

Any form of physical, verbal or sexual abuse is violence.



Physical: An act which harms an adolescent physically; it can be in the form of punching, kicking, shoving, beating, slapping, ear/hand twisting.



Verbal: An act to harm a child by using verbal language as offensive words, slang, embarrassing a child in front of classmates, narrating sexual jokes in front of someone, using insulting language. It can be in the form of abusive language a husband uses against his wife or parents against their children. It can also be in the form of whistling, passing lewd remarks against anyone, especially girls.

Emotional: Anything which hurts a child emotionally – insults, humiliations, threats, lack of affection, bias – is emotional violence which can lead to mental stress in the child; it is very difficult for the child to understand it.

Sexual: Pressuring or forcing someone to perform sexual acts (can range from kissing to penetrative sex) against his/her will or consent. It can be in the form of brushing past girls, touching them inappropriately, undressing in front of a child, asking a child to undress in front of an adult, etc.

What can be the effects of violence?

Violence can lead to more serious consequences for the victims than the perpetrators. Especially if the victim is a girl, she is not allowed to go out of the house, forced to discontinue studies and often deprived of available opportunities for skill building and independence. So violence does not only harm the present of the victim but also influences his/her future.

What should a child do who has faced violence?

A child who has faced any form of violence should not feel ashamed, scared or isolated but should be supported in his/her fight for justice.When possible the child must seek support from parents/ teachers or other family members in such a situation. CHILDLINE (telephone no. 1098) stands for a friendly *didi* or a sympathetic *bhaiya* who is always there for vulnerable children 24 hours of the day, 365 days of the year.

What is Gender Based Violence (GBV)? Who can be the victims?

Gender-based Violence (GBV) is term for any harmful act that is done against a person's will, and that is based on gender differences between males and females. While GBV is usually targeted at girls and women, boys and men may also be victims of GBV.

What are the different forms of GBV?

Some of the commonly heard forms of GBV in our country are female foeticide, female infanticide, honour killing, child/forced marriage, kidnapping for marriage, domestic violence, eve teasing, stalking, molestation and rape (forced sex).

What can we do if we spot a victim of GBV?

Victims of GBV need to be immediately taken to the nearest medical/health centre for first aid, treatment and counselling support. Most of the health centres have good referral contacts to ensure legal aid, care and support to the victim/survivor.







Who can I contact?

Name	Contact No.

My Rights and Entitlements

Are human rights applicable to adolescents? What are the bodies that ensure adolescent rights?

All human rights are applicable to adolescents (10–19 years of age) as to any adult. The Constitution of India has a special provision to ensure survival, protection, development, health and happiness of its children. Some of the Rights entitlement bodies include - National Committee for the Protection of Children's Rights (NCPCR) an independent body to take measures to protect the rights of children across the country; the Convention on Rights of a Child (CRC) of United Nations which means that the Government of India and our State governments are committed to ensure the Rights of Children as stated in the CRC; and Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

What are the six fundamental rights that every Indian child is entitled to?

The constitution of India has provided six Fundamental Rights to every child of the country. These are:

- The right to equality
- The right to freedom
- The right to freedom from exploitation
- The right to freedom of religion
- Cultural and educational rights
- The right to constitutional remedies



What are the key features of the Adolescent Friendly Health Services that adolescents are entitled to?

The key features of the Adolescent Friendly Health Services are as follows:

- Separate room in the existing clinic for adolescents with a separate waiting area
- Accessible location
- Adolescent friendly timings
- Dedicated trained service provider
- Privacy to adolescents when sharing their concerns with ANM/doctor/counsellor
- Doctors/counsellor and other staff not to discriminate, judge adolescents on the basis of:
    - the act that caused the medical condition

- the information they want to seek about their own body or sexual activities
- asking for contraceptives

Who can I contact?

Name	Contact No.

Health and Environment

How can we maintain body hygiene?

Daily bath is a very important routine. One should have a full body bath daily with a gentle soap/cleanser. Bathing includes cleaning of hair and genital area. Head bath with soap/shampoo or home-based cleanser is necessary at least three times a week to prevent dandruff and other scalp infections. One can also use home-based cleansers available in our kitchen such as wheat flour husk, *besan* mixed with *dahi* or plain water with a little turmeric. There are also special kinds of clay (locally known as *multani mitti*) that are easily available. These home remedies not only clean the body and hair but also maintain their softness and glow. During daily bath special care should be taken to clean genital area with plain water or gentle cleanser.

Why is it important to wash our hands with soap and keep our nails clean?



While we take care of our body and looks, it is equally important to wash our hands properly everytime we use the toilet and before handling eatables. Hand washing with soap reduces the risk of infections causing diarrhoea, jaundice, typhoid and polio in childhood substantially. Nails should be cut; if one has long nails, they should be cleaned every time during hand wash to remove any dirt or infection underneath.

How do poor community hygiene and environmental conditions cause illnesses?

Defaecation in the open, improper hand washing and poor waste disposal are the root cause of water borne infections and diseases like diarrhoea, intestinal parasites and malaria and air borne infections like pneumonia and tuberculosis. Smoke from factories and vehicles has raised levels of harmful pollutants in the air. Bronchial asthma and other respiratory conditions are on the rise among children and adolescents.

How can adolescents help in community health and sanitation?

- Stop defecation in the open and encourage use of toilets and hand washing with soap.



- Encourage construction of sanitary latrines at home.
- Demand for separate toilets for boys and girls in schools.
- Educate people to keep toilets and public utilities clean and sanitized.
- Create awareness that unclean water should pass through a separate pipe/ channel.
- Separate biodegradable (easily decomposed like vegetables, food products etc.) from non-biodegradable waste (that do not decompose but can be recycled like paper, plastic, glass etc.)
- Encourage hygienic disposal of menstrual product.

Who can I contact?

Name	**Contact No.**

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