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ayu:sutras

by ayu:manthra

WOMEN'S HEALTH EDITION

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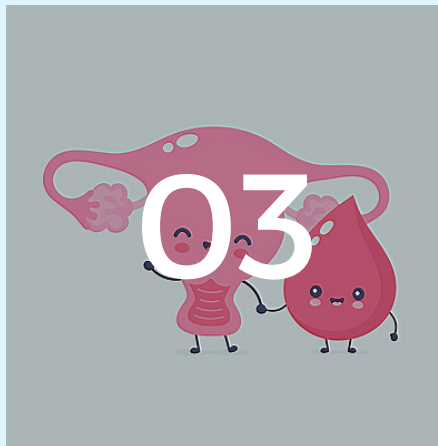
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Dr Shanthi Ganga's
ayu:manthra

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HEALTHY & HAPPY TEENAGE CHUMS

Few suggestions for a healthy
happy pain free menstruation



Soothing Asanas for Menstrual Pain

Many girls and women in
reproductive age have
problems like abdominal
cramps and pain during their
menstruation. Menstrual
cramps have adverse effects in
daily lives in a number of ways.



PCOS

PCOS is a condition where the
hormonal imbalance in females
affects ovaries resulting in the
formation of multiple (poly)
fluid-filled sac-like structures
(cysts).



THE DUNNING KRUGER EFFECT

Recently an aged patient
recommended a "wonder
healthcare tonic" that had
miraculously made her healthy
again.

Here are a few suggestions for a healthy happy pain free menstruation

Females of most species on earth are blessed with high levels of endurance and resilience. Hence the responsibility of holding, carrying and delivering the elements of procreation has been vested with the feminine gender across all living organisms. Same applies to humans too. Pregnancy and childbirth is the privilege of womanhood. The body, mind and soul of women are genetically engineered by nature with these basic instincts.

Menstruation, the process of preparing and repairing the egg and womb for pregnancy is indeed a master phenomenon of nature. Healthy womanhood means healthy menstruation especially in the teens around the menarche age.

Here are a few suggestions for a healthy happy pain-free menstruation

□ If you are a teenager and if you have chums with cramps...

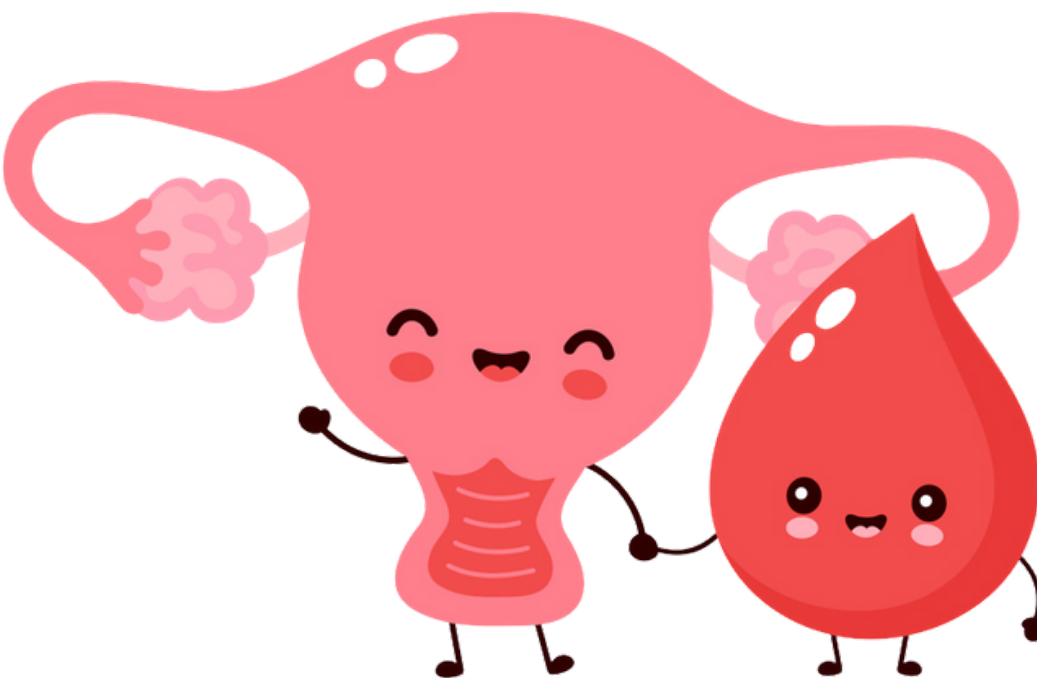
1. Practice Padahasthasana and Pavanamuktasana during off-cycle days
2. Avoid junk food
3. Drink at least 3 litres of warm water every day
4. Boil 20 g each of jaggery and jeera in water and sip it hot throughout the day during the first and second day of periods

5. Apply warm sesame oil with a pinch of asafoetida powder around your belly button and foment with a hot towel if the bleeding is scanty and painful
6. Eat 2 Sesame Ladoos every evening from Day 1 to Day 7

□ If you are a teenager and worried about leaks and changing pads.....

1. Practice Badhakonasana and Sarvangasana during off-cycle days
2. Avoid spicy sour food always
3. Sleep at least 8 hours a day
4. Never use hot water for head bath and avoid blow-drying of hair
7. If the bleeding is heavy and your pad soaks every 3 hours then rest with feet elevated for few minutes during the first four days of the cycle
4. Avoid hectic travel and strenuous activities
5. Drink 200 ml cold milk with sarsaparilla- Nannari extract and honey twice daily
6. Eat porridge cooked with malar, milk and Kalkandam or Koovakanji with ghee and jaggery

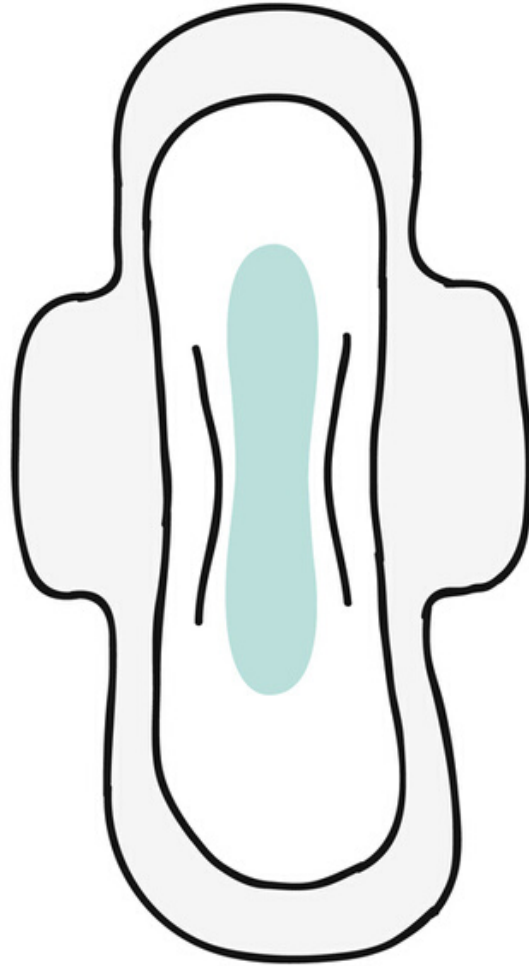
Healthy food and lifestyle is the key to healthy happy menstruation. You are privileged. Enjoy it with pride.



HEALTHY HAPPY TEENAGE CHUMS



Dr. Valsaladevi



SANITARY NAPKINS/PADS

these are made of Super Absorbent Polymer (SAP) and Polyethylene for back cover. Today's sanitary pads are almost entirely from plastic. It is a non-bio degradable waste. It should not be flushed. The only way is to incinerate.

ABOUT

30%

**DESCRIBE THE
PAIN AS SEVERE**

**MENSTRUAL
CRAMPS AFFECT**

50%

**UP TO OF ALL
MENSTRUATING
WOMEN**



Dr. Vrinda P

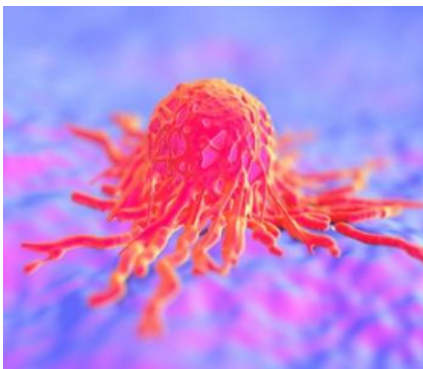
SOOTHING ASANAS FOR MENSTRUAL PAIN

Menstruation is a normal part of a woman's life, but severe pain need not be. Many girls and women in reproductive age have problems like abdominal cramps and pain during their menstruation. Menstrual cramps have adverse effects in daily lives in a number of ways. Some cannot leave home or 'curl up in a ball'. Some can't attend school or work, enjoy recreational activities like parties and attend family responsibilities especially dealing with kids because of their severe symptoms.

Dysmenorrhea is the medical term for painful cramps felt before or during menstruation. A study conducted by Liliwat et.al(2006) on the prevalence of dysmenorrhea shows higher incidence among middle adolescence(15 to 17 yrs of age). The number of school absences increased with increasing severity of dysmenorrhea. Most of them reported being unable to participate in sports and poor concentration in class. Thus dysmenorrhoea has a significant negative impact on the quality of life.

Dysmenorrhea may be primary or secondary.

Primary dysmenorrhea is caused by specific imbalances in women's endocrine system during the menstrual cycle. An imbalance between the hormones prostaglandins, oestrogen and progesterone can lead to more intense or prolonged uterine contractions. PD is a common gynaecological disorder. Increased levels of prostaglandins stimulate uterine smooth muscle contraction leading to vasoconstriction of uterine arteries and resulting in uterine hypoxia and pain of dysmenorrhea. Onset is within 6-12 months after menarche. It may occur on the first day of the period and last for 8-72 hours. Prevalence of primary dysmenorrhea in Indian students was 70%. Secondary dysmenorrhea denotes menstrual cramps caused by other distinct organic disorders like endometriosis, uterine fibroids, pelvic inflammatory diseases etc. Usually begins 1-2 days before the period and lasts for more than 3 days. It tends to worsen with age.



Signs and symptoms of PD are Pain in lower back and thighs, Dull, throbbing pain in the lower abdomen, Nausea, vomiting, dizziness, constipation or diarrhoea, bloating in belly area and headache. Generally in treating dysmenorrhea modern medicine prescribes addictive, antispasmodic painkillers which are not good for health for long term use. By use of these drugs, they may experience gastrointestinal problems, headache, drowsiness and dizziness. Ayurveda describes dysmenorrhea as 'kashtarthava'.

Gynaecological disorders do not occur without Vata vitiation. According to Ayurveda, Apana Vata controls menstruation. In Ayurveda, internal therapies like Vasthi and external therapies like oil massage focuses on the correction of Apana Vata. As a sedentary lifestyle, lack of exercise and stress causes dysmenorrhea, Ayurveda recommends lifestyle changes like Dinacharya, Ruthucharya, change in food habits and practice of yoga to alleviate the pain.

LIFESTYLE CHANGES

Lifestyle includes controllable and changeable behaviours that can affect an individual's health either positively or negatively.

AHARA:- Eat healthy, warm and fresh food. Avoid stale and cold food. Food prepared with spices like coriander, ginger, etc is recommended. Keep the body hydrated with intake of water at regular intervals. Eat more leafy vegetables. Have fresh fruits like grapes, pomegranate, plums etc. Reduce the use of caffeine.

VIHARA:- Exercise regularly- minimum thrice a week. Sound sleep for 6-8 hours. Avoid smoking and alcohol.

Role of Yoga

Yoga has bolstered its popularity due to its positive effects on physical and mental health. Yoga helps in the regulation of hypothalamic- pituitary- adrenal axis and sympathetic nervous system to maintain positive health. Studies show that different forms of exercise such as core strengthening and active stretching are beneficial in coping with menstrual pain. During menstrual days when bleeding and cramping are heavier, you feel less energetic and high-intensity exercises like running may not be appropriate. Instead, yoga and breathing exercises can be a good way to reduce menstrual cramps. Asanas for primary dysmenorrhea. (pelvic pathology) Asanas or yoga poses include conscious usage of a group of muscles which increases

the awareness of the body and provide both psychological and physical benefits. Start yoga practice with warm-up loosening exercises (Sukshma Vyayama) and end with savasana for complete relaxation. Every single session for 60 seconds with 3 to 5 repetitions. It is a good practice to work with a trained yoga instructor who can guide you on the correct posture, breath and gaze (Drishti) for these poses.

BHUJANGASANA (COBRA POSE):- stretches the entire front portion of the body. It tones the female reproductive system and stretches the abdomen, alleviates menstrual cramps and reduces stress.



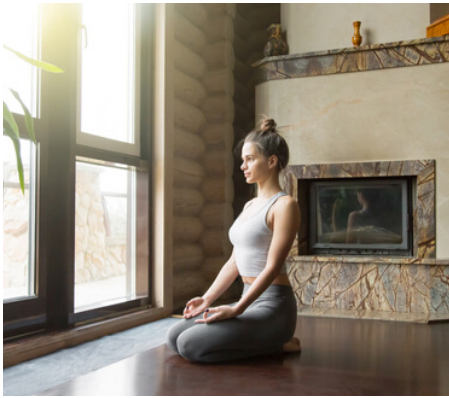
DHANURASANA (BOW POSE):- stimulates uterus and also relieves pain during menstruation.



MATSYASANA (FISH POSE):- stretches shoulder, chest and spine. Stimulates the abdomen increasing blood supply to pelvic organs



VAJRASANA (DIAMOND POSE):-relieves constipation, helps in relaxation of pelvic floor muscles.



USHTRASANA (CAMEL POSE):-Relieves menstrual discomfort, lessens backache.



PASCHIMOTTANASANA (SEATED FORWARD BEND POSE):-It stretches the whole back muscles, groin and hamstrings. Stimulates reproductive organs and therefore menstrual pain is reduced. This asana also relieves headache, anxiety and fatigue.



During menstruation, weak core muscles create an inability for the body to handle forces required for normal movement and function. This results in improper biomechanical function of structures adjacent to the lumbar spine.

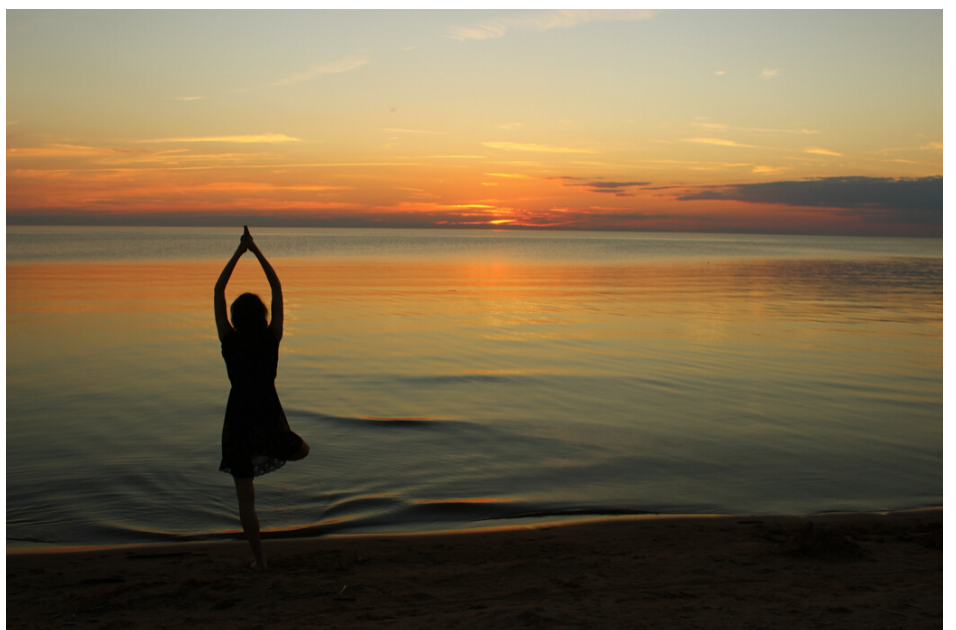
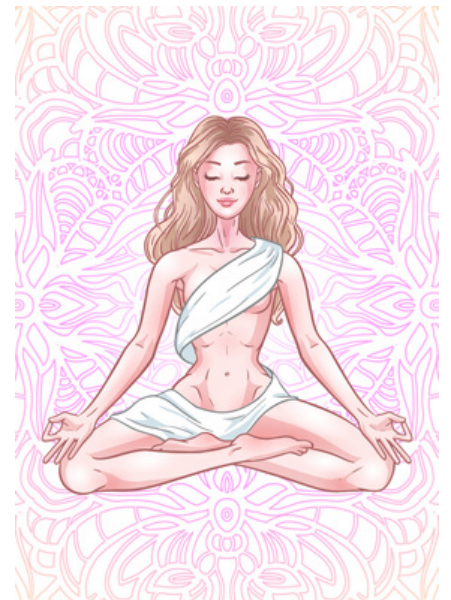
If lumbar spine is weak then it can result in pain throughout the abdomen, lower back and thighs. Practising these asanas improve spine flexibility and increase muscular strength of back and avoids obesity. By performing Yogasanas the blood circulation improves and helps in the release of “feel-good hormones” called endorphins in the brain and spinal cord to soothe the cramps. In secondary dysmenorrhea, yoga therapy may vary according to the pelvic pathology.



Regular practice plays an important role in reducing stress and helps to improve blood circulation. Practising these asanas in between the monthly cycle helps to prevent menstrual pain. Practising slow pranayama (Nadishuddhi) compared to fast pranayama (Kapalabhati) improves the quality of life and pain related to dysmenorrhea.

Along with asanas, yoga Nidra (psychic sleep) should also be practised which induces deep relaxation and subsequently causes pain relief.

Yogasanas are considered as the most convenient, drugless and inexpensive home-based method. Yoga does more for women than just make their bodies supple. Yoga is highly recommended for women in adolescence. Various yoga postures help them to adapt to multiple changes easily, painlessly and develop a regular and healthy menstrual cycle. It also has an encouraging effect on increasing the pain threshold capacity in individuals.



Millet Pulao

Easy & Healthy Recipe

Millets are small-seeded grasses. It is a very healthy gluten substitute and is also rich in proteins. Helps to keep blood sugar and cholesterol under check. Some familiar millets are Sorghum (Jowar), Pearl millet (Bajra), Finger millet (Ragi), Little millet (chama), Kodo millet, Foxtail millet (thina), Borso millet

Little millet / foxtail millet - ½ cup

Chopped vegetables (carrot, beans, potatoes) - ½ cup

Soaked Peas/ Frozen Peas - ¼ cup

Onion thinly sliced - ½

Ginger garlic paste - 1 teaspoon

Bay leaf - 1

Star anise - 3 petals

Cardamom - 2

Cloves - 2

Cinnamon stick - small

Jeera - ½ teaspoon

Mint leaves chopped

Coriander leaves chopped

Salt Water - 1 ½ cups

Ghee - 1 ½ tablespoon

PREPARATION

- Wash and soak the millet in lots of warm water for an hour.
- Heat a pan with ghee and add ingredients 6 to 11 and fry until it begin to sizzle.
- Add ginger-garlic paste and then sliced onion and fry until the aroma becomes strong.
- Add chopped vegetables, Peas, Mint leaves and fry until the raw smell is gone.
- Pour water and add required salt, bring it to boil.
- Add drained millet to the boiling water.
- Cook on medium to low flame till it is cooked well. If excess water is there put on high flame and evaporate it.
- Switch off the stove and add coriander leaves, cover it and keep it for a few minutes.
- Can be served with raita.





BIODEGRADABLE SANITARY PADS

Biodegradable pads are mostly made of organic materials such as bamboo, jute, corn or banana fibre with no use of harmful chemicals.



Dr. Rohini Subramanian

PCOS!! ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW!

Most of us are familiar with the term PCOS. As the name suggests, Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome (PCOS), is a condition where the hormonal imbalance in females affects ovaries resulting in the formation of multiple (poly) fluid-filled sac-like structures (cysts). In women, the ovaries secrete the female sex hormones mainly estrogen, which is responsible for the secondary sexual characters. It also secretes the male sex hormone called testosterone in a relatively smaller quantity. In PCOS, there is an imbalance in these hormonal levels leading to increased production of testosterone resulting in irregular periods, male pattern of hair growth and more.

It is the most common hormonal disorder encountered by women of reproductive age of 18-44 years and one of the leading causes for female infertility. An estimated one in five (20%) of women suffer from PCOS. It is mostly an overlooked and undertreated condition that prolongs for a lifetime which can be simply controlled by proper diet and lifestyle if detected earlier. If not monitored on time, it may have serious health impacts such as diabetes, cardiovascular disorders and endometrial cancer.

ARE YOU AT RISK

- Irregular periods: Most of them have delayed periods (> 35 days cycle). Sometimes the absence of periods or cycles less than 21 days may also be seen.

- Excess hair growth in the face especially above the upper lip and chin, chest, lower abdomen, inner aspect of thighs and back. (Hirsutism)
- A male pattern of hair loss/baldness.
- Acne
- Darkening of skin in body folds such as armpits, back of neck, forehead and others. (Acanthosis Nigricans)
- A sudden increase in body weight typically around the abdomen. (Obesity)
- Difficulty in getting pregnant (Infertility)
- Spontaneous abortions
- Diabetes depression/anxiety
- Eating disorders (binge eating)

The symptoms are to be confirmed by the examination by a physician, ultrasound scanning of abdomen and blood tests to measure hormonal levels.

WHAT CAUSES PCOS

It is a heterogeneous condition caused by complex genetic and environmental factors. The exact cause of PCOS needs to be defined yet. Risk factors include:

- Family history
- Poor eating habits
- Sedentary lifestyle
- Stress

According to Ayurveda, all the diseases are caused due to the imbalance in the three fundamentals called Tridoshas. In ayurvedic literature, various gynaecological disorders are grouped under Yoniroga, where acharya specifies Mithyachara (improper diet and lifestyle) and Beejadushti (genetic factors) as the cause for the Doshic imbalance. Our food habits and lifestyle have been changing over the years. The use of millets like ragi & maize, brown rice, fresh homemade foods is replaced by fast foods and excess eating habits. Increased use of vehicles has greatly reduced the habit of walking even for short distances. The working atmosphere with A/C rooms, gadgets and electronics have cut short physical activities to a greater extent. Lack of time has seized the habit of exercise. Thus an imbalance always exists between the excess food intake and decreased energy utilization by the body. Alteration in the sleep pattern has significantly contributed to stress and mood changes, especially in working women. All these have contributed to the abnormal and unhealthy weight gain putting us at a high risk of lifestyle disorders like PCOS.



WHAT CAN BE DONE

Ayurvedic management of PCOS or any other chronic illness is different from conventional medicine. It is done in multiple phases that begin with:



Nidana Parivarjanam (Removal of causative factors):

This includes dietary and lifestyle modifications.

- Avoid processed or canned foods, fried foods, high refined carbohydrate diet
- Avoid junk foods and processed meats.
- Maintaining proper food timings.
- Include more fruits and salads in the diet.
- Include more vegetables and greens like spinach and lettuce
- Whole grains, plant-based proteins, lean meats or fishes need to be added
- A high-fibre low-sugar diet will be a perfect choice
- Drink adequate amount of water
- Regular exercise and brisk walks: Exercise brings down blood sugar levels, helps with weight loss, is important for cardiovascular health and can help improve mood swings.
- Avoid day sleep.
- Ensure adequate sleep (6-8hours) at night.

Normalization and stabilization of complex hormonal functional efficacies (Correction of Agni and Dhatu Parinama): Various formulations are explained in ayurvedic literature based on the clinical conditions.

And finally, stress management through practices of yoga and pranayama: Suryanamaskara, Bhujangasana, Dhanurasana, Nadishuddhi pranayama and Bhramari are specifically useful in PCOS.

Ayurvedic medications along with lifestyle and dietary modifications, regular exercise and panchakarma treatments if and when needed in conditions like infertility produce amazing results in PCOS. An ayurvedic saying goes: - "if you follow Pathya (proper diet and lifestyle), there is no need for medicines and if you don't follow Pathya, there is no use for medicine." Ayurveda always emphasizes the uniqueness of every individual.

Hence a one-size-fits-all approach won't be feasible. Understanding the underlying cause and mechanism is crucial in developing personalized treatment for each individual.



REUSABLE PADS

Usually made up of cloth and some absorbent material. This can be washed and reused for a considerable period of time. These are comparatively economical and environment friendly.

THE DUNNING KRUGER EFFECT & A CURIOUS CASE



Dr. Nidhin V

Recently an aged patient recommended a "wonder healthcare tonic" that had miraculously made her healthy again. The patient is a frequent visitor to the OPD for some minor ailments. From time to time I have suggested basic investigations to rule out any serious underlying pathology and she has always postponed it claiming lack of money. Whenever she takes medicines, the complaints seem to reduce for a week or so. This time she came with a barely used bottle of health drink and said that all her health problems have vanished. I was more amazed by the exorbitant price of the product. So I asked who had prescribed it to the patient with claims like a solution for all health problems. It turned out that she got it from a friend who got it from a friend and the pattern of a multilevel marketing scheme started to come up. The patient then suggested names of leading hospitals and doctors who prescribe these "medicines" and about the commission, they make every month. Later she asked me to buy it from her and prescribe to others as well!! I must admit there was a good offer for commission as well. When I asked the patient why I must prescribe this, her response was that doctors write numerous tests and procedures and Yet some patients don't get well. Why not write this product instead of it and see if they recover.



FAKE



MEDICINE

The problem with such logic is that this placebo effect is not ethical for a doctor to practice. As a matter of fact, my teachers, colleagues nor my students have never shown such an example that this placebo model will work. When doctors prescribe medicine there is always an underlying logic in which medicine will act.

The problem with multi-level marketing programs like this is that though they are legal they are not entirely ethical. They focus more on adding more members to the pyramid than healthcare in general. There is no scientific research on the quality of the products and in the long run your credibility will be put at risk. So it's safer if multi-level marketers stop advertising their medicines as some sort of magic remedy for all ailments.

I write this because it is one of the latest strategies for quacks and similar parasites. Outside an ICU, cancer ward, rehabilitation centre or waiting area of a hospital, it is very easy to fool innocent people especially if the marketing guys are good at using words wisely. Most often patients take such products expecting miracles and end up suffering. There are instances where patients stop visiting their doctors after buying such products and come back in worsened conditions.

The Dunning-Kruger effect is about people having cognitive bias where they estimate their ability as greater than it is. Such people tend to believe that they have authoritative knowledge of fields such as medicine and in their ignorance, they do more harm than anyone else. The thing with quacks and people who think they know a lot more than others is that they are often ignorant about their ignorance. With their ignorance, they convince normal people to make stupid choices.



TAMPONS

These are made up of rayon and cotton. It is inserted into the vagina. It expands by absorbing the menstrual fluid. Rare but life-threatening infection Toxic Shock Syndrome can occur with tampons.

MENOPAUSE

The heat builds up inside my body and it feels like it's on fire, I would think it's going to blow up and the next minute droplets of sweat seep out from every pore on my skin, I'm completely drenched and dripping, soaked in sweat, I struggle, until it converts into another form of suffering, my body would chill down and I would shiver as if a cold current is passed through my spine. I'm back to normal in some time but not for long, the next attack happens sooner or late.

MEN-OH-PAUSE

Strictly for women above 45

Hot and cold flashes, that's what it is called.

I'm going to tell you the story of its origin. It starts off as a gift of God bestowed on all-female beings. "Menstruate... be a woman..." said the maker and he served it as a gift wrapped in - Women-ness, Fertility and Motherhood. But essentially combined it with - Cramps, Aches and PMS' for FREE! Years later the creator notices that the Maiden is done with all her feminine related assignments.

And then he says "Pause!"

Again with plenty of "Get-Free" offers, Fatigue, anxiety, depression, hair loss, weight gain, sleeplessness, hot flashes, vaginal dryness. In reality, you're supposedly in the best phase of your life, a free bird you are now, children are grown up and independent, spouse, in his own world busy trying to cope with his middle-age crisis. This is your time to enjoy The - ME TIME - and to catch up with your girlfriends. Yes, sure it is, exactly that's what you do.

Scene:1 - Movie time - you choose not the movie but the theatre, preferring the one with clean bathrooms. And hey! don't forget your shawl (theatres are human freezers) and it happens not without the last minute drop out of at least one in the gang - reason - suddenly in a - don't feel like- mood. Ha! mood swings, one of the most prominent of the free gifts offered.



Shahnaz M C Sherief

“How exciting it sounds! But how agonizing it actually is!”



Scene: 2- You plan a road trip with your bosom friends. You babble, you scream and you laugh as much as your panty liner can take. Then, all you're looking out for is the 'Use and Pay Toilet' sign. Incontinence it is! Yet another free gift which comes with MP.

Scene: 3 - Dinner at a fancy restaurant, you and your soul mates are decked in your semi-formals, chatting away, giggling, making the waiter do his job, which is: To Wait! till you contemplate on the menu to order something suitable for all your fashionable diets. In 20 minutes you're shivering and requesting the waiter, "Son, please can you increase the temperature of the AC, it's too cold in here". He smiles and politely says, yes and pretends to do so but never actually does it because he knows, the next minute your bodies are sweating and you will ask him to turn it down to 18 (Obviously his mom is on the 'Pause phase' too).

Scene: 4 - It's your best friend's son's/daughter's wedding. Wow! You're going to meet up with your mate. What fun it is going to be, you assume. You are dressed in your best silks and elegant makeup. You meet, you greet, you hug, but within half an hour into the wedding you're like a melting piece of decorative ice-sculpture, slowly dripping, melting and losing it's the best form. Your face is like a blurring painting on water, your clothes with dark prints of sweat-patches. You are no more the same person who walked in, you run to the restroom with your fuming body, pulling out tissues to wipe out your menopausal effects.

The various precautions you'd taken by bathing in cologne stirred water, body sprays, body mists, aloe vera wet wipes are all in vain!

(By then the number of wet wipes you would have used on you would be 4 times more than you'd used to clean up your babies' bottoms in the past)

Evion, Primrose, walks, workouts, you try out everything but you have to go through this till it passes away at its own pace. So, let's deal with it, although it's a Big Deal, remember my dear fellow 'Pausers' and co-sufferers, we are in the last period of our organic, vulnerable and purest female forms. Few steps away from -We Manhood-!



MENSTRUAL CUP

Cups are mostly made of medical-grade silicone and rubber. The small flexible funnel-shaped cup is inserted into the vagina. The menstrual fluid is collected in it. Menstrual cups are available in 3 different sizes and it is the most economical and easy to use product.

Your queries will be answered by experts from the respective field

Q&A

Please send us your query to
ayumanthra@gmail.com or
WhatsApp 9495457918

Question How does Panchakarma differ from basic Ayurvedic treatments?

The panchakarma therapies are Vamana (emesis), Virechanam (purgation), Vasti (enema), Nasyam (nasal drops) and Raktamoksham (bloodletting). The panchakarma therapies are cleansing therapies which are done after considering the dosha predominance and the ailments of the patient. The other treatments like abhyanga (massage), Swedana (steaming through various methods like Kizhi, Nadi Swedana etc) are preparatory therapies. But many times these therapies are enough and Pancha Karmas are not done. Likewise, Ayurveda also has post panchakarma therapies like Dhoopana and also localised treatments like Tarpana for eyes.

Question What is the relevance of following strict Pathya kramas during ayurvedic treatments?

Ayurveda is not just a science of few medicinal formulations. Diet and lifestyle have equal importance in the management of diseases. Hence it is clear that Pathya-Apathya has a major role in treatments. Pathyas are suitable food and regimen for a particular disease or treatments are done. For eg: Mamsa rasa is a Pathya in the treatment of Rajayakshma. The Pathya Kalpanas followed after Panchakarma therapies are Manda, Peya, Yusha etc.

Our contributors.



Dr. Vrinda P

NHM AYUSH Medical Officer GAH
Balusserry, BAMS, MD
Swasthavritta



Dr. Valsaladevi

Sr Ayurveda Consultant and
Quality co ordinator



Dr. Rohini Subramanian

Research Associate CASIRA Trust
Palakkad



Dr. Nidhin V

Asst Porfessor (on contract)
Govt Ayurveda College,
Thiruvananthapuram



Shahnaz M C Sherief

Freelance Writer

ayu:manthra

Sarovaram Road(PHED Road), Eranhipalam,
Calicut, Kerala-673006

www.ayumanthra.com

ayumanthra@gmail.com



ayumanthra

Be a contributor & get your article in the spotlight

For more details contact us at:

+91 95672 29092, +91 94954 57918
ayumanthra@gmail.com

Chief Editor:

Dr Shanthi Ganga,
Chief Physician & Managing Director at ayu:manthra

Editor:

Soorej Anitha jayaram
Yoga Mentor & Managing Partner at ayu:manthra

Designed & Produced by

Akshay V

www.growthassociates.xyz

Our team.



SHE WILL CONTINUE TO SMILE

NO MATTER HOW HURT SHE IS