

ADOLESCENT'S GUIDE TO PHYSICAL, MENTAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH





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Introduction



Hello Dost,

I speak to you from the pages of this colourful booklet...I am 'you'; a little grown up, not so old and yet not a little one too! You must have often heard such things from confused adults who readily label 'us' as the confused lot. Never mind, for I will stay far from the adult world and we shall deal with 'our own' mysteries and woes!

Have you ever wondered how mechanically magical our bodies are? Beginning right with the head, they are homes to our curious brains with thoughts racing; they give us the muscles to smile, the eyes to express, while making the heart tick along. Our bodies house our limbs, allow us to think, work, stand, run, eat, shit and do so much more!

And then this society...What we call 'ye log/samaaj' all around us; constantly watching our bodies and trying to pry into our minds. In this booklet, I shall do nothing but refresh everything that you have learnt - about eating right, sleeping well, questioning people...and about 'boys' and 'girls' and 'boys-girls' and what not!

Let me take you through all the questions that rattle you - about the sudden changes, the periods, the night falls and the bursts of excitement or rage.

Do use me as you would like to. You could read me once a month, discuss me with your parents and friends and siblings and neighbours. You could look up some facts that might help, and even check out the important numbers whenever you need help. Let me help you speak up and speak out against messy adults!

Yes, I will be really glad if you use me to seek help and to help others to seek help.

Let us, you and I keep growing and keep glowing while we resist norms that tie us down or throttle our dreams.

Let us own our responsibility - towards ourselves and those around us!



What is Anaemia?

Anaemia occurs when the number of healthy red blood cells or haemoglobin in your body is too low.

What causes Anaemia?



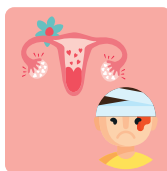
Lack of iron in food intake



Diseases like TB, Dengue, Malaria...



Worm infestation



Heavy loss of blood (menstruation/accident)



Excessive consumption of junk food

What are the signs of Anaemia?



Pale skin and eyes



Fatigue



Dizziness



Difficulty in concentrating



Loss of appetite



Brittle nails



Sore muscles



Headache



Sore tongue



Fast heartbeat

Anaemia LEVELS

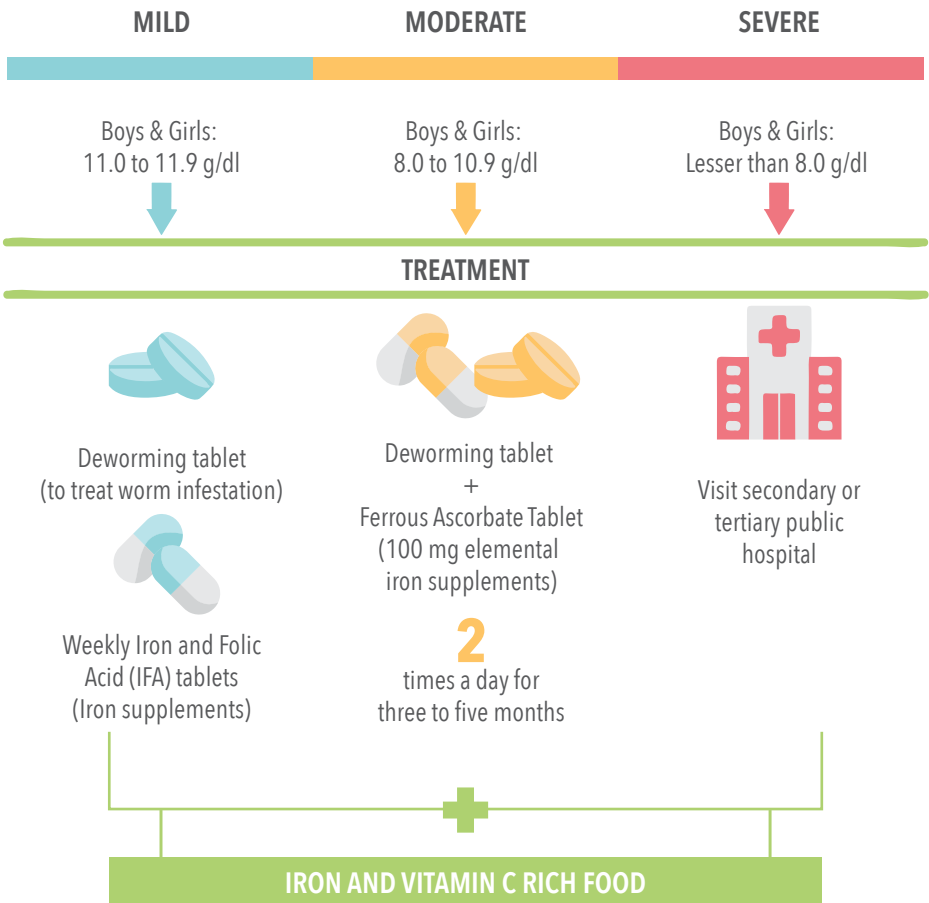
Cut off levels of haemoglobin for diagnosis of Anaemia



CATEGORY / AGE	HB GRAM / DL
Children 6-59 months	≥11
Children 5-11 years	≥11.5
Adolescents 12-14 years	≥12
Non pregnant women (15+)	≥12
Pregnant women	≥11
Men	≥13

How is Anaemia tested?

A sample of your blood will be taken and tested for RBC count and haemoglobin levels. You will then be categorised into Normal, Mild, Moderate or Severe. The below table marks levels for adolescent girls and boys (12-19 year olds)





Normal Side effects of IFA tablets



Loss of appetite



Nausea



Bloating



Black stools



Headache



These side effects are usually mild and do not last long



CONSUME IRON-RICH FOOD to prevent Anaemia

MEAT & POULTRY

Red Meat • Chicken • Organ Meat: Liver, Kidney, Eggs
(body absorbs two to three times more iron from animal sources than from plants)

SEAFOOD

Fish • Prawns • Mackerel • Indian Salmon • Clams

VEGETABLES

Spinach • Beetroot • Potatoes with Skin • Methi • Mustard Leaves
Mint • Drumsticks • Drumstick Leaves • Coriander • Raddish
Carrot • Rajgira (Amaranth)

LEGUMES, BEANS & LENTILS

Barley • Chickpeas • Peas • Kidney Beans
Black-eyed Peas • Soya Beans

MILLETS & CEREALS

Puffed Rice (Murmure) • Flattened Rice (Poha) • Raagi • Bajra

FRUITS

Watermelon • Apple • Pomegranate • Strawberries
Pineapple • Papaya • Sweet Lime

NUTS & SEEDS

Pumpkin Seeds • Sunflower Seeds • Peanuts • Nuts • Dates

CONSUME VITAMIN C & B RICH FOOD

FRUITS

Orange • Banana • Lemon • Guava • Strawberry • Amla

VEGETABLES

Cabbage • Cauliflower • Red Pepper • Tomatoes



USEFUL TIPS

- ✓ Use double fortified salt (with iron + iodine)
- ✓ Add Tamarind, Mango Powder, Cumin seeds, Black pepper and Turmeric to food to get a boost of iron in your diet
- ✓ Eat sweets made with jaggery (e.g. chikki) instead of with sugar
- ✓ Avoid Tea & Coffee as they reduce iron absorption, including before and after meals
- ✓ Avoid or limit eating junk foods and street foods like Chinese Bhel, Chinese Pakoda, Soft Drinks, Chips, Vada Pav, Instant Noodles, etc.
- ✓ Always wash fruits and vegetables with water, before cooking or eating
- ✓ Always cover your food
- ✓ Cook food in iron utensil
- ✓ Always wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds, before eating



WHAT NEXT?



Pass on this information to your parents, friends, relatives and others in your community.



Coordinate with the Municipal health post and help organise Anaemia testing camps in your community



Observe how gender-based discrimination leads to greater neglect of girls and women, in turn leading to malnourishment.

Observe who is the first / last one to eat in the family, is there any difference in portion size given to different members in your family

Prevention is better
than cure



preventive Diseases



Malaria and Dengue

Infectious diseases like malaria and dengue caused by Mosquito bites are entirely preventable and treatable.

What is Malaria?

- Malaria is caused by a parasite that is transmitted to humans through the bites of infected mosquitoes.
- Malaria mosquito is active between dusk and dawn
- Malaria fever is of shorter duration
- Breeding ground: Accumulated water

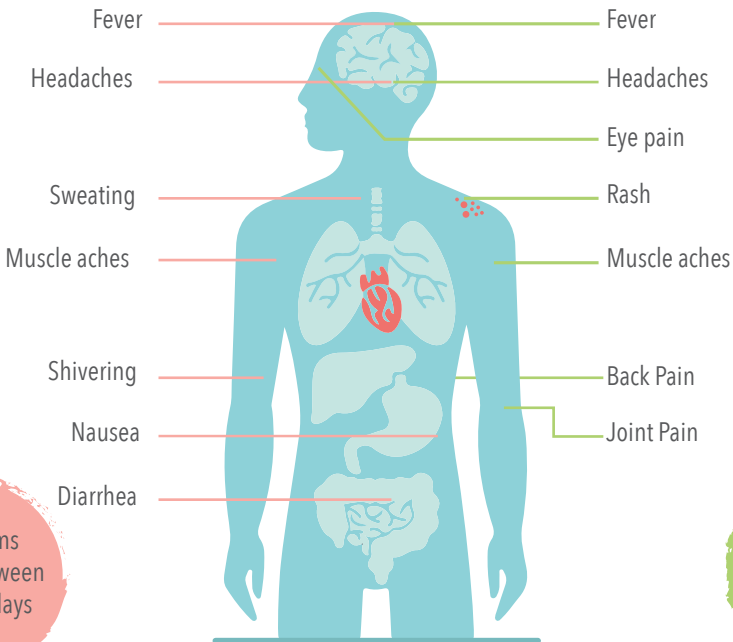
What is Dengue?

- Dengue fever is a viral disease caused when an infected mosquito bites someone.
- Dengue mosquito is active during the day
- Dengue fever starts all of a sudden and can last upto 7 days
- Breeding ground: Shallow water surfaces

Malaria

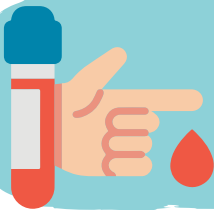
Dengue

SYMPTOMS



Symptoms appear between 10 to 28 days

Symptoms appear within 4 to 10 days



A blood test is done to detect Malaria/Dengue

If the results are positive, follow treatment recommended by your doctor

preventive strategies



Use bed nets



Use Insect repellent



Clean & hygienic surrounding



Cover arms & legs



Draining stagnant water sources



What is Diarrhoea ?



Diarrhoea is loose, watery stools three or more times in one day. Acute diarrhoea lasts a short time. It is a common problem. It usually lasts for about one or two days, but it may last longer.

SYMPTOMS



Watery stools



Abdominal pain



Nausea and vomiting



Fever



Lethargy/
Dizziness



Dehydration

CAUSES



Infection caused by bacteria, virus and parasites



Water contaminated with human faeces



Malnutrition makes children more vulnerable



Poor personal hygiene



Contaminated food /stale food/ food poison

Stool samples are tested to know the cause of infection and Blood test is done to test the signs of inflammation

Preventive strategies



Boil water before drinking



Wash hands with soap



Keep surroundings clean and hygienic



Maintain good personal /food hygiene



Avoid junk food



Vaccination*



What is Tuberculosis?

Tuberculosis (TB) is an airborne contagious infection that usually attacks your lungs. It can also spread to other parts of your body, like your brain and spine.

SYMPTOMS



Coughing blood for more than 2 weeks



Chest pains



Tiredness and weakness



Fever

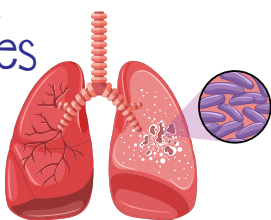


Weight loss/
Loss of appetite



Night sweats

What causes TB?



TB germs are put into the air when a person with TB coughs, sneezes, speaks or sings.

These germs can stay in the air for several hours, depending on the environment. Persons who breathe in the air containing these TB germs can become infected.

TB is diagnosed by medical history, physical examination, chest x-ray, sputum test and other laboratory tests.

Key action and prevention



Early diagnosis



Complete treatment



Maintain healthy immune system



Maintain good ventilation



Do not spit in public



Avoid exposure to TB patients



What is Emotional Resilience?

Emotional resilience refers to one's ability to adapt to stressful situations or crises. It is the skill to calm a worried mind on encountering/facing a negative or challenging experience. This ability can differ from person to person and one can work and exercise to improve their Emotional Resilience.



What are feelings & Emotions?

Feelings are mental expressions of one's current state of mind. Emotions are associated with bodily reactions.

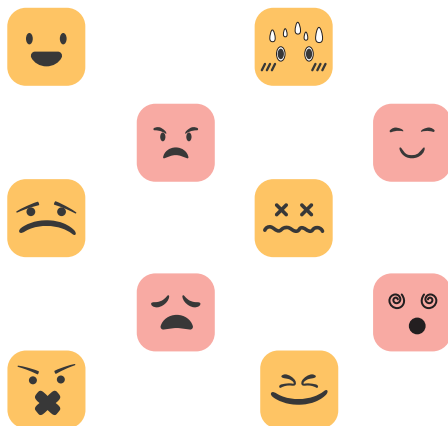
How to gain deeper understanding of self?

Being self-aware of our feelings gives us a better understanding of how feelings contribute to our actions. Emotions help us understand ourselves better and guides us in making future decisions.

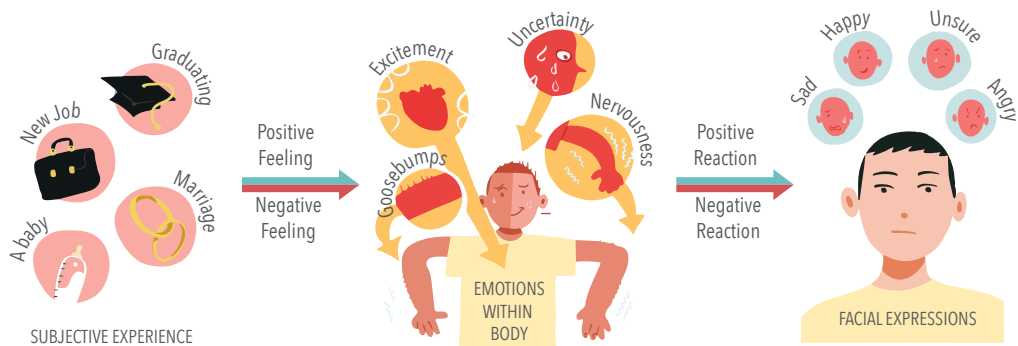
No feelings are good or bad. Some are pleasant whereas some are unpleasant.

Types of feelings

Happiness	Sadness
Anger	Fear
Worry	Disgust
Shame	Guilt
Frustration	Dislike
Pride	Jealousy
Confusion	Hurt
Calmness	Worthlessness
Irritation	Contentment
Love	Excitement
Enthusiasm	Curiosity



Emotional response to situations differs from person to person.
The same situation could trigger either a positive or negative reaction in different people.



USEFUL TIPS

- Do not bottle up your emotions. It can affect your health and wellbeing
- Avoid guessing emotions of a person
- Communication is the key to help understand others and oneself

Where do feelings and reactions to situations come from?

Feelings stem from thoughts of an individual about a situation. Our self-talk and thoughts lead to our feelings and reaction towards a situation.



Thoughts

Affect how we feel and act

Reasonable / Practical /
Logical / Effective / Functional

Unreasonable / Illogical / Ineffective
/ Hinder daily function

- 1) I ask for help
- 2) My decisions are in my control
- 3) It is easier to change myself and do something productive
- 4) I can learn from this mistake and work better in the future

- 1) I will make a mess of things, I will lose control
- 2) They will think I am weak or stupid, I shouldn't feel like this

Behaviour

Affect how we think and feel

Helpful

Not Helpful

Goal setting
Initiating
Organising
Clarifying

Avoiding people / situations
Overchecking
Staying overly busy
Worrying

Emotions

Affect what we think and do

Positive

Negative

Happy
Excited
Glad
Content
Satisfied
Cheerful

Irritable
Sad
Anxious
Embarassed
Guilty

Physical Sensations

Affect how we behave

Tense
Shaky
Nauseous
Weak
Butterflies
Hot
Sweating



Physical reactions to anger

Feeling and expressing negative emotions like anger is very common



HOW TO deal With ANGER



unhealthy ways of expressing anger



Attack on person,
animal or object



Attacking
verbally



Attacking
physically



Recruit allies
against others



Withdrawing
aggressively

Breathing exercise

1



Sit in a comfortable
position

2



Close your eyes

3



After a few minutes,
start trying to control
your breathing. So
take a deep breath in
through your nose and
hold for 3 counts/
seconds.

4



Then exhale for 3
counts

5

3 sec



Pause for 3 seconds

6



Then inhale again and
exhale.

7



Repeat this for five
minutes or till you feel
calmer.

List of character strengths that benefit oneself and our community



- Kind
- Generous
- Straightforward
- Honest
- Cheerful
- Calm
- Sociable
- Confident

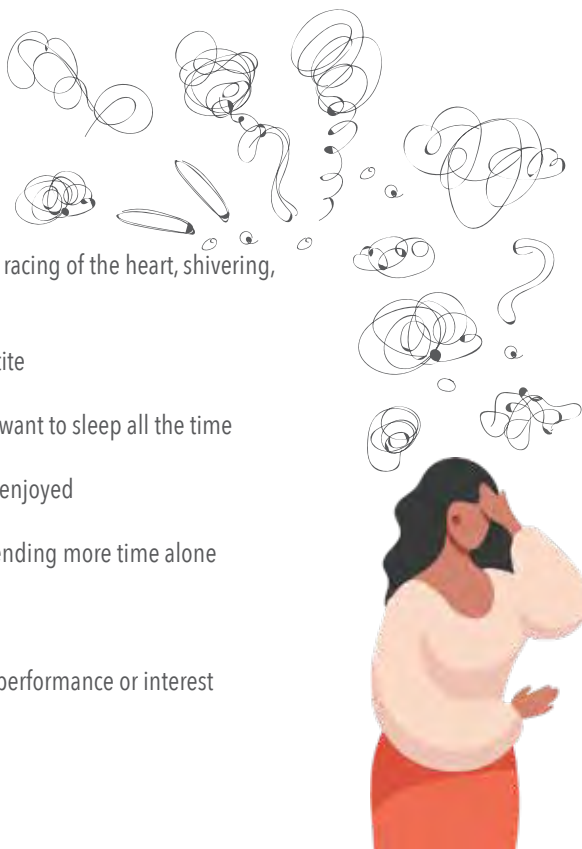
- Cooperative
- Efficient
- Organised
- Courageous
- Strong
- Smart
- Affectionate
- Wise

- Humble
- Compassionate
- Humorous
- Fun loving
- Adventurous
- Resourceful
- Practical
- Caring

- Persevering
- Resilient
- Hopeful
- Grateful
- Polite
- Enthusiastic
- Curious
- Loving

People are in a lot of distress when they:

- Feel sad very often
- Cry frequently
- Feel hopeless or worthless
- Find it difficult to control worrying
- Experience panic attacks - sudden acute racing of the heart, shivering, feeling extremely anxious
- Show a sudden loss or increase in appetite
- Find it difficult falling/staying asleep or want to sleep all the time
- Lose interest in activities that they once enjoyed
- Withdraw from social situations and spending more time alone
- Show an increase in absenteeism
- Reduce involvement in academic/work performance or interest
- Change their behaviour suddenly



It is then time to seek help!

Talking about your feelings with a counsellor

CAN HELP
YOU TO...

- Maintain good mental health and deal with times when you feel troubled
- Solve problem
- Reduce stress and anxiety
- Calm down when you feel angry
- Motivate yourself to take action

Communication styles:

Aggressive communication

Where you get what you want regardless of what the other person feels

Passive aggressive communication

Where you don't express your anger openly but express it through behaviours such as non-cooperation and sulking

Assertive communication

Where you express your needs calmly while also trying to be sensitive to others' needs to a reasonable degree

Submissive communication

Where you give in to others at the expense of your own needs

All of us use all styles of communication from time to time. Assertiveness is the healthiest mode of communication. It makes us feel positive about ourselves and others and increases one's self esteem.

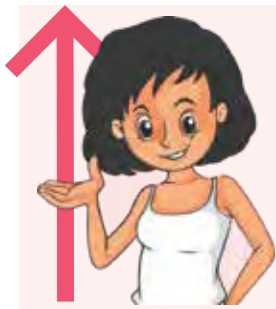
Formula for assertive communication

When you Pinpoint the specific action that prompted your response; just the facts

I feel/felt Recognise that the feeling come from your perception/interpretation of events

Because Optional for conversation, but helps define the true source of your feeling

What I want/need from you is Ask for what you need, and let go of the outcome



What is Growing up?



Growing up is the term we use for transitioning from childhood to adulthood. There are 7 stages of growing up. These stages include early childhood, middle childhood, adolescence, early adulthood, middle adulthood and old age.

Let's look at changes that take place in each stage

Infancy (0-2 years)



Babies learn to focus their vision, reach out, explore, and learn about the things that are around them.

Childhood (3-9 years)



Children learn to walk steadily, develop motor skills to run, walk, climb. They are able to speak simple sentences and recognise words. They start going to school and form friendships with others.

Adolescence (10-19 years)



Adolescence is a time of significant mental, emotional, and social and physical changes. Read on to learn more about changes occurring during this phase.

Early Adulthood (20-40 years)



Physical abilities are at their peak, including muscle strength, reaction time, sensory abilities, and cardiac functioning. The aging process also begins and is characterised by changes in skin, vision, and reproductive capability.

Adulthood (40-65 years)



It is the longest stage of lifecycle. The adult develops a sense of responsibility towards family, livelihood and society in general. They are able to love and make commitments. The ageing process also begins during early adulthood.

Old Age (65+ years)




Older adults are able to look back at life with a sense of fulfilment. There is a decline in functioning and repair ability of body tissues.

changes occurring during adolescence

There are many changes that occur during adolescence due to hormonal changes in the body. These changes are brought about by the endocrine glands in the body.

common changes that occur in both girls & boys

- Increase in height and weight
- Develop body odour
- Hair growth under armpits and in pubic area
- More hair growth on arms and legs and hair might get darker
- Skin break outs and acne
- Growth of sexual organs and darkening of skin around genitals
- Wet dreams or night fall (Release of semen in boys and vaginal discharge in girls)



Not everyone grows at the same time or the same pace. Some people have their growth spurt really early and others really late.

USEFUL
TIP

Additional changes

BOYS

- Voice gets deeper and might crack
- Penis and testicles get bigger
- Hair growth on face, chest and back
- Chest and shoulders get broader

These changes occur due to the increase in testosterone in the testis

GIRLS

- Breasts start getting bigger
- Hips get wider, body becomes curvy
- Start getting periods
- Vagina grows

These changes occur due to the increase in Oestrogen in the ovaries



THINGS TO KNOW



Masturbation is completely normal. It can help you explore your body. It is also normal to not want to masturbate



Attraction to the same or opposite sex is quite normal. It is also normal to not be attracted to anyone

What are wet dreams?

Wet dreams are when a person orgasms involuntarily while they are sleeping because of a dream, which may or may not be erotic.

- Wet dreams are normal and occur during puberty.
- Adolescent boys as well as girls can have wet dreams
- Wet dreams are a natural occurrence for both men and women. They cannot be controlled or stopped, and a person should not feel ashamed to have them.



Emotional changes that occur during adolescence



Depression



Aggression



Unexplained
mood swings




Low
self-confidence



Low self-esteem

What is Body Image?



Body image is the way you think and feel about your body and assume how others perceive them. It includes the picture of your body that you have in your mind, which may or may not match your body's actual shape and size.









All body shapes
are beautiful





Body image

-  Feeling happy and satisfied with your body, as well as being comfortable with and accepting the way you look
-  Making healthy eating and physical activity part of your everyday family life
-  Appreciating your own body for what it can do, not just how it looks
-  Being proud of things in yourself that aren't related to appearance
-  Accepting and valuing people no matter how they look, and not commenting on how people look
-  Being confident about your looks on social media

Body image

-  Feeling unhappy with the way you look. People who feel like this often want to change the size or shape of their body
-  Criticising your body – for example, calling yourself ugly, too fat, too thin, too tall, too short, etc.
-  Continuously comparing your body with others
-  Not doing activities or trying new things because of the way you feel about your body
-  Spending lots of time looking in the mirror or taking photos and looking for changes or imperfections
-  Editing your photos to change your appearance on social media

THINGS TO REMEMBER

-  Nobody is perfect
-  Find things to like about yourself
-  Changes in the body during adolescence are normal, everyone goes through it
-  Never tease or shame anyone for their appearance





What is sex?

What is gender?

About	Assigned at birth based on the child's reproductive organs	Determined by society's understanding of what a person belonging to a particular sex should look, feel and act like
Types	Male, Female or Intersex	Many possibilities - Masculine, feminine (it can include transgender, gender queer, etc)
Example	Males have male sexual physical characteristics (penis, testes, sperm) and females have female sexual physical characteristics (vagina, ovaries, eggs).	Blue for boys, pink for girls. Skirts for women, pants for men. Men as leaders, women as followers
Changeable?	Can be changed through surgery and hormone therapy	Roles keep changing. Gender is socially determined and can lead to stereotyping



What are gender stereotypes?

Gender stereotypes are the beliefs that people have about the characteristics of males and females. These vary over different cultures and over time.

Common stereotypes are:

- Women and bad drivers
- All men love sports
- Men don't cry
- Women are oversensitive
- Men's role are external and public where as a women's are internal and private





Gender stereotyping leads to gender inequality, discrimination, patriarchal divide and gender-based violence.



Things that will help in removing the gender bias

- Not considering any gender as inferior or superior and thus treating them equally
- No job should be considered small. Doing household work or working at an office shouldn't define the masculinity or femininity of a person.
- Understanding the concerns faced by women thus helping them attain their rights
- Raising awareness and breaking patriarchal norms



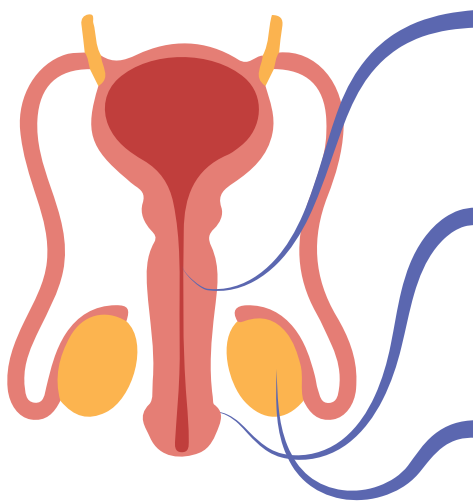
DISCUSS:

- Who decides and defines 'masculinity' and 'femininity'?
- How much of a role do both nature (genetic and all factors that are inherited) and nurture (our environment, upbringing and life experiences) play in the above definitions?
- How does gender defines roles and functions at home, workplace & community?
- Are both boys and girls intellectually gifted? Are some subjects or fields reserved for one sex, which the other cannot aspire to?
- Can the culturally defined roles of husband & wife be shared, interchanged and adjusted?



SEXUAL & REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND HYGIENE

Male reproductive parts



URETHRA

Tube-like structure inside the penis when soft, carries urine from bladder when erect, releases semen (with sperm)

PENIS

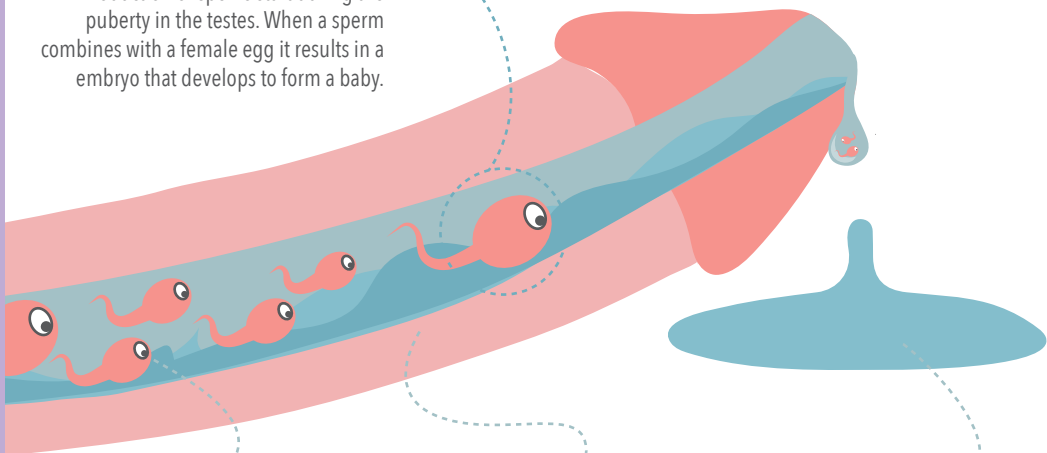
Organ from where urine and semen are discharged from the body. The length of a penis varies from person to person

TESTES/TESTICLES

A small bag of skin that contains two testicles. These testes produce sperm and testosterone. Testosterone is responsible for changes in a boy's body during puberty.

SPERMS

Production of sperms start during the puberty in the testes. When a sperm combines with a female egg it results in a embryo that develops to form a baby.



SEMEN

The fluid that carries the sperm out of the body. If it is ejaculated into a woman's vagina (during sex), she may become pregnant.

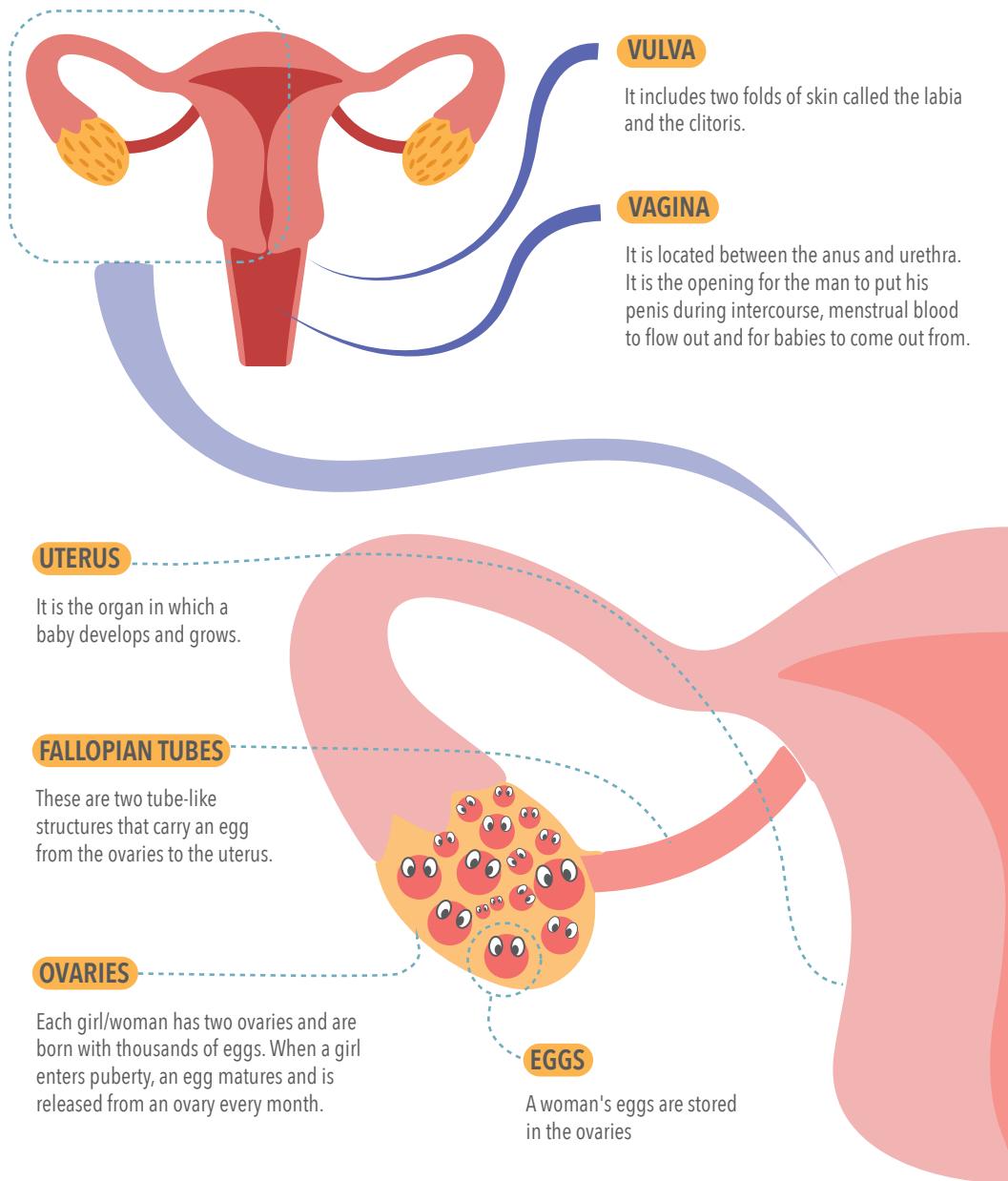
ERECTION

Occurs when a boy/man is sexually excited. The penis fills with blood and becomes hard and straight.

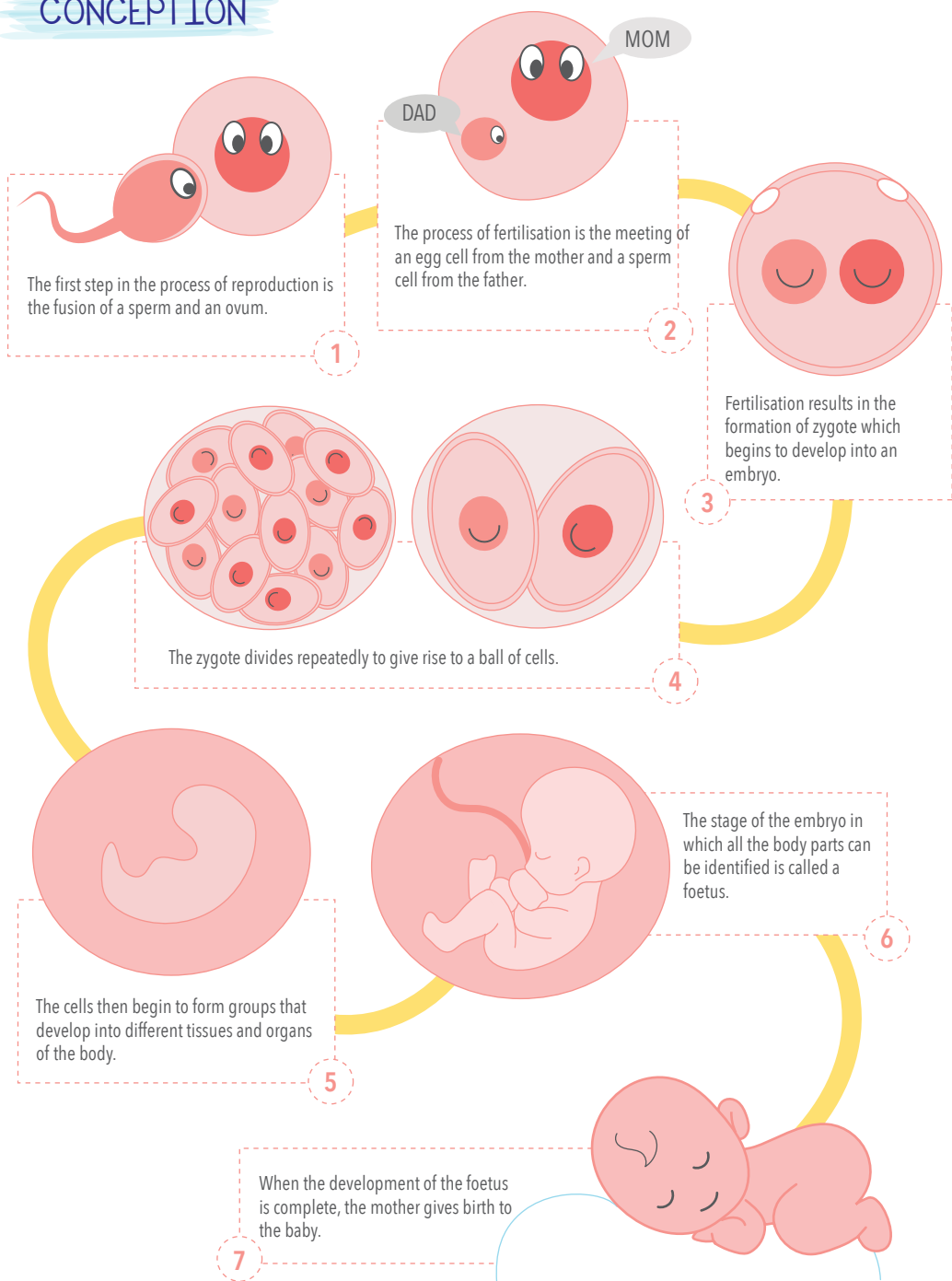
EJACULATION

Occurs when the semen comes out of an erect penis.

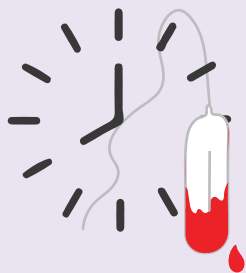
Female reproductive parts



CONCEPTION



WHAT HAPPENS WHEN CONCEPTION DOESN'T TAKE PLACE?



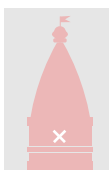
What is menstruation?

To prepare for a baby, the uterus develops a thick lining of tissue and blood every month. If a baby is not made, then the uterus sheds the lining and the egg. This is called menstruation.

THINGS TO KNOW

- ✓ Menstruation occurs every month and lasts for 3-7 days.
- ✓ A menstrual cycle typically lasts 26-35 days.
- ✓ Menstruation is normal and healthy.
- ✓ A girl/woman is not dirty or unclean during menstruation.
- ✓ Menstruation is a key aspect of puberty in girls and signals the physical readiness of a girl to get pregnant.
- ✓ It is important to eat foods rich in iron and energy.
- ✓ Menstrual irregularities include delayed periods, significant pain during menstruation, having periods twice a month or not bleeding every month as in cases of PCOS/PCOD etc. In such cases consult a doctor.





Unhealthy social and cultural practices imposed upon girls/women



- Not allowing them to touch household items
- Forced to eat separately with separate utensils
- Not allowing women to enter the kitchen
- Not allowing women to enter religious places
- Talking in public about periods/menstruation is considered against the social norms
- Stain shaming



Menstrual Hygiene

PRODUCT	TIME FOR WHICH IT CAN BE USED	HOW MANY TIMES SHOULD IT BE CHANGED IN A DAY	DISPOSAL
Sanitary pads 	6-7 hours	2 times in a day or depending on flow	Wrap them in newspaper and throw them in a dustbin.
Cloth 	6-7 hours	3-4 times in a day or depending on flow	Wash used cloth with water and soap, and dry it properly in the sun. It should be thrown away after using 2-3 times
Tampons 	8 hours	3 times in a day or depending on flow	Wrap them in newspaper and throw them in a dustbin
Menstrual cups 	6-12 hours	Twice a day or depending on flow	Simply empty the cup, wash it with soap and water, and insert it again. After the cycle is over put the menstrual cup in boiling water for a few minutes and store in a clean and dry area for the next use

Hygiene tips for both boys and girls

- Maintaining personal hygiene by bathing at least once a day with water and soap.
- Wearing fresh/clean cotton underclothes after bathing.
- Washing the genitals with water, especially for girls when menstruating.

CONTRACEPTION

A woman can get pregnant if a man's sperm reaches one of her eggs (Ovum). Contraception tries to stop this from happening:

- Keeping the egg and sperm apart
- Stopping egg production
- Stopping the combined sperm and egg (fertilised egg) from attaching to the lining of the womb

Methods of contraception:



Condom

Effectiveness

Condoms are 98% effective when used correctly. It is also the best way to protect yourself against sexually transmitted infections (STIs and HIV)

Usage

Male: On the penis
(when erect)

Female: Inserted in
the vagina



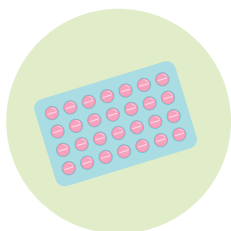
Surgical sterilisation

Effectiveness

It's a procedure to permanently prevent reproduction through surgery. This method is 99.5% effective, but it is also irreversible.

How it's done

It's a surgery performed by professional doctors and takes about 20-30 min.



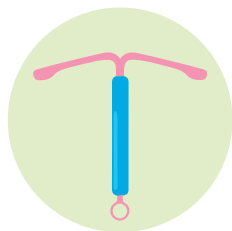
Oral contraceptive pills

Effectiveness

The oral contraceptive pills help in preventing pregnancy. This method is about 99% effective.

Usage

The pill should be taken according to the instructions mentioned on the box and as recommended by doctors.



IUDs like Copper T

Effectiveness

It is used for birth control and emergency contraception within five days of unprotected sex. The effectiveness is 99.3%

How it's done

The copper IUD is inserted inside the uterus (womb) by a trained doctor or nurse.



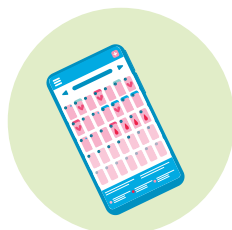
Coitus interrupts

Effectiveness

The pull out method isn't a very reliable way to prevent pregnancy. It works about 78% of the time.

How it's done

The guy pulls out his penis before he ejaculates. The idea is that not ejaculating inside the vagina will prevent pregnancy.



Rhythm method

Effectiveness

The rhythm method is a form of natural family planning. This method is about 76% effective. It shouldn't be relied on completely

How it works

Likelihood of pregnancy is less if a woman accurately identifies her fertile period and avoid unprotected sex on those days every month.

Abortion

Abortion is the termination of a pregnancy by removal or expulsion of an embryo or foetus.

What does the law state?

Abortion in India is legal and can be performed until 24 weeks of pregnancy after an amendment to the MTP (Medical Termination of Pregnancy) Act 2021

Sex determination tests on pregnant women have been illegal since 1994

What is a safe period for abortion ?

- An abortion may be performed up to 24 weeks according to the Criminal code. In practice, doctors apply a two-week margin of error, and stick to a time limit of 22 weeks.
- After the 24th week, a doctor may only terminate the pregnancy for serious medical reasons



Who can take decision about the abortion?

- The consent of the woman whose pregnancy is being terminated is required for an abortion
- In case of a minor i.e. below the age of 18 years, or a mentally ill woman, consent of guardian is required.



Taking advice from a certified medical professional is required before performing any steps to terminate the pregnancy.

What are the types of abortions?

In-Clinic Abortion

Abortion can be performed until 24 weeks pregnancy after MTP Amendment Act 2021. A doctor or nurse uses medical instruments and gentle suction to remove the pregnancy from your uterus.

Medication Abortion

Abortion pills can be used upto 7 weeks of pregnancy. The pills make the uterus expel the pregnancy tissue (like an early miscarriage). One should always consult a doctor before taking the pills.





What is sex?

The physical formation of a person depending on one's biological attributes defines the sex of a person

What is sexuality?

Sexuality is about a person's sexual feelings, thoughts, attractions and behaviours towards other people

Types of sexualities

Sexuality	What it means	Call themselves	Example
Heterosexual 	Being attracted to the opposite sex.	'Straight'	Girls like boys or boys like girls
Homosexual 	Being attracted to the same gender.	'Lesbian' for girls and 'gay' for boys	Girls like girls and boys like boys
Bisexual 	People who are attracted to both men and women	'Bi'	Being attracted towards both girls and boys
Asexual 	People who experience very little or no sexual attraction	'Ace'	Not being attracted towards any sex



LGBTQ+ or LGBTQQIAAP

Stands for

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning, Intersex, Asexual, Allies and Pansexual.

Lesbian

Women who are attracted towards other women

Gay

Men who are attracted towards other men

Bisexual

A person who is attracted towards both men and women

Transgender

An umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or gender expression differs from what is typically associated with the sex they were assigned at birth

Queer

Someone whose sexual orientation is not exclusively heterosexual

Questioning

Someone who is questioning their sexual orientation or gender identity and is not sure about it

Intersex

Intersex is a term used for a variety of situations in which a person is born with reproductive or sexual anatomy that doesn't fit the boxes of "female" or "male."

Asexual

Someone who is not attracted towards any gender

Allies

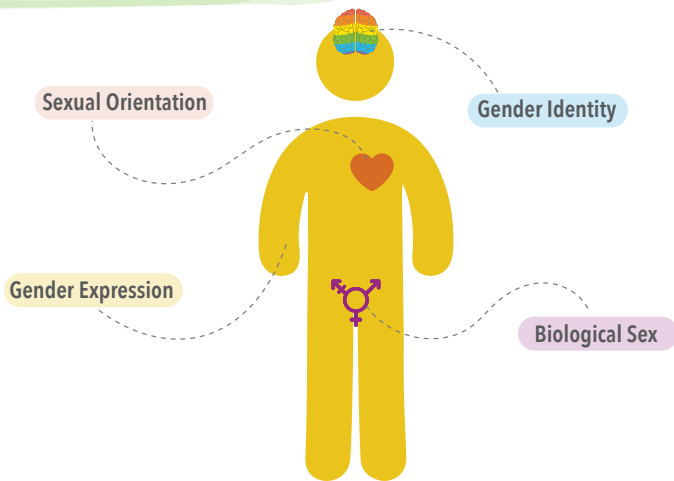
Ally is a heterosexual person who supports equal civil rights, gender equality, and LGBT

Pansexual

It means being attracted towards people regardless of their sex and gender identity.



The Gender-bread Person



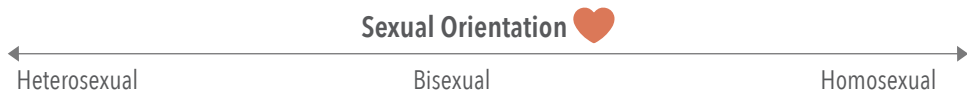
Gender identity is how you, in your head think about yourself. It's the chemistry that composes you (e.g. hormonal levels) and how you interpret what that means.



Gender expression is how you demonstrate your gender (based on traditional gender roles) through the ways you act, dress, behave, and interact.



Biological sex refers to the objectively measurable organs, hormones and chromosomes.
Female = vagina, ovaries, XX chromosomes; male = penis, testes, XY chromosomes;
intersex = a combination of the two.



Heterosexual orientation is who you are physically, spiritually and emotionally attracted to, based on their sex/gender in relation to your own.

Things that can affect the mental health of an LGBTI person are:

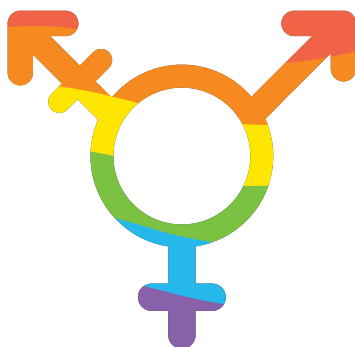
- Being treated differently from other people
- Being bullied physically as well as verbally
- Feeling pressure to deny or change their sexuality
- Feeling worried about coming out, and then being rejected or isolated
- Feeling unsupported or misunderstood.

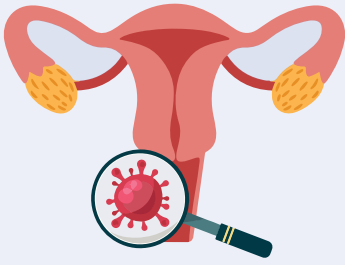
Section 377 in The Indian Penal Code (IPC)

What is Section 377?

The Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) is an act that criminalises homosexuality and was introduced in the year 1861 during the British rule of India. It referred to 'unnatural offences' and says whoever voluntarily has carnal intercourse against the order of nature with any man, woman or animal, shall be punished with imprisonment for life.

However, in a historic verdict, the Supreme Court of India on September 6, 2018, decriminalised the Section 377 of the IPC and allowed gay sex among consenting adults in private. The SC ruled that consensual adult gay sex is not a crime saying sexual orientation is natural and people have no control over it.





What are sexually transmitted diseases?



Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs), or Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs), are infections that are passed from one person to another through sexual contact.

The STDs can spread through

- Vaginal, oral and anal intercourse
- Sometimes intimate physical contact

The following are the commonly transmitted STDs and STIs

Chlamydia

Chlamydia is a STI that is normally passed on through sex without a condom or sharing sex toys with someone who has the infection.

HIV & AIDS

It stands for human immunodeficiency virus. HIV is a virus that attacks the immune system against illness.

If HIV infection is not treated eventually the virus will progress to AIDS (Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome).

Gonorrhoea

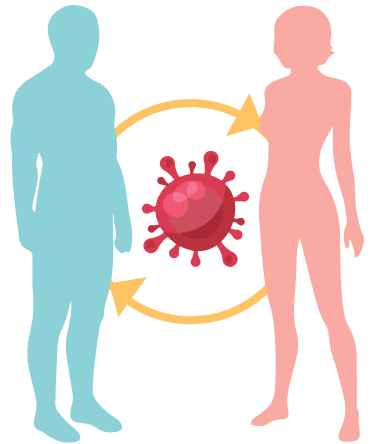
Gonorrhoea is caused by bacteria called *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* or gonococcus. It used to be known as "the clap".

Syphilis

A bacterial infection usually spread by sexual contact that starts as a painless sore.

Herpes

Herpes results from infection with the herpes simplex virus (HSV).

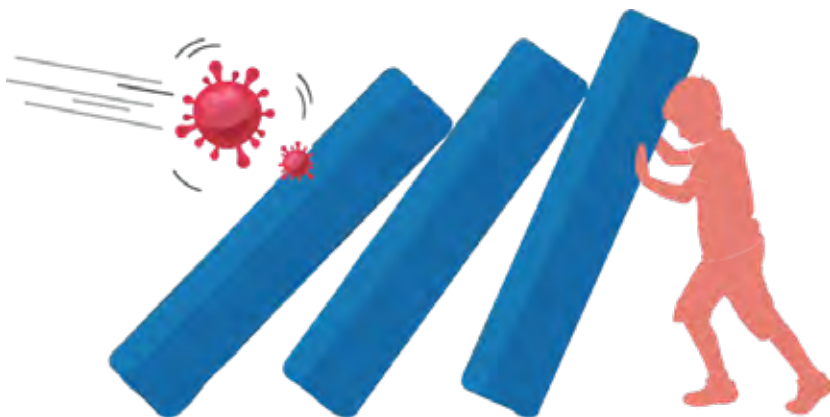


Common symptoms of STIs are

- an unusual discharge from the vagina, penis or anus
- pain when peeing
- lumps or skin growths around the genitals or bottom (anus)
- a rash
- unusual vaginal bleeding
- itchy genitals or anus
- blisters and sores around your genitals or anus
- warts around your genitals or anus
- warts in your mouth or throat, but this is very rare

Precautionary measures to avoid getting sexually transmitted diseases

- Using male condoms or female condoms every time you have vaginal sex, or male condoms during anal sex
- Using a condom to cover the penis or a latex or plastic square (dam) to cover the female genitals if you have oral sex
- Not sharing sex toys, or washing them and covering them with a new condom before anyone else uses them
- Avoid sharing towels and underclothes
- Washing before and after intercourse
- Not sharing needles with anyone
- Making sure the barber uses a fresh blade while shaving





What IS substance Abuse?

Substance abuse is the repeated harmful use of any substance, including drugs and alcohol.

Following are the substances that are abused:

Drugs

Prescribed drugs-

Using any prescribed drug (used for medical purposes) for a nonmedical purpose or using drugs that were not prescribed to someone or for a different issue is substance misuse.

Commonly prescribed drugs are:

- codeine
- methadone
- morphine
- CNS (central nervous system) depressants such as Valium
- stimulants such as Adderall or Ritalin.



Illegal:

The use of any drug, even if casual, can lead to dependency and can have a negative effect on one's physical and mental health as well as their wellbeing, relationships and career

Common illegal drugs include:

- Cocaine
- Heroin
- Marijuana
- Ecstasy
- Meth
- Weed (Ganja)



Drug abuse can lead to short term as well as long term effects

Short term effects include:

- Need to take it constantly (addiction).
- Out of character, erratic or irresponsible behaviour such as stealing, abusing, etc.
- Sleeplessness or insomnia
- Increased heart rate
- Noticeable changes in appearance, such as extreme weight loss

Long term effects include:



depression
and anxiety



panic disorders



increased
aggression



paranoia



hallucinations

Alcohol

If one drinks too much of alcohol and too often it is considered as alcohol abuse.

Alcohol abuse can lead to:

- liver damage and other health problems
- increased chances of injury or accidents
- serious alcohol disorder
- risky sexual behaviors
- violence, including homicide, suicide, sexual assault
- cancer of the breast, mouth, throat, etc
- learning and memory loss problems
- mental health problems, including depression and anxiety

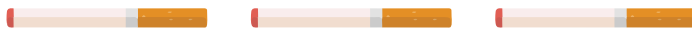


Nicotine/ tobacco

Nicotine, a powerful central nervous system stimulant found naturally in the tobacco leaf, is classified as a drug. Nicotine is one of the main ingredients in tobacco.

Nicotine abuse can:

- cause damage to the body by reducing blood flow to all organs and parts of the body
- harms a young person's appearance and health in a short period of time
- cause bad breath, smelly clothes and stained fingers and teeth
- lead to falling sick more often, with everything from sore throats to colds
- cause various diseases such as different types of cancer, heart and cardiovascular diseases, skin damage in the long term
- be more injurious and harmful for other people (passive smoking)



Solvent abuse

Commonly abused solvents are often fluids found in household items such as fuel canisters, aerosol cans such as hairspray and air freshener, glue, paints, thinners, and correcting fluids.

Inhaling the same can lead to:

- Headaches
- Drowsiness
- Nausea and vomiting
- Hallucinations (when large doses are inhaled)

Risks of solvent abuse include:

- Damage to the nasal membrane
- Damage to the brain, liver, and kidneys
- Suffocation
- Poisoning (when users inhale leaded petrol)
- Accidents under the influence of solvents
- Death



Things to remember

Substances such as alcohol and drugs have addictive tendencies and can contribute to:

- Broken families and stressed relationships
- School dropouts
- Unemployment
- Crime
- Risky sexual behaviours resulting in HIV, STIs and unwanted pregnancies



And thus....

Getting addicted to substances is easy but getting over it can be difficult. Simply experimenting can lead to an urge to try again. So, one should not get started with it in the first place.

Peer pressure can push one to experiment leading to addiction. So, one needs to keep good company, learn to say no, dissuade friends from experimenting with addictive substances or encourage them to quit the habit.

A prey to substance abuse can be a harm to himself and the society.

Smoking addictive substances such as nicotine can harm the passive smokers and can be more injurious to their health.

When under the influence of addictive substances the person exhibits out of character, erratic or irresponsible behavior and can harm their loved ones.

**KEEPING ALL THE ABOVE ILL EFFECTS OF ADDICTIVE SUBSTANCES IN MIND,
ONE SHOULD AVOID CONSUMING THEM.**



What is Child sexual abuse?

Child sexual abuse or child molestation is a form of child abuse where an adult or an older adolescent uses a child for sexual stimulation.



Who can be the victim?

- Both girls and boys can be victims of child sexual abuse.

Who can be the perpetrator?

- We may picture a possible perpetrator/suspect as someone who is perceived as uncertain, unreliable or untrustworthy. However, in reality they are good around children, have good social skills and are perceived as reliable most of the times. The majority of perpetrators are someone the child or family knows.



This doesn't mean one doubts everyone but one needs to be aware and vigilant.

Signs of Child Sexual Abuse:

Child sexual abuse is difficult to spot as the perpetrator could be someone you've known for a long time or trust making it even harder to notice it

Following are the warning signs that could be seen:

Behavioral signs:

- Changes in hygiene habits, such as refusing to bathe or bathing excessively
- Develops phobias
- Exhibits signs of depression or post-traumatic stress disorder
- Expresses suicidal thoughts, especially in adolescence
- Has trouble in school, such as absences or drops in grades
- Inappropriate sexual knowledge or behaviors
- Nightmares or bed-wetting
- Overly protective and concerned for siblings, or assumes a caretaker role
- Shrinks away or seems threatened by physical contact
- Runs away from home or school
- Self-harm
- Avoiding people, places, or situations
- Feeling on guard
- Being hypervigilant

Physical signs:

- Bleeding, bruises, or swelling in genital area
- Stomach pain
- Bloody, torn, or stained underclothes
- Difficulty walking or sitting
- Frequent urinary or yeast infections
- Pain, itching, or burning in genital area



What to do if...

You are being sexually abused

- One needs to avoid self-blame and should report the incident of CSA to any trustworthy adult
- Tell about your situation to a friend/teacher/or any adult you trust
- Learn to say "NO". It's okay to tell an adult that you have to leave, if something that feels wrong is happening (eg. If someone wants to see or touch your private parts, you can tell them that you need to leave)
- Do not be scared of reporting the crime

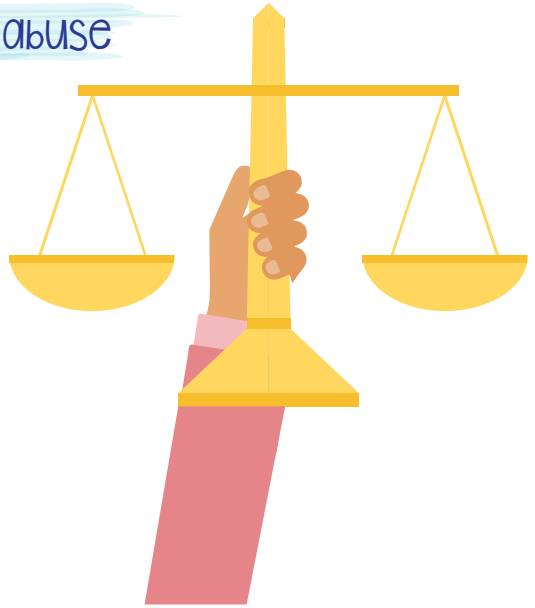


Known someone is sexually abused

- If someone comes out to you reporting cases of CSA, one should trust them
- It is important that they feel supported - don't dismiss their claims or put them off talking about it.
- Stay calm, steady and make them feel comfortable because if the child fears you, they are less likely to disclose what they are actually facing.
- Allow them to talk freely. Wait for them to pause, and then follow up on points that made you feel concerned.
- Keep reminding them that they have done nothing wrong and you will be there and protect them in this situation
- SBLR- Stop, Breath, Listen, Respond
- The child may not want you to report and may be frightened, especially if the perpetrator has threatened them or their loved ones. But remember that by reporting, you are involving authorities who will be able to keep the child safe.

law against child sexual abuse

- Reporting of CSA is mandatory by law.
- Having sex with a child who is below 18 years of age is considered as CSA by law. A child's consent to such an act is not acknowledged.
- In case of sexual activity between minors, the boy involved is considered responsible and will be tried for CSA under Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012



Important telephone numbers



CHILDLINE 1098 is a phone number that spells hope for millions of children across India. It is a 24-hour a day, 365 days a year, free, emergency phone service for children in need of aid and assistance.



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Domestic violence includes any type of physical, emotional, sexual or financial abuse. It can be perpetrated by your partner, any family member (natal or matrimonial), or a combination thereof.

What is Gender-Based Violence?

- Gender-Based violence refers to violence that affects persons of a particular gender disproportionately.
- The socialization of both men and women has resulted in an unequal balance of power between women and men.
- Gender-based violence and violence against women are terms that are often used interchangeably as it has been widely acknowledged that most gender-based violence is inflicted on women and girls, by men.



TYPES OF VIOLENCE

Categories of GBV

Physical violence

- Beating, punching, kicking, biting, burning, attempting to burn, maiming or killing, denial of food and medical assistance etc.



Emotional violence: can be verbal or non-verbal.

- Abuse/humiliation:
Insulting, degrading, demanding, and compelling the victim to engage in humiliating acts, whether in public or private, etc.



- **Confinement:**

Isolating a person from friends/family, restricting movements, restricting mobile access etc.

- **Deprivation:**

Of love, respect, education and other opportunities of growth, of agency (forcing someone to marry against their wishes, not letting someone marry to the person of their choice) etc.



Sexual violence

- **Sexual abuse:**

Actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, including inappropriate touching, without consent

Sexual harassment:

- Any unwelcome or unsolicited sexual attention, demand for sexual access or favours, sexual innuendo or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, or display of pornographic material etc.

Trafficking/ Forced prostitution:

- Forced/coerced sex in exchange for material resources, services and assistance, usually targeting highly vulnerable women or girls unable to meet basic human needs for themselves and/or their children

Sexual violence as a weapon of war and torture:

- Forced abortion, forced pregnancy, forced delivery, and forced child bearing



Economic Violence

- Denial of access to remunerated employment, denial of property rights, forcing to take loans, not giving money for household expenses, demanding dowry, throwing a woman out of the house etc.



MYths Surrounding GBV

Sexual assault is more likely to be committed by a stranger

A majority of assaults are committed by someone known to the victim, quite often a family member.

Violence against women only affects women from certain backgrounds

Exposure to violence transcends socioeconomic status, affecting all levels of income, education, and occupation.

Survivors of sexual assault are responsible for their attack or are capable of preventing it

A prey to sexual assault is often blamed for dressing provocatively, being intoxicated, or it might be suggested that she was being flirtatious. Regardless of the circumstances, sexual assault is never the survivor's fault.

Marriage implies consent for sexual relationship

Consent is always necessary regardless of marital status, so it is entirely possible for a husband to sexually assault his wife.

Nothing can be done to stop violence against women

Violence against women is a product of learned attitudes and norms. Domestic violence can be ended by eliminating gender stereotypes and promoting a culture of respect and equality in family and in society.

Sexist jokes are okay

Sexist attitude and jokes promote gender stereotypes and discrimination against women.



How does violence affect...

Women

- It takes away women's right of choosing what she wants to do, what she wants to wear, what she likes, dislikes, etc.
- Encouraging gender-based violence forces women to accept the social norms and act accordingly even if it's against her will. Women are expected to be passive, nurturing, submissive, and emotional.
- This reinforces the perception of women as weak, powerless, and dependent on men.



Mental health

- Gender based violence creates a fear in the minds of people. The fact that women might fall prey to an act of violence restricts them from doing many things.
- Mental health impacts for survivors of gender-based violence include Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), depression, anxiety, substance misuse, self-harm and suicidal behavior, and sleep disturbances.
- A survivor of GBV may also face stigma and rejection from her community and family.



Physical health

- The health consequences of violence against women include injuries, untimed/unwanted pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections (STIs) including HIV, pelvic pain, urinary tract infections, fistula, genital injuries, pregnancy complications, and chronic conditions.



Society

- Gender based violence shapes the way people think and act.
- In many societies, children learn that men are dominant and that violence is an acceptable means of asserting power and resolving conflict.
- Cultural and social norms often socialise men to be aggressive, powerful, unemotional, and controlling. This contributes to a social expectation (by both men and women) that accepts men as dominant.
- Women as mothers and mothers-in-law unwittingly perpetuate violence by socialising boys and girls to accept the dominance of men and by acquiescing throughout life to men's demands.
- It makes the society narrow minded and toxic.



These myths should not be encouraged as these cause harm to both men and women and make it difficult for women to live freely in society.

Violence of any kind is harmful and there cannot be any justification for violence.

Gender based violence is a public, not a private issue that needs attention.

If you witness anyone falling prey to any kind of violence, one should try and help in any way possible.

A hand holding a white rectangular sign with a slightly distressed or torn edge. The sign has the words "THINGS TO REMEMBER" written in a bold, purple, sans-serif font. The hand is brown and is holding the sign from the bottom right corner. The background of the sign is white, and the text is purple.

**THINGS TO
REMEMBER**

Laws to punish the offenders

- The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006
- Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013
- IPC section 498 A
- Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, (2005)
- Criminal Law Amendment Act, 2013
- Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012
- Cyber Law: Information Technology Act, 2000 ("IT Act")



List of important numbers

● Childline	1098
● BMC Complaints, Helpline No.	1916
● Rationing Kruti Samiti	1800 1024 103
● Police Helpline	100
● Women's Helpline	1091
● Women Helpline (Domestic Abuse)	181

Suicide Prevention Helplines

● TISS iCall	022-25521111
● Vandrevala Foundation	1860 2662 345

● Ambulance Services	108/102
● Fire Helpline	101
● SNEHA: One-Stop Centre at KEM Hospital	022-24100511





Notes



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