



Dysmenorrhea - A Over View

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INTRODUCTION

Menstruation was the periodic change occurring in women which results in flow of blood and endometrium from the uterine cavity. The biological cycle of a woman follow a monthly pattern and have a profound influence on her life and behaviour.

Adolescent girls constitute one fifth of the female population in the world. Generally this group was considered healthy and has not been given adequate attention in health programmes. The reason was age specific mortality was comparatively low in this age group as compared to others. In countries like India, adolescent girls face serious health problem due to socio-economic, environmental conditions and gender discrimination. These factors make them more vulnerable to health risks.

DEFINITION

Dysmenorrhea was characterised by cramping lower abdominal pain that may radiate to the lower back and upper thighs and was commonly associated with nausea, headache, fatigue and diarrhoea. Pain during menstruation due to the increased level of prostaglandins in the menstrual fluid.

The terms "menstrual pain" and "dysmenorrhea" were commonly considered synonymous in clinical practice and literature. They indicate a cramp-like, dull, throbbing pain that usually emanates from the lower abdomen, and that occurs just before and/or during menstruation.

PREVALANCE OF DYSMENORRHEA

Around 50 to 60% of female pain in relation to menses. The extent of pain may vary from minor discomfort to severe pain incapacitating the individual from her normal activities. It was estimated that about 70 to 90% of women have recurrent menstrual problems. However, only 20 to 40% of women report some degree of interference with their usual functioning and 2 to 5% were incapacitated by the symptoms.

Dysmenorrhea was the most common gynecologic disorder among female adolescents, with a prevalence of 60% to 93%. In the United .s, dysmenorrhea was the leading cause of recurrent short-term school absenteeism. Several studies have shown that adolescents with dysmenorrhea report that, it effects their academic performance, social and sports activities.

STUDIES RELATED TO DYSMENORRHEA

UMM 2004 (alternative and complementary therapies), according to him **ginger was a tropical plant that has green-purple flowers and an aromatic underground stem** (called a rhizome). It was commonly used for cooking and medicinal purposes. Historically, ginger has been used in Asian medicine to treat stomach aches, nausea, and diarrhoea. Today, ginger was used as a folk or traditional remedy for postsurgery nausea; nausea caused by motion, chemotherapy, and pregnancy; rheumatoid arthritis; osteoarthritis; and joint and muscle pain.

Majority of the adolescent girls in India under study had experienced dysmenorrhea, that is, 698 out of 970 (71.96%), said that dysmenorrhea was a very common problem among adolescent girls. Further analysis was conducted to find out how frequently they experienced dysmenorrhea. It can be seen that, the maximum number of girls, that is, 237 out of 698 girls (33.95%) experienced dysmenorrhea every month, and 118 (16.90%) experienced it in most of the months.

Among the menstrual disorders, dysmenorrhea was the most common one being reported in half of the women of child bearing age and of these 10% experience incapacitating pain for 1-3 days, every month. In 60-90% of adolescent girls in India, dysmenorrhea was a major cause for absenteeism from school or restriction of activities of daily living or social interaction.

Studies have shown that exercise reduced menstrual cramp and improved associated symptoms. Exercise today was an integral part of normal life for many women. Exercise increases the release of several neurotransmitters including natural endorphins (the brain natural painkillers), catechol, estrogen, dopamine and endogenous opiate peptides, as well as altering the reproduction of hormone secretion, suppressing prostaglandin from being released and raising the estrongen estradiol ratio which acts to decrease endometrial proliferation and shunts blood flow away from the uterus.

HOME REMEDIES FOR DYSMENORRHEA

There was some of the home remedies commonly practice to reduce dysmenorrhea as follows

- Consumption of Mint tea helps in alleviating pain in dysmenorrhea.
- Ginger can be consumed by boiling it in water and drinking the water at least 3 times a day to get relief from dysmenorrhea.
- Parsley has menstrual cycle regulating properties and pain relieving properties.
- Holy basil or Tulasi was one of the best home remedies for dysmenorrhea.
- Asafetida can increase the production of female hormone, progesterone which helps in menstruation.
- Aloe vera was also one of the home remedies for dysmenorrhea.
- Coriander can be consumed by boiling few stems, known to reduce dysmenorrhea.
- A glass of Beet root juice daily can control dysmenorrhea.
- Sesame seeds and wholesome diet also helps in dysmenorrhea.
- Regular exercises and practicing yoga was known to be effective in controlling dysmenorrhea.

Aerobic means 'with oxygen' Aerobic exercises were exercises that use the large muscles of the body – usually the

arms & the legs – in repetitive and rhythmic movements. This increases the need for oxygen; it was met through increased heart rate and respiration. So the heart and lungs also get a good work out. During aerobic exercise the body releases chemical substances (endorphins) that were similar in nature to opiates

Ginger has been recognised as the “universal medicine” by the ancient Orientals of China. Today ginger remains a component of more than 50% of the traditional herbal remedies and has been used to treat nausea, indigestion, fever and infection and to promote vitality. Ginger has played an important role in Asian medicine as a folk remedy to promote cleansing of the body through perspiration, to calm nausea and to stimulate the appetite. Chinese sailors chewed on ginger root to combat seasickness. Chinese women drank ginger tea to alleviate menstrual pain.

CONCLUSION

Dysmenorrhea has been reported to be 50- 72% in the age group of 14 to 25 years. Out of these, not more than 10% report the problem and seek medical attention, while the rest go unreported. It was estimated that painful menstruation was perhaps one of the major causes for teenage girls and young women missing out their high schools and work at days, respectively.

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