



Sanitary Napkins

Introduction

It is an absorbent thing worn in the panties when menses, where it is required to absorb a flow of blood over the vagina. Pads are recommended to be changed every 3 to 4 hours to avoid certain bacteria that can fester in blood, this time also may differ depending on the kind you wear, your flow and the time you are wearing it. According to the NFHS (National Family Health Survey) report, about 48% of women in rural areas and 78% in urban areas use sanitary towel during the menstrual cycle.

Ecological impact

Sanitary napkins are mostly made up of plastic, it takes more time to decay. Apart from the product used in its manufacturing, napkins contaminated with blood are a biological hazard and pose great health risks for the waste collector. According to the Bio-Medical Waste (Management & Handling) Rules, 1998, substances contaminated with blood and body fluids, including cottons, are a biomedical waste and should be burned to destroy pathogens. In India that occurs infrequently as we do not have incinerator that needs to be of WHO (world health organisation) standard.

Alternate to Sanitary Pad

Cloth pads are eco-friendly as well as female friendly. The pads can be reused up to three years with proper care. Commercial sanitary napkins are non-biodegradable and thus harmful to the environment. According to the NFHS data, about 62% of women aged between 12-24 still use clothes, along with other methods, during menstruation.

Conclusion

Females in the reproductive age group should be provided with proper data about menses. Education sector officials should play a positive role in the delivery of such information. While it is appreciable that women are moving towards hygienic menstrual goods, at the same time the side effects of using sanitary napkins cannot be ignored.

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