



CARE OF SKIN, MOUTH, NAILS, CLOTHING AND BATHING.

INTRODUCTION

Good hygiene is an important barrier to many infectious diseases, including the faecal–oral diseases and promotes comfort, safety and better health. Personal hygiene is the basic concept of cleaning, grooming and it is the first step to good health. Besides that it is considered as one of the most important part of our daily lives at home and at workplace which help us to protect ourselves and keep us with good health. As a whole, personal hygiene is the care of our bodies.



Personal hygiene includes different habits i.e., washing hands and brushing teeth which keep bacteria, viruses and fungal far away from our bodies. Moreover these habits will help us to protect our mental health and activity. Also good personal hygiene will help us to keep feeling good about ourselves. Since those who do not take care of their personal hygiene i.e., dirty clothes, body odour and bad breath will suffer from discrimination and this will mainly leads to mental

problems. But the most important point is that all people has their own hygiene but some people do it better than others, this will mainly depends on each person culture, society and family norm.

Personal hygiene entails more than just being clean. It includes the many practices that help people stay healthy. Hygiene promotes comfort, safety, and better health. Many factors affect hygiene needs- perspiration (sweating), elimination, vomiting, drainage from wounds or body openings, bed rest and activity. Illness and aging changes can affect self-care abilities. Some people need help with hygiene.

SKIN CARE

Skin is the largest organ of the body. Skin is the body's first line of defense against disease. Intact skin prevents microbes from entering the body and causing an infection. It is the largest system. It is the body's natural covering. There are two layers:

- The epidermis is the outer layer. It has living cells and dead cells. Dead cells constantly flake off and are replaced by living cells. Living cells also die and flake off. Living cells of the epidermis contain pigment. The epidermis has no blood vessels and few nerve endings.
- The dermis is the inner layer. It is made up of connective tissue. Blood vessels, nerves, sweat glands, oil glands, and hair roots are found in the dermis. Sweats glands help regulate body temperature. Sweat is secreted through the skin's pores. The body is cooled as sweat evaporates. Oil glands secrete an oily substance into the space near the hair shaft. Oil travels to the skin surface. The oil helps to keep the skin soft and shiny.

The skin has many functions:

- Provides the body's protective covering.
- Prevents microbes and other substances from entering the body.
- Prevents excess amounts of water from leaving the body.
- Protects organs from injury.
- Contains sensory structures. i.e. nerve endings in the skin sense both pleasant and unpleasant stimulation. They sense cold, pain, touch, and pressure to protect the body from injury.
- Helps to regulate body temperature. i.e. blood vessels dilate when temperature outside the body is high. More blood is brought to the body surface for cooling during evaporation. When blood vessels constrict or narrow, the body retains heat. This is because less blood reaches the skin.
- Stores fats and water.

Skin plays an important role in maintaining body temperature by continuous sweat evaporation. Sweat is made to loose heat from body when desired. Vitamin D is manufactured within the skin as a result of the action of sunlight. Skin gives information like pain, heat and cold after perception of touch. Hence, care must be taken for its proper maintenance –

1. Regular cleaning of the skin is desirable as it removes sebum, sweat, dead skin, dirt, cosmetics and some bacteria
2. Regular bathing with soap and cold water during hot humid climate is essential but in winter days more bathing cause itching and dryness of the skin, so bathing with slight warm water is preferred.
3. Usually at puberty boys and girls suffer from acne, problems which bring disfigurement in their appearance. They are advised

not to squeeze the papuls and to remove the seed as it may cause infection. Acne can be improved by enough sleeping, exercise, avoiding irritants and food like chocolate, nuts, sea foods, fried foods, sweet and spicy foods. The face should be thoroughly rinsed with water.

4. Improper care of the skin leads to bacterial infections and cause boils and warts. During shaving in saloon by infected razors, fungal and bacterial infections are likely to invade the healthy persons. Similarly warts can be removed by freezing or by electric sparks or the old method of rubbing them with horse tails.
5. Loss of pigmentation of the skin results in white patches over forehead, cheeks, chin or any part of the body. Exposure of the skin to sunlight and use of irritants are often effective in re-pigmentation of the skin. Both oral medicines and ointment will also be helpful.
6. The skin is attacked by fungal infections. The marks of the infections are ring shaped, hence it is called ring worm. It affects the sides of the groin, scalp, foot and nails. It spreads rapidly from one person to another. During that moment the child should not be allowed to attend the school and his dress materials are to be boiled with caustic soda.
7. Among all the skin diseases, scabies is most prominent. This is due to a particular mite infestation of the skin. It can be treated by the application of the ointment benzylbenzoate.
8. Another condition of the skin is eczema. The area is itchy or non itchy. There is inflammation of the skin. So, to get rid of it we should keep the skin well hydrated and away from woolen and

synthetics as sweating makes it worse, it is better to stay in a cool environment. Anti allergic medicines and steroid ointment can be effective.

9. Leprosy is a contagious disease which appears as patches on the skin. It is caused by bacteria. The patch is either paler than normal skin colour or reddish. Margins of the patch are generally well demarcated from the surrounding skin. So, if the patches appear on the skin, the person should get examined by a physician. There may be ulcers in foot and nose. These cases are infective and are to be isolated.
10. Moles and tumors may be present on the skin. Moles are harmless and rarely become cancerous. Therefore, any mole which appears later in the body or one which changes in size rapidly tending to bleed, needs to be shown to the skin specialist. Likewise, tumors are overgrowths which rapidly appear on the skin.
11. To keep the skin in proper order, regular washing of hands and face before eating and after using the lavatory is necessary. Cold baths like swimming and sea bathing are taken for their tonic effects. Use of special creams having a protective function to protect the hands of the housewife or those engaged on jobs requiring immersion of the hand in water, chemical substances or grease oil is advisable.

MOUTH CARE

The condition of the various parts of our mouth, i.e., the tongue, teeth and gums, reveals much about the health habits of the individual -pan and tobacco stains speak for themselves. Halitosis or offensive

mouth odour is indicative of poor oral hygiene. The foul smell is primarily a result of cell decay, and the odours are characteristic of the growth of some microorganisms. Halitosis can also result from infected or diseased gums, decaying teeth, or oral tumors. An attractive smile is often the first thing one notice about others. In addition to creating an attractive appearance, healthy teeth and gums are a basic requirement for over all good health. For good oral sanitation one should brush one's teeth every morning and before going to sleep at night. Brushing teeth in the morning is a ritual with most of us but not brushing before going to bed, which is also very important because, hopefully, mouth remains shut while we sleep i.e., for approximately 7-8 hours. This causes decay of whatever is stuck to teeth or to the gums, and allows bacteria to grow during sleep causing decomposition as well as a foul smell. One prevents all this by brushing the teeth just before going to bed and after it is sure that he or she is not going to eat or drink any more.



Mouth care or so call oral hygiene does the following:

- Keeps the mouth and teeth clean
- Prevents mouth odours and infections
- Increases comfort
- Makes food taste better
- Reduces the risk for cavities and periodontal disease

Plaque and tartar are built up from poor oral hygiene. Plaque is a thin film that sticks to teeth. It contains saliva, microbes, and other

substances. Plaque causes tooth decay (cavities). Hardened plaque is called tartar. Tartar builds up at the gum line near the neck of the tooth. Tartar buildup causes periodontal disease. The gums are red and swollen and bleed easily. As the disease progresses, bone is destroyed and teeth loosen. So tooth loss is also very common.

Illness, disease, and some drugs often cause the following problems:

- A bad taste in the mouth.
- A whitish coating in the mouth and on the tongue.
- Redness and swelling in the mouth and on the tongue.
- Dry mouth which is also very common and cause from lack of oxygen, smoking, decreased fluid intake, and anxiety.

NAILS CARE

Nails are extensions of the epidermis, or outer layer of the skin. What we see of the nails is really a dead tissue, called keratin, but it originates in cells that are very much alive. One can feel the pain in this live part of the nail if the nail breaks close to its roots. Nails should be kept short so that nothing accumulates under them. One should make a special effort to clean under nails while washing hands. This can be done with an old tooth brush. Some of the problems associated with nails are the result of too much manicuring. To ensure healthy and clean toe nails, feet should be soaked in warm water once a day and nails cleaned with brush and soap water. Infection or injury of the tissue at the base of a fingernail may cause its surface to become rigid or to split.



Inflammation of the finger joints in case of arthritis can also result in nail deformity. Brittleness of the nails can be caused by chemicals in polish removers, soaps and detergents. It is also a natural consequence of aging. A nail that is polished right down to the base prevents its live tissues from 'breathing' which is not conducive for a healthy nail. Nail polish should therefore not be used all the time.



Therefore, washing hands frequently is very important to avoid spreading germs. Many diseases such as diarrhoea, typhoid etc are caused due to germs present on dirty nails. One should ensure that their hands are clean, especially before eating any food. Everyone must wash hands thoroughly after going to the toilet and before having meal.

Therefore, hands should be washed-

- After using the toilet
- Handling raw food (before and after)
- Touching the hair, face, or body
- Sneezing or coughing
- Smoking, eating or drinking
- Handling chemicals
- Taking out garbage or trash
- Clearing Tables
- Touching clothing or aprons
- Touching un-sanitized equipment and work surfaces

BATHING

Bathing cleanses and removes wastes from the skin, stimulates circulation, and provides passive and active exercise. Regular bathing is important for cleanliness and good personal appearance. They also prevent hygiene-related diseases such as scabies, ringworm, trachoma and conjunctivitis. Educational and promotional activities can encourage bathing and laundering, but increasing the number of washing facilities and locating them conveniently may be more effective. Bathing with soap is an important means of preventing the



transmission of trachoma—an illness that can cause blindness and other eyesight problems. Children's faces in particular should be washed regularly and thoroughly. If a child has trachoma, a special towel or tissue should be used to wipe or dry the child's face; the towel should never be used for other children because of the risk of transmitting the disease. Ideally, programmes that promote bathing should be combined with a programme to reduce the numbers of flies, which spread trachoma and other diseases, and to improve sanitation.

For people to bath thoroughly they must use sufficient water, but it may be difficult to promote the use of more water for washing if water supplies are distant and water must be collected by hand. Moreover, many traditional bathing practices do not use water efficiently and ensuring cleanliness may be difficult. By modifying existing practices, such as by encouraging the use of water



containers with taps, it may be possible to improve the efficiency of water use. Community shower units, with separate facilities for men and women, can also become income-generating enterprises in larger villages, but the facilities require careful maintenance and must be conveniently located.

CLOTHING

Clothing is a feature of nearly all human societies. The amount and type of clothing worn is dependent on physical stature, gender, as well as social and geographic condition.



A primary function of clothing is to improve the comfort of the wearer by providing protection against the elements. Clothing provides protection from sunburn in warm weather, and protection from frostbite in cold weather. Cloths also reduce risk during activities such as work or sports. Some clothing protect from specific environmental hazards such as insects, noxious chemicals, weather, weapons and contact with abrasive substances. Clothing also performs a range of social and cultural function. Clothing can be used to indicate social status and convey individual, occupational, and sexual differentiation.

Importance of clothing

Clothing is important because it reflects an individual's culture, personality and preferences. People can use clothing to enhance personal appearance and protect the body from extreme temperatures and elements in various climates. The clothes say something about an individual and reflect one's personality in the best way possible. But it

should also be appropriate for the weather, the occasion and in good repair. The main objectives of wearing clothes are:

- (a) to protect the body against wind, cold, heat, rain and snow;
- (b) to maintain the body temperature; and
- (c) to cover the body and enhance one's appearance.

The materials most commonly used for making clothes are wool, cotton, linen, silk, artificial silk and leather.

Synthetic yarns are a comparatively recent introduction to clothing. It is important to understand the nature and qualities of the different fabrics used to make clothing in order to make an intelligent choice from the point of view of utility, comfort, maintenance as well as



expenditure. Out of the three functions of clothing, while a lot of attention is given to covering the body and enhancing its appearance, the other two objectives i.e., protection from the elements and maintenance of body temperature, get relegated to the background.

This is so mostly because of ignorance rather than design. All of us know that wool keeps us



warm because it is a bad conductor of heat. It is a bad conductor of heat because of the structure of the fiber and

not because it is thick or fluffy. This is why, while woolen garments are required when it is cold outside, cottons are the choice for the



heat of the summer when we want our body to shed as much heat as possible, and also want to get as much air in as

possible to be able to loose heat. Cotton fabric ventilates well. It allows air to pass through. Silk is a poor conductor of heat and does not ventilate as well as cotton, hence silk clothing is best suited for cold climates. Synthetic fibers are also poor conductors of heat and do not ventilate well, hence are not comfortable in hot climate. A little understanding of the nature of different fabrics will help us to combine protection, comfort and beauty in selecting our clothing.



Clean and fresh underclothes are also of the utmost importance - much more so than clean outer clothes because they are close to the skin and can cause bad odour and even infection. It is very important to change underwear like underpants, vests, brasseries and petticoats every day throughout the year. In the summer if we perspire a lot we might need to change twice a day. It is much less unhygienic to wear a used shirt, kurta or saree than it is to wear unwashed underwear after a bath. Arrangements should be made to wash underwears daily so that we can always have a clean one. It is a good practice to get into clean and loose garments for sleeping at night. Long-sleeved and long-legged terry-cotton, flannel or silk night clothes are acceptable for the cold climate but for the summer short-sleeved and short-legged cotton ones are preferred, particularly for children. Night garments should be loose enough to allow free movement of the body.



Colours also have an impact on how we feel in our clothes. Dark colours make us feel warm and light colours like white make you feel cool.

CONCLUSION:

Good hygiene is an important barrier to many infectious diseases, including the faecal-oral diseases and promotes comfort, safety and better health. As a whole, personal hygiene is the care of our bodies.

It includes the many practices that help people be, and stay healthy such as skin care, mouth care, nails care, bathing and clothing. Therefore, these practices are very important for our healthy living and to avoid spreading of various germs and viruses into the body. Many diseases caused due to poor hygiene like not caring of skin, mouth, nails, bathing and clothing etc. One should ensure these practices regularly and properly so that their body remain neat and clean as well as protect from various unwanted diseases and illness.