Menstrual Hygiene

Stuff you can use when you're on your period

The Red Elephant Foundation
Menstrual hygiene products absorb the blood flow from the uterus.

There are a lot of options available in the market when it comes to buying menstrual hygiene products, be it sanitary napkins, tampons, menstrual cups or cloth pads. Each of these options come in a variety of brands as well.

Most of these products are available over the counter at stores. But, they're not always accessible for a variety of reasons.
why aren't menstrual hygiene products accessible?

Menstrual hygiene products that are sold over the counter can be expensive for many to access. In some places, cultural and economic barriers prevent access to menstrual hygiene products. In fact, a lot of girls drop out of school once they start menstruating because they do not have access to/use menstrual products which actually prevent their clothes from staining.

Most store-bought products use material that may cause allergic reactions. They are made of rayon, wood pulp or viscose and not cotton. Such pads may not be good for women in the long run. Besides, there is also the fact that some of these products are not usable because there are no sustainable means of disposal!
why does disposal matter?

The sanitary products that most women use are non-degradable and thus end up adding to the landfill. Reports state that an average woman disposes about 150 kg of non-biodegradable waste every year.

That is just for one woman. Now try to calculate the number of sanitary napkins that all the women in a country probably dispose in a year! It is indeed a staggering amount of waste, isn’t it?

Fortunately, there are other hygiene products which are more affordable, better for the environment and better for your health as well!
A tampon is a product that you insert into your vagina so that it absorbs menstrual blood during periods. Tampons prevent staining and do not leak. It also helps one go ahead with their normal routine including swimming or running without having to worry about menstruating.

Most tampons, however, are made from plastic which can be harmful. Instead, there are lots of organic options available. Organic tampons are made from cotton. Thus, the product is a healthier alternative to other tampons.
what are menstrual cups?

A menstrual cup is a miniscule cup-like structure that rests against the walls of the vagina. It collects menstrual fluids instead of absorbing them.

Most types of menstrual cups are durable (long lasting) and reusable. To clean a menstrual cup, simply wash it with soap and water or sterilize it.

In the long run, menstrual cups can be a good investment as one can save a lot of money spent on buying disposable pads.

Menstrual cups need not be removed and cleaned frequently as they can be used for up to 12 hours. They reduce the risk of leakage and odor.
what are cloth pads?

These pads are made of sustainable and environment positive materials such as cotton, banana-fiber and bamboo fiber.

Cloth pads are healthier to use as the manufacturing process is devoid of harmful and irritant chemicals. Most cloth pads are biodegradable and decay easily since they are not made of plastic.

Cloth pads are long-lasting, recyclable and reusable. In the long run, cloth pads are cheaper to buy as one pad can be used for a long time and need not be frequently purchased. Cloth pads require regular washing and sterilizing.
references


http://www.keeperofthehome.org/make-your-own-cloth-pads

http://www.wikihow.com/Make-Your-Own-Reusable-Menstrual-Pads