

Session 5

Hygiene and Puberty

Objectives

By the end of this session, the participants will:

1. Explain the need for increased hygiene during puberty.
2. Describe hygiene procedures for adolescents.



Materials Needed

- Note cards
- Several poster-size sheets of paper
- Markers

Before You Begin

- Carefully read all of the **Content for Session 5** (pages 116-117).
- Read each step of the session. Think about how you will perform each step and what you will add to every session.
- Prepare note cards for Step 2, as directed.
- Make your own advertisement, song, or rap for Step 2 to share as an example.



Time

Activity	Minutes
Step 1: Taking Care of Your Body	15
Step 2: Body Care Advertisement/Commercial	45
Step 3: Question and Answer Race on Hygiene	30
Step 4: Take-Home Messages	10
TOTAL MINUTES	100

Step 1: Taking Care of Your Body

Large Group Discussion (15 minutes)

Ask the following questions to promote discussion and use the opportunity to introduce a new topic:

- We talked before about bodily changes in puberty. Does this mean we have to care for our bodies differently? How?
- Why is it important to keep different parts of our body clean?
- How can you keep each area of your body clean?

Mention any other areas or aspects of the body that they forgot (*face, hair, teeth, odor, and genital area*).

Step 2: Body Care Advertisement/Commercial

Small Group Activity (45 minutes)

Divide the participants into pairs or small groups and assign one of the following topics to each group. Using the Content for Session 5, create a note card for each of these topics with basic information about each topic and give it to each group (or alternatively, make a photocopy of each page and distribute one topic to each group).

- Washing the Body
- Smelling Good
- Hair
- Teeth and Mouth
- Underwear
- Genital Area (Boys)
- Genital Area (Girls)

Ask groups to review the information about their topics.

Ask each group to create either a television/radio commercial or newspaper/magazine advertisement to publicize an exciting new product or method to manage their topic. For example, an advertisement could be a poster that gives the complete steps and process for smelling good. Encourage participants to be creative. For example, they may invent a product to use; act in the role of “expert” on the subject; incorporate an activity, such as new dance steps, to use while brushing and flossing teeth; or develop a “keep clean” rap.

Show them what you made as a sample.

After completing their work, ask the participants to share their commercial/advertisement with the larger group.

Step 3: Question and Answer Race on Hygiene

Large Group Game (30 minutes)

Divide participants into two teams. Ask Team 1 a question from the list below. The team has 30 seconds to answer. If the answer is correct, then the team receives one point. If the answer is incorrect, give the same question to Team 2. Continue until all the questions have been answered correctly. The team with the most points wins.

1. What should boys and girls use to wash their genitals? (*Soap and water.*)
2. If a boy’s penis is not circumcised, how should he wash it? (*Gently pull the foreskin of the penis back and wash the head of the penis.*)
3. What is the best way to take care of acne on your face? (*Washing your face at least twice a day with soap and water.*)
3. What is the best way to stay clean? (*The answer should be what is most common in your country.*)

4. What is the best way to brush your teeth? (*The answer should be what is most common in your country.*)
5. Why do we brush our teeth? (*To avoid cavities and keep them clean.*)
6. Why do we wear clean underwear? (*To avoid infection and keep the genital area clean.*)
7. When do you always wash your hands? (*Before meals, after meals, and after going to the bathroom.*)
8. Why should you always wash your hands after going to the bathroom? (*To avoid the spread of bacteria and infection.*)
9. Should women put perfume (herbs, douche, etc.) into their vagina? Why or why not? (*No, this will cause dryness, irritation, or infection.*)

Step 4: Take-Home Messages

(10 minutes)

Close the session by stressing the following:

- Keeping clean means keeping healthy. Keeping clean should be a routine part of your day.

Stress the Following

Thank them for being an enthusiastic group. Tell them that it is hard to talk about one's body sometimes and that you are proud of them for participating and sharing with each other.

Possible Questions and Answers

Q. My sister told me that it was good to put perfume, herbs, douches, etc. in the vagina to keep it smelling nice. Is there something wrong with that?

A. Yes, this will cause dryness, irritation, or infection in the vagina. Some women put products there because they do not like the secretions that come out. But the secretions are normal. Women should not try to fix this by putting unusual products there.

Q. How often should you wash your hair?

A. Every day or every two or three days is okay. For others, once a week is fine, especially for those of African descent.

Q. Do all men shave?

A. No. Some men grow beards or moustaches. Some men do not have to shave because they do not grow much facial hair.

Q. Is it okay to pick at acne on the face?

A. It is important to try not to pick at, or squeeze, the spots as this can cause them to become infected. It also leads to scarring.

Session 5

Content for Session 5

Washing the Body

Washing the body helps one to stay clean, avoid infection, and avoid becoming sick.

Bathe with water or soap and water once or twice per day.

Wash hands before and after meals. Wash hands after using the bathroom to prevent the spread of bacteria and infection.

Washing the face at least twice a day with soap and water can help keep acne away or make it less severe.

Smelling Good

Use deodorant, baby powder, or the most common product in your country for smelling good under your arms.

Hair

Shampoo your hair regularly to keep it clean. Every day or every two or three days is fine. Once a week is fine, too, especially for those of African descent. It also depends on cultural beliefs.

Boys should talk to a parent, an older brother, or another adult they trust about shaving. Girls can ask a female they trust about shaving their legs. Not all men and women shave. This depends on culture and choice.

Teeth and Mouth

Use what is most common in your country to clean the teeth after every meal and before bed each night. Cleaning teeth helps avoid cavities or rotted teeth. Using toothpaste with fluoride can also help to strengthen your teeth.

Underwear

Wear clean underwear every day to avoid infection and keep the genital area clean.

Genital Area (Boys)

It is important to wash and clean the penis every day. Wash the scrotum, between the scrotum and the thighs, in between the buttocks, and the anus with soap and water every day.

For uncircumcised boys, it is important to pull back the foreskin and gently clean this area. Whether a boy is circumcised or not, it is important to wash and clean the penis and the area around the anus every day.

Genital Area (Girls)

Girls need to wash the area around the vulva and the anus with soap and water every day. The inside of the vagina cleans itself naturally. You should never try to wash inside the vagina unless a health provider instructs you to do so. Unfortunately, some girls and women try to wash inside the vagina with harsh soaps. Some women also use deodorants, perfumes, herbs, or douches to clean the vagina. None of this is necessary, and it can even be harmful because such products can change the normal fluids inside the vagina and can irritate the skin inside the vagina and cause infection.

Girls should try to wipe from front to back after they use the bathroom. Whether or not a girl uses toilet tissue, paper, water, grass, or leaves to clean herself, she should make sure she avoids wiping forward. If she wipes forward, she risks pulling germs from the anus to the vagina and urethra. This can give her an infection.

Regularly change the pads or whatever else you use during menstruation.