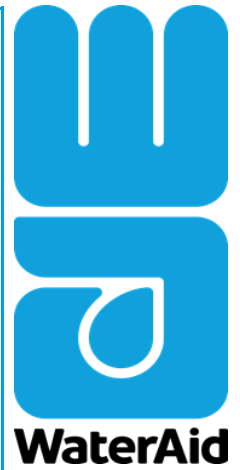


Ouch! Treating the symptoms of periods

Background:

WaterAid is an international not-for-profit organisation, determined to make clean water, decent toilets and good hygiene normal for everyone, everywhere within a generation. Every month, 1.8 billion people across the world have a period – but millions have to manage theirs without essential clean water, decent toilets and good hygiene knowledge. Not having access to these can be both embarrassing and unsafe – and can have far-reaching impacts for women and girls, acting as a disadvantage in their lives as they are forced to stay home every month, missing vital chances to go to school, earn a living, and to take control of their futures.



Time needed:

15 minutes

Aim:

To find out what happens before and after a period arrives.

To discover and share ways of dealing with symptoms before and during periods

Materials:

Period symptom and relief cards printed, copied and cut out.

Learning Objective:

To discuss and learn ways to deal with some of the symptoms that are experienced before and during a period.

What to do:

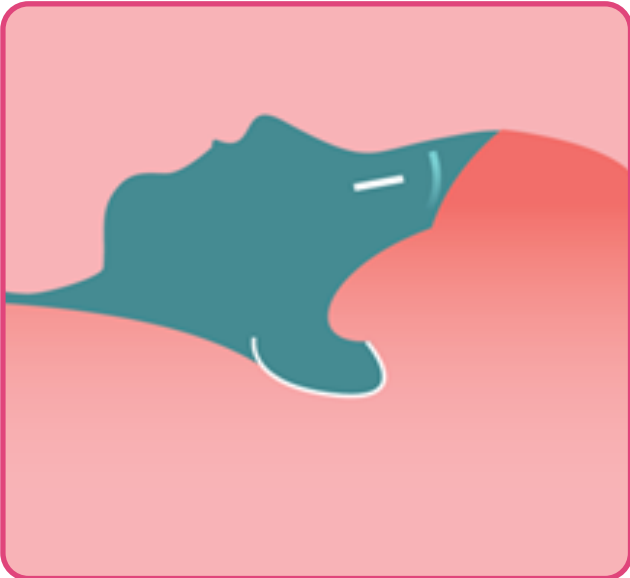
As a group activity:

1. Ask students if they know what symptoms people can experience before and during a period. Discuss the common symptoms, share your experiences (if you have periods) or ask students if they could share theirs.
2. As symptoms are discussed write them on a whiteboard. Such examples include; irritability, discomfort, headaches, spots, tummy aches, tiredness or feeling emotional.
3. Explain to the students that these symptoms are normal but that each individual's experiences vary as some feel all these symptoms, some a few and some none.
4. Stick the symptom relief cards up on the walls around the room, leaving space between each card.
5. Read out each symptom and ask students to stand in front of the relief cards they think might help relieve the symptoms. Remind them that there may be more than one right answer and not everyone has to agree. They can also call out their own ideas.

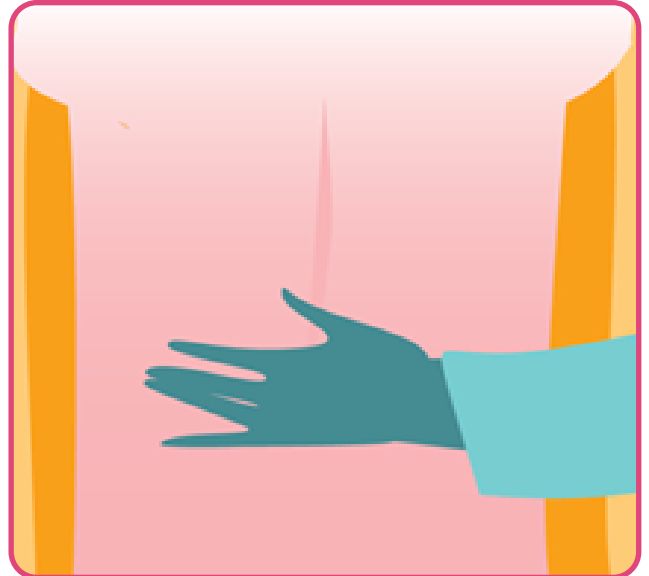
As an individual activity:

1. Ask students if they know what symptoms people can experience before and during a period. Discuss the common symptoms, share your experiences (if you have periods) or ask students if they could share theirs.
2. Explain to the students that these symptoms are normal but that each individual's experiences vary as some feel all these symptoms, some a few and some none.
3. Give each individual or pair a set of cards, ask them to organise the cards into three piles (symptoms, picture cards and treatments.)
4. Once they have organised the cards, see if they can match the symptom to a good relief treatment for it. Remind them that there may be more than one right answer and not everyone has to agree. Once they have done this, discuss the answers as a class, see if they agree or if they have any ideas of their own. The treatment explanations sheet can help explain why treatments can help ease discomfort.

Treatment Pictures - Group Activity



Treatment Pictures - Group Activity



Symptoms Cards



Irritability

Headaches

Discomfort

**Tummy
aches**

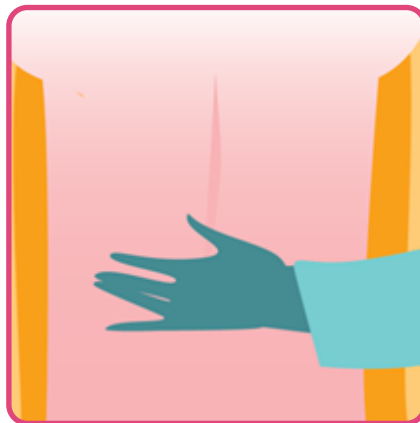
Tiredness

**Getting
spots**

**Feeling
emotional**

Back ache

Treatment Pictures - Individual Activity



Treatment Cards - Individual Activity



**Hot Water
Bottle**

**Glass of
water**

Sleeping

**Laying
down**

Exercise

**Rub your
tummy**

**Eat a nice
meal**

A back rub

**A hot
drink**

**Talk to
someone**

**Relaxation
exercises**

**Listening
to music**

Treatment Explanations Sheet

Hot water bottle - a hot water bottle wrapped in a tea towel or in a cover on your tummy or back can help reduce pain.

Glass of water - Staying hydrated during your period can help reduce the amount of pain, clear up your skin and reduce your headaches.

Sleeping - having a sleep can reduce your irritability and discomfort during your period. If you need to rest, take the time to do so.

Laying down - When you lie down on your back it can reduce your discomfort and help give you some rest.

Exercise - releases happy chemicals in your brain to help improve your mood and relieve discomfort.

Relaxation exercises - doing mindfulness exercises, yoga and other relaxation methods can improve mood and relax muscles, reducing cramps.

Eat a nice meal - this can help make you feel happier, but also by eating healthy foods you can help reduce your tummy aches.

A back rub - having your back rubbed can help relax your muscles and help ease pain.

A hot drink - drinking something hot can help relax your muscles, destress you and soothe cramps.

Talk to someone - having a conversation with someone about your worries or to cheer you up.

Rub your tummy - this can reduce the intensity of period cramps.

Listening to music - can help relax you which improves your mood, soothes your muscles and reduces discomfort.

