



A.S.D. Government Degree College for Women

An Autonomous Institution

Jagannaickpur, Kakinada, Andhra Pradesh-533002

Affiliated to Adikavi Nannaya University, Rajamahendravaram



INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE CELL

DEPARTMENTAL EXTENSION AND OUTREACH PROGRAMS (2019-2020)

S.No	Name of the Activity	Conducted Through	Date	Number of Students Participated
1	Awareness on Balanced Diet and Nutritional Deficiency - Diet Survey	Department of Home Science	20-02-2020	52
2	Health and Hygiene Awareness in Social Welfare Hostels	Department of Home Science	20-02-2020 to 27-02-2020	35
3	Practical Demonstration to IX Students.	Department of Physics	15-02-2020	35
4	Teaching Grammar at High School	Department of English	11-12-2019 to 05-01-2020	68
5	Orientation and Awareness on Health, Hygiene and Nutrition to adolescents	Department of Home Science	24-04-2020 to 29-04-2020	54



H. Suvachala

Signature of the Principal
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A.S.D GOVERNMENT DEGREE COLLEGE FOR WOMEN (A),

KAKINADA



Department of Home Science

Extension Activity

2019-2020

Diet Survey on 20/02/2020

Awareness on Balanced Diet and Nutritional Deficiency

On 20th February 2020, students of III B.Sc Home Science under the guidance of Dr.G.Anitha conducted diet survey in the Golilapeta Area and created Awareness on Balanced Diet and Nutritional Deficiency for the Mothers and young Women



On 20th February 2020 Dr.G.Anitha, Lecturer in Home Science conducted diet survey

Need of Diet Survey: Golilapeta Area lacked awareness about balanced diets and nutritional deficiencies, which could lead to health problems, especially among mothers and young women. Proper education was required to promote healthy eating habits and address malnutrition issues in the community.

Impact of the Survey: The diet survey helped assess the dietary patterns and nutritional status of the residents. The awareness program educated mothers and young women about the importance of a balanced diet, the consequences of nutritional deficiencies, and ways to incorporate nutrient-rich foods into their meals. This initiative empowered the community with knowledge to make informed dietary choices, potentially improving overall health and well-being

Health and Hygiene Awareness from 20th to 27th February 2020

Students of Home Science conducted awareness on Health and Hygiene in the nearby Social welfare hostels from 20th to 27th February 2020







Need : Hostels often lack proper guidance on maintaining good health and hygiene practices, which can lead to the spread of illnesses and infections among residents. Awareness and education were necessary to promote a clean and healthy living environment for the hostel students.

Impact: The awareness program emphasized the importance of personal hygiene, sanitation, and healthy habits. Students received practical tips on handwashing, food safety, waste management, and maintaining cleanliness in shared spaces. This initiative instilled valuable knowledge and skills, enabling hostel residents to adopt better hygiene practices, reduce the risk of illnesses, and create a more conducive living environment for their overall well-being.

M. Suvarchala



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Department of Physics
Extension Activity
Practical Demonstration
to
High School Students
15-02-2020

on 15-02-2020 Department of Physics, ASD GDC for Women Conducted Practical Demonstration to the Class IX students of Municipal Girls high School Jagannaickpur

Objectives of the Programme are:

1. **Bridging the gap between theory and application:** Physics is a subject that involves numerous abstract concepts and theories. Practical demonstrations help students visualize and comprehend these concepts, making the learning process more engaging and effective.
2. **Cultivating scientific curiosity and inquiry:** Hands-on experiments and demonstrations spark curiosity in young minds, encouraging them to ask questions, think critically, and develop a deeper appreciation for the scientific method.
3. **Promoting experiential learning:** Experiential learning through practical demonstrations reinforces the theoretical knowledge acquired in the classroom, enhancing retention and understanding.
4. **Fostering interest in STEM fields:** Exposing high school students to the wonders of physics through captivating demonstrations can ignite their passion for science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), potentially influencing their future academic and career choices.







The programme Created Impact in the following Ways.

1. **Increased motivation and engagement:** Interactive and visually striking demonstrations capture students' attention, fostering a deeper interest in physics and potentially motivating them to pursue further studies or careers in related fields.
2. **Promotion of scientific literacy:** Exposing students to practical applications of physics contributes to their overall scientific literacy, equipping them with the knowledge and skills necessary to navigate an increasingly technology-driven world.
3. **Inspiration for future scientists and innovators:** Witnessing the awe-inspiring demonstrations may inspire some students to pursue careers in physics, contributing to the advancement of scientific research and technological innovations.
4. **Strengthening community outreach:** Such programs foster collaboration between educational institutions and the local community, promoting science education and awareness, and potentially attracting future talent to the field of physics.

By organizing practical demonstrations in physics for high school students, the Department of Physics not only enriches the learning experience but also plays a crucial role in nurturing the next generation of scientists, innovators, and critical thinkers.

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శ్రీ విద్యా ప్రసక్తాం

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

2019 - 2020

Students Extension Activity

'Teaching Grammar to High School Students'

11-12-19 to 05-01-2020



Students of BSc Taking grammar classes to Students of Municipal girls High school , Jagannaickpur at Church square

Impact of Teaching Grammar to High School Students Programme :

1. Improved language proficiency: The grammar classes will directly contribute to enhancing the language proficiency of the students from the Municipal Girls High School. By mastering grammar rules and concepts, they will be better equipped to communicate effectively, both in academic and personal settings.
2. Increased academic performance: Strong language skills are essential for success in various subjects, as they enable students to comprehend texts, convey ideas clearly, and express themselves effectively in written assignments and exams. Improved grammar knowledge can lead to better academic performance across disciplines.
3. Boosted self-confidence and motivation: As students gain a better understanding of grammar and improve their language skills, they are likely to experience a boost in self-confidence. This increased confidence can motivate them to actively participate in class, ask questions, and engage more fully in their education.
4. Fostering a love for learning: By making the learning process interactive and engaging, the program can potentially instill a love for learning in the students. This positive attitude towards education can have a lasting impact on their academic journey and personal growth.
5. Developing leadership and mentorship skills: For the BSc students involved in teaching the grammar classes, the program provides an opportunity to develop leadership, communication, and mentorship skills. These experiences can be invaluable in their personal and professional development.
6. Strengthening community ties: The collaboration between the BSc students and the Municipal Girls High School fosters stronger ties within the community. It promotes a sense of responsibility and collective effort towards improving educational outcomes and empowering the younger generation.

Overall, the grammar classes provided by the BSc students to the students of the Municipal Girls High School have the potential to positively impact language proficiency, academic performance, self-confidence, motivation, and community engagement, ultimately paving the way for better educational and career opportunities for the participating students.



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BEST PRACTICE

2019-20

DEPARTMENT OF HOME SCIENCE

From
K.Lavanya
Lecturer in Home Science
A.S.D GDC (W)(A)
Kakinada

To
The Principal
A.S.D GDC (W)(A)
Kakinada

Respected Madam,

I submit that we are planning to conduct "Orientation cum Awareness Programme for adolescent girls" in Municipal Girls High School, Jagannaickpur, Kakinada. In this regard, I request you to kindly permit me to send the students of III B.Sc Home Science (23) to Municipal Girls High School daily 3PM to 5PM from 24th February to 29th February 2020. I also submit that their classwork will not be disturbed and adjusted accordingly.

Thanking you madam,

Yours faithfully,

K. Lavanya

(K.Lavanya)

H. Svarchala
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Department of Home Science
Activity Proforma 2019-20

Date	24.2.2020 to 29.2.2020
Conducted through	Department of Home Science
Nature of the activity	Best Practice of the department
Title of the activity	Orientation & awareness on Health, Hygiene & Nutrition to Adolescents
Name of the Collaborative Agency	-
Details of Resource Person	-
Brief report of the activity	The students of Home Science who are staying in the hostel regularly conduct sessions on Health, Hygiene and Nutrition for the other girls in the hostel. This not only creates awareness to the adolescents but also increases communication and leadership skills among the Peer teachers.
Name of the lecturer who planned and organized the activity	Department of Home Science
Signature of the Dept incharge/convenor of the committee	K. Lavanya
Signature of the principal	
Remarks	





PERSONAL HYGIENE

Maintaining personal hygiene is essential for more than one reason; social, health, personal, psychological or just as a way of life. Maintaining a good standard of hygiene helps keep infections, illnesses and bad odors at bay. The importance of hygiene should be taught from an early age to help cultivate good habits. Personal hygiene can be defined as an act of maintaining cleanliness and grooming of the external body. Maintaining good personal hygiene consists of bathing, washing your hands, brushing teeth and sporting clean clothing. Additionally, it is also about making safe and hygienic decisions when you are around others.

One of the most fool proof ways to safeguard yourself and others from illness is through good personal hygiene. This means cleaning your hands, especially, but additionally your body. Good personal hygiene not only enhances your overall appearance, its importance is directly related to prevention of diseases, infections, and unpleasant odors.

Our comprehensive guide to help you stay healthy through good personal hygiene from healthy hand washing to all your need to know about skin we've got healthy personal hygiene covered from top to toe!

Hygiene in your daily life

We are all completely aware of the kind of health risks that we are exposed to on a daily basis, and that has made hygiene the most vital part of our life. Actually, majority of the new-world diseases like bird flu and swine flu have been associated with lack of hygiene. If we work towards maintaining better hygiene today, it will surely help the generation that would follow us.

Hygiene is a habit that should be given importance and be indoctrinated in children from an early age. Hygiene should not be all about our bodies; it should also concentrate on maintaining our surroundings as well.

Let us see how we can maintain hygiene in the best manner:

- Committing yourself to self-hygiene

Keeping in mind the harsh weather conditions in India, it is highly essential to staying hygienic and teach our loved ones the importance of hygiene. As Indians, we have always looked down for our lack of hygiene and it is high time we changed that notion.

Let us look at some tips that will help you stay hygienic:

- Make sure you brush your teeth twice on a daily basis. Dental hygiene is very crucial as your teeth get easily damaged if not cared for properly
- Make sure you bathe daily, and depending on weather conditions, don't shy away from bathing twice if you have to. Bathing is really important, especially in a city where humidity and pollution breeds bacteria faster.
- Wear a clinical mask if you are travelling through highly polluted areas. Exposure to pollutants on a regular basis can increase the toxin levels in your body and lead to respiratory issues.
- Always wear fresh set of clothes. Wearing the same clothes without washing them can lead to variety of skin disorders. You can add an extra layer of protection by using multi-use hygiene liquid while washing your clothes
- Always keep your genitals extremely clean. It is easy for bacteria and infections to spread from there.
- Wash your hands in regular intervals. We end up touching a lot of unclean places almost every few minutes.

Let us understand how we can keep our surrounding hygienic:

- Dispose waste as soon as you can. If waste material is not handled properly, it can lead to the outbreak of deadly diseases like Pneumonia, Jaundice, and Tuberculosis. History has been a proof that most of the epidemics has caused due to improper waste disposal.
- Always keep your home clean. Keep your toilet and kitchen germ free. There are highly effective kitchen gels available in the market that helps in cleaning and disinfecting multiple surfaces. Chose the ones that are dermatologically tested and safe on hands.
- Do not dispose waste nearby residential areas
- Never spit or urinate in public places.

Usage of public transport is unavoidable in this time and age. Unless you are highly affluent and only travel in a private car and jet, you have to depend on the regular metro, bus, or train for your daily commute. Regardless of whether you are a germophobe, you have to agree to the fact that public transportation breeds a lot of uncleanliness, filled with unimaginable grime that you would not want to think about.

People who take the public transport are more likely to suffer from acute respiratory illnesses than those who travel in private vehicles. However, there is a silver lining: if you are a daily commuter, you are

comparatively safe than an occasional commuter, because eventually you are the one who ends up building immunity.

Till we get our head around which approach is the correct one, let us look at some of the methods through which we can keep ourselves safe from becoming ill while travelling in public transport.

- **Keep washing your hands**

If gloves are too silly for you, don't worry, we have another solution. All you need to make sure is that you wash your hands whenever you get to your destination. Make sure you wash your hands before eating your food or making contact with your face. Hand sanitizers can act like a blessing in situations like these. Make sure you always have one whenever you are on the go.

- **Carry Tissues**

This helps in more than one way. It will come handy when you are about to sneeze as well as when someone else around you starts sneezing. If a colleague or a stranger around is sneezing, press the tissue to your nose for 30 seconds and keep your eyes shut. Also, there are highly effective antibacterial multi-use wipes offered by Dettol that can assist in instant clean-up of your face and hands.

- **Stay away from your cell phone**

Today, we are constantly in touch with our gadgets; laptops, computers, and tablets. While we spend time on these, we need to make sure that the surface and screens of all our gizmos are clean, especially the ones that come in close contact with the face. Also, try to avoid bringing your phone out if there is too much pollution. The reason being that you bring the phone close to your face when somebody calls, which gives the germs a lot of time to pounce on to your body.

- **Change clothes as soon as you reach home**

Majority of the people have the habit of lazing on their sofa for hours in their street clothes. However, this increases the risk of you transmitting the germs to your sofa, couch, or even your bed. So, make sure you change into your favourite home clothes as soon as you reach home. To ensure maximum hygiene, add a capful of hygiene liquid while doing your laundry.

- **Timing is the key**

This may sound wishful, but, travelling in public transport when it is less crowded can really add more stars to your hygiene. The simple logic being, lesser the people, fewer the chances of contagious bacteria around you. Moreover, it is always better to find empty space in otherwise overcrowded bus, metro, or trains. Try leaving your home slightly early if you are a daily commuter. Another effective way of reducing human contact while commuting is by using smartcards. This way you wouldn't have to stand in long queues and stand close to people who might be carrying bacteria in their body.

- **Drink safe water**

Always carry adequate water from home before you start commuting. Drinking contaminated water

can lead to water borne diseases such as cholera, typhoid, and hepatitis. If the water facilities on your way are not satisfactory, always go for packaged drinking water.

- **Air Masks**

They say desperate time calls for desperate measures. So if your city is infamous for the rising air pollution levels or if there are news of any communicable disease to break out ensure you get yourself air masks. It is one of the most efficient ways to keep bacteria, pollen, and dust away.

- **Wear gloves**

There are high chances that you would look silly doing this in summers, but this is the season when the humidity levels are high, which together with pollution makes you irresistible for the bacteria. Wearing gloves safeguards you whenever you touch poles, seats and handlebars, which are also touched by everyone else. Simply put, you are avoiding skin contact wherever possible.





Anemia : symptoms, causes , diagnosis and management

Anaemia is a deficiency in the number or quality of red blood cells. The red blood cells carry oxygen around the body, using a particular protein called haemoglobin. Anaemia means that either the level of red blood cells or the level of hemoglobin is lower than normal.

When a person is anemic, their heart has to work harder to pump the quantity of blood needed to get adequate oxygen around their body. During heavy exercise, the cells may not be able to carry enough oxygen to meet the body's needs and the person can become exhausted.

Anaemia isn't a disease in itself, but a result of a malfunction somewhere in the body. This blood condition is common, particularly in females. Some estimates suggest that around one in five menstruating women and half of all pregnant women are anaemic.

Understanding blood

Blood is made up of a fluid called plasma which contains:

- Red blood cells – which take oxygen around the body.
- White blood cells – which are part of the immune system, and defend the body from infection.
- Platelets – which help the blood to clot if we cut ourselves.
- Proteins – and other chemicals that have various functions.

Red blood cells are made in the bone marrow, and millions are released into the bloodstream each day. A constant new supply of red blood cells is needed to replace old cells that break down. Red blood cells contain a chemical called haemoglobin. Haemoglobin binds to oxygen and takes oxygen from the lungs to all parts of the body.

To make red blood cells and haemoglobin constantly, you need a healthy bone marrow and nutrients such as iron and certain vitamins which we get from food.

Anaemia Blood count

Anaemia is the condition of having a lower-than-normal number of red blood cells or quantity of hemoglobin.

Normal results vary, but in general are:

Male: 13.8 to 17.2 gm/dL

Female: 12.1 to 15.1 gm/dL

(Note: gm/dL = grams per deciliter)

Anaemia has three main causes: blood loss, lack of red blood cell production, and high rates of red blood cell destruction.

Conditions that may lead to anaemia include

- Heavy periods
 - Pregnancy
 - Ulcers
 - Colon polyps or colon cancer
 - Inherited disorders
 - A diet that does not have enough iron, folic acid or vitamin B12
 - Blood disorders such as sickle cell anaemia and thalassemia, or cancer
 - Aplastic anaemia, a condition that can be inherited or acquired
- Anaemia can make you feel tired, cold, dizzy, and irritable. You may be short of breath or have a headache.

Symptoms

The most common symptom of anaemia is fatigue or weakness. Other signs and symptoms of anaemia include:

- Shortness of breath
- Dizziness
- Headache
- Coldness in the hands and feet
- Pale skin
- Chest pain

Causes

Three main cause of anaemia are:

1) Blood loss: Blood loss is the most common cause of anaemia, especially in iron-deficiency anaemia. Blood loss can be short term or long term depending upon the conditions. Bleeding in the digestive or urinary tract can cause blood loss. Surgery, trauma, or cancer also can cause blood loss. Heavy blood loss due to menstruation. If a lot of blood is lost, the body may lose enough red blood cells to cause anaemia.

2) Lack of Red Blood cell production:

It can be due to "acquired" or "Inherited". ["Acquired" means that the person is not born with the condition, but may develop it at later stages.

"Inherited" means that the condition has been passed by the parents.]

Acquired conditions and factors that can lead to anaemia include:

Poor diet

Unusual hormonal levels

Chronic diseases

Pregnancy

Aplastic anaemia can also prevent body from making enough red blood cells. This condition can be both acquired or inherited.

3) High rates of RBCs destruction:

Factors that can cause destruction of red blood cells.

One condition can be an enlarged or diseased spleen. This is an acquired condition.

Inherited conditions are the one when body destroy too many red blood cells. It can be in sickle cell anaemia, thalassemias, and lack of certain enzymes. These conditions create defects in the red blood cells that cause them to die faster than healthy red blood cells.

Hemolytic anaemia is another example of a condition in which body destroys its red blood cells. Both inherited or acquired conditions or other factors can cause hemolytic anaemia. Examples include immune disorders, infections, certain medicines, or reactions to blood transfusions.

Diagnosis

Medical History:

Signs and symptoms like weakness, malaise or body aches

Blood tests:

To check for the levels of hemoglobin (it is a protein that transports oxygen)

Red blood cells (cells that contain hemoglobin) is lower than normal.

Physical examination:

Rapid or irregular heartbeat

Rapid or irregular breathing

Enlarged liver or spleen

Complete blood count (CBC): A CBC is generally done to know the number of blood cells in the blood. To check anaemia, physician will see the levels of the red blood cells contained in the blood (hematocrit) and the hemoglobin in blood. Normal adult hematocrit values vary from one medical practice to another but are generally between 38.8 and 50 percent for men and 34.9 and 44.5 percent for women.

A test to determine the size and shape of your red blood cells. Some of red blood cells may also be examined for unusual size, shape and color. This will help in diagnosis. For example, in iron deficiency anaemia, red blood cells are smaller and paler in color than normal. In vitamin deficiency anaemia's, red blood cells are enlarged and fewer in number.

Management

Iron supplements: The most commonly prescribed supplement is ferrous sulphate, taken orally (by mouth) two or three times a day.

Dietary supplements:

Iron-rich foods include:

Dark-green leafy vegetables, such as spinach

Iron-fortified cereals

Whole grains, such as brown rice

Beans

Nuts

Meat

Apricots

Complications

Iron deficiency anaemia rarely causes any serious or long-term complications. However, some of the complications are listed below:

Tiredness

Iron deficiency anaemia can leave a person tired and lethargic (lacking in energy), as a result person may be less productive and active at work.

Immune system

Iron deficiency anaemia can affect immune system (the body's natural defence system), making a person more susceptible to illness and infection.

Heart and lung complications

Adults with severe anaemia may be at risk of developing complications that affect their heart or lungs. For example,

Tachycardia (an abnormally fast heartbeat)

Heart failure, when your heart is not pumping blood around your body very efficiently

Pregnancy

Pregnant women with severe anaemia have an increased risk of developing complications, particularly during and after the birth. They may also develop postnatal depression (a type of depression some women experience after having a baby).



All About Germs

What are germs and how do they spread?

Most of the germs in the world are harmless to humans. Some types of bacteria even do us good, like the ones that help us digest food. But it's worth knowing about germs and how they can be spread in your home – especially because a few simple hygiene steps of germs protection can stop them in their tracks.

What are germs?

Germs (or **pathogens**, as they're sometimes called) are microscopic organisms that can cause illness and infections if they get into our bodies.

The most common types are:

- Bacteria (e.g. Salmonella which can cause food poisoning)
- Viruses (e.g. Rhinovirus which causes the common cold)
- Fungi (e.g. Trichophyton which can cause athlete's foot)
- Parasites (e.g. Giardiasis which can cause diarrhoea)

How are germs spread?

Bacteria and fungi can thrive anywhere warm and moist in your home. But viruses are different. Around one hundredth the size of a bacterium, viruses need to be inside a living host in order to reproduce. It's through this process that they cause disease.

Germs can be spread around the home on people's hands, usually through touching infected people or contaminated surfaces. Germs can also travel through the air on tiny dust particles or in water droplets expelled from our mouths and nose when we cough, sneeze or talk.

Common sources of germs in the home are:

- Contaminated food and water.
- Regularly touched surfaces like doorknobs, taps, TV remotes and telephones.
- Cleaning and waste areas like bins, sinks and toilets.

- Household waste like used or gone-off food, used tissues and soiled nappies.
- Cleaning items like cleaning cloths, sponges and dirty toothbrushes.
- Pets and other animals like rodents and flies.
- Other people.

How do germs get into the body?

There are several ways that germs can get into our bodies.

- They could be eaten in contaminated food.
- Germs in the air could be inhaled through our nose and mouth get into the lungs.
- Germs on our skin can enter via untreated cuts or wounds.
- They can be introduced to our bloodstream through injections, surgery or through animal or insect bites.
- Finally some specific germs in our body fluids can be passed onto others through bodily contact.

Did you know...

In the right conditions, bacteria like *Escherichia coli* (e-coli) can divide every 20 minutes so that in only 8 hours a single bacterium can grow to nearly 17M bacteria.

It's not all bad news though as Dettol offers a range of products that kill germs to protect you and your family from illness.

Tips to prevent infection

Sometimes it is just a daunting task to keep yourself and your family away from infections. It is not enough to keep the obvious runny nose and hacking cough at bay. You need to find useful and practical methods to keep infections at bay. Your skin behaves as a natural force-shield protecting you from harmful bacteria that causes infections. However, a new form of smarter and lethal bugs have found alternate ways to get inside your body and cause infection.

Don't worry, all hope is not lost. By making a few simple behavioural alterations, you can easily master the art of infection prevention.

Keep your hands clean – You will be surprised to know that microbes can survive on inert surface anywhere from a few minutes to as long as several months. It depends on the microbes and the environment it is in. However, these microbes can be taken care of by simply washing your hand effectively. You must wash your hand thoroughly and vigorously for at least 20 seconds with soap and water. If you can't find water around you, then the best alternative solution would be a good hand sanitiser.

Avoid sharing personal items – Razors, toothbrushes, towels, nail clippers, and handkerchiefs breed a lot of infectious bacteria. Ensure you don't share it with anyone.

Be careful when you cough and sneeze – In a similar manner, respectable personal hygiene is not only about grooming yourself, but also about following the golden rule of covering your mouth when you are coughing or sneezing. Now you would question, why should I do it if I am not sick? The reason being that the disease-causing bacteria in most infections start growing and multiplying way before the symptoms actually show up.

Be updated with recent news – A clear understanding of latest events can help you make wise decisions before travelling or indulging in recreational activities. For instance, a bird flu outbreak in Asia can make you reconsider about the trip you were planning. Lead in food products? Don't eat those products. As Simple as that. (Move this point to the end)

Always have safe sex - Infectious diseases that are sexually transmitted are the easiest one to prevent. By using condoms you can prevent transfer of infectious bacteria or viruses from one person to another.

Exercise caution if you are an animal lover – Infections that spread from animal to people are called "zoonotic diseases". These infections are more common than most people realize. So, if you are a pet lover, make sure they get timely check-ups and their vaccinations are up-to-date. Make sure you keep their litter box clean, and keep small kids away from animal feces.

Travel smart – Infectious diseases are easy to catch while traveling, especially if you are travelling to underdeveloped countries. If you travelling to a destination where the quality of drinking water is questionable, make sure you use bottled water for drinking and while brushing your teeth. Be sure to update every immunizations that are recommended or required for your journey and needless to say – pack your basic medications along!





Allergies

An allergen is any substance that causes an abnormally vigorous immune response when it enters our body. The allergen cause the immune system to fights off a perceived threat that would otherwise be harmless to the body. An allergy is a hypersensitivity disorder of the immune system which results in the body's negative reaction towards otherwise innocuous substances like food, common medicines, dust and pollen to name a few.

Allergic responses vary from individual to individual and can range from mildly discomforting to potentially fatal anaphylactic shocks.

Causes

There are thousands of allergens that can trigger allergies, but some of the most common include:

- Airborne allergens: dust and pollen.
- Animal dander: material shed from animal skin such as skin cells. Similar to human dandruff.
- Food allergens: shell-fish, dairy products, nuts and/or seeds and gluten, eggs and fish.
- Medications: aspirin and penicillin.
- Insect stings: wasps and bees.
- Plants: grass and stinging nettles.
- Substances: Latex.

Symptoms

- Skin rashes
- Hives
- Red itchy eyes
- Coughing
- Wheezing

- Sneezing
- Asthma attacks
- Abdominal pain and vomiting
- Anaphylaxis

Prevention Tips

Avoid exposure

- Avoiding exposure to allergens that you react to is the most basic prevention tactic in your arsenal but it is also the most effective. Make sure you read all food and medicine labels and avoid the ones that pose a risk.

Dust proof your home

- Dust and pollen are incredibly hard to avoid as they're airborne and as such the only line of defence is a home that is regularly vacuumed (surfaces such as carpets, upholstered furniture and pillows) and wiped clean with a damp cloth (for hard surfaces like floor tiles and marble countertops)
- For when you want to scrub your home clean with a cloth or broom soaked in water, add a few drops of Dettol Antiseptic liquid to the wash bucket. This will kill 99.9% of germs.

Medication & Antihistamines

- Pharmaceutical drugs such as antihistamines are particularly useful in combating allergic reactions caused by airborne allergens. Decongestants and nasal sprays are similarly effective against allergic reactions that attack the respiratory system
- Certain foods, medicines and insect stings are known to trigger potentially fatal anaphylactic reactions. Administering adrenaline is the medically preferred course of action in such cases.

Myths and Truths

If I am allergic to something, will my children be?

Allergies can potentially be passed down from generation to generation. However, the diagnoses of allergic reactions cannot be solely attributed to genetic factors and as such scientists are currently conducting extensive studies in environmental pollution and keeping a close eye on allergen levels in the air to isolate the root cause of allergic responses.

If I have one allergy, am I more prone to other allergies?

Not necessarily. Allergic responses may be similar but are essentially unique for every individual. Hay fever is a common allergy cause by pollen but while one person may be allergic to pollen in general, another may be allergic to pollen from a specific plant. It is crucial that one understands that not every reaction and intolerance exhibited by our bodies is allergic in nature.



Orientation Programme on Health, Hygiene and Nutrition



