

**MENSTRUAL PRACTICES AMONG STUDENTS  
ATTENDING AT UNIVERSITY OF MEDICAL  
TECHNOLOGY, YANGON**

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M.B.,B.S**

**Master of Public Health (MPH)  
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## **ABSTRACT**

Appropriate menstrual practices are impeded by various sociocultural restrictions and taboos, also has not been sufficiently addressed in developing countries like Myanmar. Unhygienic menstrual practices and inadequate water and sanitary hygiene facilities at universities have been associated with health and social outcomes of post pubescent females. This study aimed to assess knowledge, perception and practices of undergraduate adolescents relating to menstruation and to explore their challenges that are encountered during menstrual hygiene management. Using questionnaires, a cross-sectional descriptive study with mixed method design was conducted among 180 female undergraduate students from University of Medical Technology, Yangon. Five individual in-depth interviews were done among students who had poor menstrual practices for qualitative examination. Descriptive analysis, Chi-square test and Fisher's exact test were used to analyze quantitative data and thematic content analysis was used to analyze the qualitative data. The result showed that 68.9% of the respondents had moderate level knowledge and 61.7% had neutral attitudes on menstruation. Furthermore, their menstrual hygiene practices were average (68.9%). Among socio-demographic characteristics, racial groups were found to be significantly associated with good menstrual practices. From qualitative interviews, emergent themes were: the personal experiences of menstruation, challenges encountered during menstruation and their suggestions. Although majority of respondents knew menstruation before menarche, most felt unprepared and experienced fear and panic when it occurred for first time. The respondents reported the challenges related to menstrual hygiene management, including inadequate provision of water, sanitation and hygiene facilities at university. In particular, toilets at universities did not have separate dust bins to discard used menstrual absorbents. They also described health and emotional problems that are being encountered during menstruation. It is needed to create a friendly and supportive menstrual hygiene management environment by improving the current water, sanitation and hygiene facilities at universities, so as to enable them to reach their potential in managing menstruation with dignity.