How to Care for someone on their Menstrual Cycle

At times the person you’re caring for may be menstruating and may need assistance to manage their cycle. Helping someone stay clean and dry during their cycle will help prevent skin rashes, infections and help them feel better. Feeling uneasy or embarrassed helping with this task is very normal, especially if you haven’t had to do this for yourself.

In this video, we will review some tips on how to help someone with their menstrual cycle. Let’s try it!

There are some supplies that you’ll need and the products you use will be based on what the person you’re caring for likes best. Sanitary pads or napkins, either reusable or disposable will be easiest to help them with.

If they’re able to insert and take out them out themselves, they may like to use tampons, reusable menstrual cups or disposable soft cups. If their flow is heavy or they can’t get out of bed, using an adult brief or diaper may be a good option.

You’ll also need two water basins, one soapy and one clean, and washcloths and a towel to clean up or wet wipes or wipes made to clean adult genitals, gloves, and hand sanitizer.

To help with pain, hot water bottles or heating pads can be very helpful as well.

Let’s start by using a sanitary pad.

To help with sanitary pads, attach the pad to their underwear. Reusable ones tend to use snaps, like this. Disposable ones usually stick to their underwear and may have wings that stick underneath. The wings help keep the pad in place and stop leaks from happening as often.

From here, help them pull the underwear on while making sure the pad doesn’t bunch up.

When the pad is soiled, start by removing the soiled pad, if they’re in bed, you can put a towel under their hips to keep the sheets clean. If the pad is disposable, wrap it up in the fresh pad’s wrapper and put it in the garbage. For reusable pads, rinse them well or soak them in cold water and wash them for use next time. Then help them wash and dry their private areas well, click here to see a video on how to do this.

Finish up by putting a new sanitary pad on their underwear, helping them get dressed, and both of you washing your hands.

If they cannot stand or lift their hips in bed, or their flow is heavy, using an adult brief is a good option. To use the brief you’d follow the same process as the pad, making sure their genitals are washed between every change.

If their flow is very heavy and they’re soaking through more than a pad an hour for three hours in a row or their period lasts for more than 7 days in a row, follow up with their health care provider.

Tampons, reusable menstrual cups or disposable soft cups all work by being inserted inside their vagina to catch the blood. If the person you’re caring for can put them in themselves, you can help by assisting them to walk to the washroom and making sure they have the supplies they need to wash up close by. Give them some privacy by leaving the washroom but stay near-by in case they need some help. After they’re done you can help them stand at the sink to wash their hands.

If the person you’re caring for has a lot of pain, helping them to use a hot water bottle or heating pad on their lower back or stomach can really help. It’s best to keep the heating pad on medium-low to avoid burns if they aren’t able to move the heat away themselves if it gets too hot or if they have less feeling on their lower back or stomach.

There are also some medications that can help, so talk to their health care professional if they need some extra help managing pain.

Talking about menstrual cycles isn’t something many people do regularly, but having more information about them can really help manage the flow and pain that can happen.

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