

Study comparing the efficacy and compliance in Shecup (Menstrual cup) users

Aims of the study:

To study the efficacy and compliance in patients using Shecup (vaginal cup) during menstruation.

Objectives of the study:

- 1) To study the efficacy in terms of any discomfort, uneasiness, leakage of menstrual blood and any local allergic response.
- 2) To study the compliance in terms of continuous hassle free use during the entire period of menstrual flow.
- 3) To study any other related side effect that may crop up.
- 4) To establish Shecup (vaginal cup) as an eco-friendly, cheap and effective alternative to conventional methods.

Methodology:

It is an initial pilot study of 10 patients attending the gynec. OPD of Dr. Shah Institute of Women's Health, Maninagar, during November, December 2009 and January 2010. Voluntary enrolment of 10 women after full counseling and ethical clearance was obtained. It was the conscious effort by the consultants of this institute to eliminate the confounding variables of race, age socioeconomic status, other complicating illness eg. Vaginitis, parity, level of literacy etc. in order to have non-biased results. Any patient not comfortable with or wanting to discontinue, for any reason was allowed to do so and the result promptly noted. At the end of the time period of use patients were given a previously made questionnaire and their responses were collected and analysed. Comparison of efficacy and effectivity was with other conventional pads and tampons.

Results:

In the first month

70% of patients not comfortable with product. Remaining 30% continue use without any consequence. Defaulters called back, re-counseling done, patients reincorporated in the study.

In the second month

40% of patients not comfortable with use, having minor teething problems, adequate counseling done and patients re-enrolled in the study.

In the third month

30% of defaulters, remaining 70% find it convenient to use and have adapted well.

Discussion:

The Shecup is made of high quality health grade silicone liquid, vulcanized with very high heat to form a solid stable piece of silicone. It is also cured in an oven at very high temperatures to make all molecules bind together. The material is subjected to rigorous testing subsequently before packing.

The silicone used is plastic free, BPA-free, latex free and odorless.

Shecup works on the principle that periods can be managed effectively and hygienically by it.

- Shecup does not contain synthetics, chemicals, additives, or bleach which creates health problems.
- It does not absorb fluid, it is self cleaning and keeps vagina moist to protect from infection.
- It is made of medical grade silicone, if used as instructed never causes infection and has never been associated with Toxic shock syndrome.
- Reports have indicated there is lowered flow, bloating, and cramping with use compared with tampons.
- Conventional means are often non-sterile (use of cloths and pads), Shecup can be made sterile.

In this pilot study it is seen that with proper counseling it can become a near ideal means to be used for menstrual flow.

Conclusion:

Shecup is safe, user friendly and very promising eco-friendly revolutionary alternative, but as with any other new thing counseling, motivation and large trials spanning a longer time period are required.

P.S.: in this study Menstrual cup and Shecup have been used synonymously, however any silicone cup with identical make and specifications can be used. This study is a humble approach to explore the safety, efficacy and compliance of Menstrual cup during menstrual flow as a suitable/better alternative.

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