



Sultanate of Oman  
Diwan of Royal Court  
Sultan Qaboos Centre for Islamic Culture

# The Guide

## Rulings of Menstruation and Postpartum Bleeding

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## **Dedication**

**The translation is dedicated to**  
**Sultan Qaboos Centre for Islamic Culture**  
**Islamic Information Centre**

**Sultan Qaboos Grand Mosque**

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## Preface

### The Verse of Menstruation and the Reason for its Revelation

Allah, the Divine, says in the Qur'an: "They ask thee concerning women's courses. Say: They are hurt and a pollution: so keep away from women in their courses, and do not approach them until they are clean. But when they have purified themselves, ye may approach them as ordained for you by Allah for Allah loves those who turn to Him constantly and He loves those who keep themselves pure and clean". (2: 222)

In pre-Islamic paganism, Jews and Arabs exaggerated in dealing with menstruating women to the extent that they forbade living, eating, and socializing with them during their periods.

Christians, on the other hand, had an opposite stance. Their corrupt behavior had taken them as far as allowing sexual intercourse with women while in their menstruation.

The difference in dealing with menstruating women expressed by these parties has arisen concerns from Muslims. To inform Muslims about menstruation Allah, the Almighty, revealed the verse: "**They ask thee concerning women's courses**": Oh, Mohammed, they ask you about the social intercourse with women who have their periods.

- "**Say: They are hurt and a pollution**" means menstruation is harmful.

- "**so keep away from women in their courses**": refrain from having a sexual intercourse with them while in their periods. Prophet Mohammed - peace be upon him - said: "you are ordered by Allah to only refrain from having a sexual intercourse with them"

- **“and do not approach them until they are clean”** which means don't have sexual contact with them until their discharge runs clear.
- **“But when they have purified themselves”** means when they clean themselves with pure water.
- **“ye may approach them as ordained for you by Allah”** means you can have sexual intercourse with women as God has ordained it to you, which is for the purpose of progeny.
- **“for Allah loves those who turn to Him constantly and He loves those who keep themselves pure and clean”** Allah loves those who repent from bad deeds and those who purify themselves from dirtiness.

### **The importance of this issue**

Knowledge about menstruation and postpartum bleeding is of great importance to women from the religious and worldly aspects of their life.

**Religious:** accurate performance of praying, fasting and pilgrimage, which are the pillars of Islam and acts of worship, entails understanding the issues pertaining to menstruation and postpartum bleeding. Furthermore, Islamic laws on puberty, divorce, iddat (a period of waiting

during which a widow or divorcee may not remarry) and sexual intercourse depend largely on the understanding of menstruation and postpartum bleeding.

**Worldly:** menstruation indicates the beginning or the end of the reproductive life of women. It is also a sign of pregnancy.

Therefore, Muslim women have to seek knowledge about the Islamic rulings on menstruation and postpartum bleeding. They are obliged to educate themselves about what is expected of them during these periods, so that they ensure that their religious duties are governed by Islam's rulings and their worldly life is complemented by the knowledge and full awareness of these crucial issues.

### **Types of blood**

Women experience three types of blood in their life:

1. Menstruation blood
2. Postpartum blood
3. Prolonged period

Women are supposed to draw a clear distinction between these three types of blood since each has its own specific rulings.

## **Type One**

### **Menstruation**

#### **Reasoning behind menstruation**

Prophet Mohammed - may Allah's blessings be upon him - said: "Allah (SWT) prescribed menstruation on Adam's daughters".

Allah (SWT) creates blood secretion in females to enhance the development of the fetus in their wombs. "So blessed be Allah, the Best to create". (23: 14)

When Allah does not predetermine the development of the fetus into a baby in women's wombs, then that blood secretion becomes harmful excess. The womb gets rid of it outside the body; otherwise, women are physically harmed.

### **Definition and characteristics of menstruation**

**Linguistically:** menstruation means flowing.

**From the Islamic Law (Shari'a) perspective:** menstruation is a black, thick, foul-smelling blood which flows on its own from an adolescent's vulva while healthy and has not yet reached menopause. Menstruation lasts from three to ten days.

- **Black, thick, smelly blood:** It has a distinguishable bad smell. Prophet Mohammed - may Allah's blessings be upon him - said: "menstruation blood is thick, black and has a bad smell".

He - peace be upon him - said: "the blood of menstruation is black and is distinguishable"

- **Flows on its own:** menstruation blood flows naturally without having to search for it or forcefully cause it to come out.

- **From an adolescent's vulva:** menstruation flows from a girl's vulva at the age of puberty or around nine years old (the very beginning of puberty).

- **Not in menopause:** menopause is about sixty years old. Sheikh Ittfaish said: "that (sixty years) is the right estimation"

- **In a healthy condition:** menstruation flows not of sickness, giving birth or first sexual intercourse.

- **From three to ten days:** If blood flows for less than three days, it is not considered menstruation. What's more, if it lasts more than ten days, it is a prolonged period which has its special rulings. Anas Bin Maalik reports that our Prophet - peace be upon him - said: "menstruation doesn't last for less than three days and more than ten days".

**Caution (1):** For a woman to know that she has a menstrual flow, she wipes with a piece of clothing on her vulva from left to right while between a standing and sitting position.

### **Rulings on non-menstrual bloods**

Not all blood which flows from women or is seen by them is considered to be menstruation. Women have to ensure that the blood flowing from them has all the three characteristics mentioned earlier. Any blood, which lacks one of the characteristics attributed to menstruation, is known as 'non-menstrual bloods'. Non-menstrual bloods are divided into two types; each has its special rulings as illustrated in tables (A) and (B).

#### **Type (1)**

Women should not refrain from praying or fasting if they have the following non-menstrual bloods. It goes without saying that these bloods are not to be considered as menstruation.

<b>Type (A)</b>	<b>Type (B)</b>
<p>• Bloods that are not regarded as menstruation because they don't flow in the regular time of menstruation. These have their own rulings:</p> <p>(1) Blood seen in childhood.</p> <p>(2) Blood seen in menopause.</p> <p>(3) Blood seen during pregnancy.</p> <p>(4) Blood seen if the interval between periods is less than ten days.</p>	<p>• Bloods that are not regarded as menstruation because they don't flow from women's vulva.</p> <p>(1) Blood seen in the thigh.</p> <p>(2) Blood seen in the shirt.</p> <p>(3) Blood seen in a place women sit on for a while.</p> <p>(4) Yellow spots turning into red with time.</p> <p>(5) Blood seen as a consequence of sickness or injury.</p>

**Table A**

## **Type (2)**

Non-menstrual bloods that are not considered menstruation unless they meet two conditions.

These are divided into two types; each has its own specifications.

<b>Type (A)</b>	<b>Type (B)</b>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bloods that are not regarded as menstruation unless they continue after the reason they flow for ends:</li> <li>(1) Blood seen in fear.</li> <li>(2) Blood seen as a result of carrying heavy loads.</li> <li>(3) Blood seen after riding a bike or animals (donkeys and horses)</li> <li>(4) Blood seen as a result of jumping.</li> <li>(5) Blood seen after normal sexual intercourse (not the first one)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bloods that are not regarded as menstruation unless they last more than three days. If continuing for three days, they are to be regarded as menstruation.</li> <li>(1) Blood seen while taking oral medication.</li> <li>(2) Blood seen as a result of the first sexual intercourse (breaking the hymen).</li> <li>(3) Blood seen after breaking of the hymen and opening the menstruation outlet on their own.</li> </ul>
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**Table B**

**Mucous Discharges (vaginal secretions)**

The womb might secrete discharges or fluids which are neither menstruation nor non-menstrual bloods. These discharges are called mucous discharges (mucous dirty secretions) that flow during menstruation and in-between periods.

**Definitions:** Mucous discharges are divided into five types.

**Yellow secretion (yellow discharge):** a weakened form of blood (like plasma) that turns into yellow.

**Murky secretion:** a discharge between black and white; resembles a dirty, muddy water.

**Scant brown discharge:** water which looks like sand in appearance.

**Blood clot:** a clot of thick, frozen blood.

**Vaginal Dryness:** When the discharge runs clear and menstruation finishes, menstruating women experience dryness.

**Rulings pertaining to these discharges:** They have two states:

**The first state:** If a woman experiences the above-mentioned discharges after or during the menstruation period- from three to ten days- then she ascribes the rulings of menstruation to them. She doesn't clean herself until her discharge runs absolutely clear or she experiences milky discharge (the whites, vaginal discharge, leukorrhea). Aysha - may Allah be pleased with her - narrated that the Prophet Mohammed - peace be upon him- said: "women don't clean from menstruation until they experience the milky discharge (the whites)"

**The second state:** If a woman has these discharges after she cleans, then she should consider them clean. She doesn't refrain from praying and fasting. Um Attayah said: "We never considered yellowish discharge as a thing of importance (as menses).

**Caution (2):** If these mucous discharges flow after the monthly period is over and the women's discharge does not run clear yet, then she has to wait. The waiting period will be explored in-depth later.

### **Signs of cleanliness and purity from menstrual flow**

Allah, the Almighty, says in the Qur'an: "Keep away from women in their courses and don't approach them until they are clean" which is interpreted as 'until they purify themselves'.

#### **- Signs of cleanliness:**

**The milky discharge (the whites):** this is a very milky and watery secretion that a woman considers as a sign to her cleanliness from menstruation provided that it flows from the same place that menstruation flows from.

The milky discharge is the strongest, unquestionable sign of cleanliness- in our estimation.

**Vaginal Dryness:** dryness happens when menstruation completely finishes and the place of blood secretion (vulva) becomes pure and clear. If a woman places cotton on the vulva, it won't get stained.

This is an indicator of cleanliness for women who normally clean by dryness instead of experiencing the milky discharge (the whites). Moreover, scholars unanimously agree that it can be taken as a sign for purity and cleanliness. Ibn Abbas narrated that Prophet Mohammed - may Allah's blessings be upon him - said: "It is obliged on women to wash and purify when menstruation ends"

**Caution (3):** If women who normally experience vaginal dryness get the milky discharge (the whites) at one period, then they should go for it and purify as the milky discharge is considered as a strong, unquestionable sign of cleanliness.

**Caution (4):** Women should not cause the milky discharge to flow by basically searching for it. Moreover, they shouldn't intentionally cause menstruation to flow so that they can refrain from praying and fasting meanwhile. Sheikh Ittfish - may Allah rest his soul in heaven -said: "if menstruation is seen but never flows and a woman searches for it to cause it to flow, she is entitled to harsh penance". Moreover, she shouldn't pray because of a searched milky discharge. If she causes the milky discharge to come out, she is entitled to a harsh penance as well.

### **Menstruation Time and the Interval between Periods**

1. Women are obliged to know the minimum and maximum number of menstruation days. The minimum number of menstruation days is three and the maximum is ten days if her discharge doesn't run clear in between. Prophet Mohammed - peace be upon him - said: "menstruation doesn't last for less than three days and more than ten days".
2. If she experiences blood for less than three days, she should not consider this as menstruation. If she happens to have refrained from praying or fasting during that time, then she has to make up for all the prayers and fasting she missed. This is because she has come to realize that it is not menstruation that she thought she had.
3. If blood flows for more than ten days, then that blood is a prolonged period and not menstruation. Prophet Mohammed - peace be upon him - said: "menstruation is only ten days, if continued more than ten days, then it is a prolonged period". In this case, women have to wait as will be demonstrated.
4. Women should keep written records of their periods. Usually, if they experience fixed timing of bleeding, then that should be considered as their regular fixed period time in the future.

**Caution (5):** a day of menstruation is calculated from one hour to another. For example, from eight o'clock of this morning to eight o'clock tomorrow morning should be counted as one day.

Sheikh Ittfish - may Allah rest his soul in heaven - said: "I can't bear ignoring a second of my life without counting it as I know it is part of my life. The first moment of menstruation is the time when a woman first bleeds, be it night or morning. From that particular moment to the same next day is counted as a day. If menstruation comes at night, then that night together with the night of the second day shall be counted as a day"

**Caution (6):** If a woman gets used to a regular menstruation time, then she should remember it and keep a written record of it so that she never forgets it. This time definitely is an indicator of when to refrain from and resume praying. It is also a core element for a set of rulings.

### **The Interval between Periods (cleanliness time)**

1. The interval between periods lasts at worst for ten days and at best up to sixty days.
2. Women as they are entitled to know the time and duration of their menstruation period should also care about when and for how long their interval between bleedings lasts, between the ten and sixty days mentioned above.
3. The interval between periods may vary considerably. For example, a woman might pray for twenty days; thus, she considers her interval time between periods to be twenty.

Sometimes, she prays twenty-two days then menstruation flows. Other times, she prays eighteen days and then she bleeds. In this case, she can take all these times as tentative and potential times for her interval between regular bleedings.

**Caution (7):** Women might have doubts about the times of their periods and interval between periods because of a sickness or forgetfulness. Therefore, they can't remember their exact times. In this case, they should ask one of their relatives about their period and interval between periods and do like them- Allah knows best.

### **Waiting time during the period and mucous discharges**

1. Waiting time is the period that a woman adds to her period days if blood continues to flow or if she experiences any of the mucous discharges described earlier after her usual period days are over.
2. Waiting with a flow of pure blood is two days.

3. Waiting with the mucous discharges is a day and a night (24 hours)

4. Women with respect to the waiting period are of two types:

**Beginner:** is a woman who bleeds for the first time. If blood continues flowing and her discharge doesn't run clear after ten days are over, she waits for two days. Then, she cleans herself and prays. If she experiences mucous discharges during the ten days, she has to wait for a day and night (24 hours). Then, she purifies and prays.

**Accustomed:** is a woman who has already established a regular time as her period time. If blood continues to flow until after her usual days are complete, she waits for two days and then prays. As for experiencing mucous discharges after her regular days are over, she waits for a day and night.

**Caution (8):** The waiting period starts from the moment a menstruation flow stops. The menstruating woman begins counting from that moment to the same moment the following day as one day- be it a day or night. To illustrate, she counts from a specific hour to the same hour the next day as she does in the menstruation time.

**Caution (9):** If a woman is on the waiting period and she still bleeds, then, if blood stops and she has mucous discharges before the two days of waiting are over, she continues the whole two days and then cleans and prays.

**Caution (10):** If a woman is on the waiting period and she has mucous discharges, then, if blood flows before the day and night are over, she has to wait for *two* days because it is mandatory to consider blood as a stronger evidence of menstruation than mucous discharges alone.

### **Heavier and Lighter Menstrual Flows**

1. Heavier menstrual flow happens when the menstruation period becomes heavier than regular and menstruating women add more days to her regular period days. The interval between periods becomes shorter.
2. Lighter menstrual flow happens when menstruation bleeding becomes lighter than regular and menstruating women drop down her usual number of menstruation days. The interval between periods is longer.

3. A woman's period time is said to become heavier or lighter when her menstrual flow bears the same characteristics of menstruation since blood and not the mucous discharges decides heavier and lighter menstrual flows.

4. Heavier menstrual flow is established after three menstruation bleedings as it signals fewer prayers and fastings. Lighter menstrual flow, on the other hand, is decided after only two period times as it is more prayers and fastings.

5. Heavier and lighter menstrual flows take place between the minimum and maximum number of menstruation days, which are three to ten days.

**How does a woman know that her menstruation is now heavier than regular?** I will provide the following example:

A woman who normally bleeds for seven days has her period for eight days one time. After eight days, her discharge runs clear. If this happens to her two more subsequent times, then as a future reference, she considers her menstruation days as eight and not seven and she cancels her previous calculations.

**How does a woman know that her menstruation is now lighter?** Similarly, I will provide the following example:

A woman who normally bleeds for eight days gets milky discharge after the six day once. Then, she cleans and prays because the milky discharge is a strong, unquestionable indicator for cleanliness. If she experiences this for two consecutive times in her future periods, then she considers her menstruation days to be for six days and she cancels the eight days.

### **Irregular and intermittent bleeding**

1. Irregular and intermittent bleeding relates to the beginner who bleeds for the first time. She has not yet had a regular time of menstruation and cleanliness.
2. An irregular and intermittent menstrual bleeding lasts for two days and irregular postpartum bleeding lasts three days.
3. Irregular and intermittent bleeding is constrained with the flow of pure blood and not mucous discharges.

**Example:** I will explain how irregular and intermittent bleedings happen then illustrate it in the diagram below. If a beginner bleeds for two days and then her discharge runs clear, then she cleans and prays. Then, if she bleeds on the sixth day before completing the ten days of

cleanliness and she continues bleeding till the ninth day and on the tenth day her discharge runs clear for the second time, her period is characterized by irregular spottings. She adds up the four days she bleeds on to the first two days and establishes six days as her period days.

**The first two days:** are established as period days

**The last four days:** are joined to the first two days of period.

<b>1</b>
<b>2</b>
<b>3</b>
<b>4</b>
<b>5</b>
<b>6</b>
<b>7</b>
<b>8</b>
<b>9</b>
<b>10</b>

**Two days blood**

**six days + Three days cleanliness**

**Four days blood**

**Cleanliness**

**Figure C**

**Caution (11):** A woman does not make up for the prayers of the days that she has established as her period days (example, the two days demonstrated above).

**Caution (12):** Irregular bleeding is rare. If a woman has it, then she should consult religious scholars.

### **Relating menstrual time to relatives'**

Relating menstrual time to relatives refers to a beginner who can't determine her period and cleanliness times. She has to relate the times of her period and cleanliness to a relative of hers like her mother or aunt.

However, what is applied in our case is the rule of Imam Al-Rabii' Bin Habiib - may Allah be pleased with him - which is "any blood seen after ten days of praying is menstruation". Applying this rule doesn't take effort for women because of its straightforwardness - Allah knows best.

### **Explanation of this rule**

If the discharge of a woman runs clear so she cleans and prays, then she bleeds on the seventh day of the prescribed ten days. She doesn't consider this as menstruation and never gives up praying and fasting. She prays till she completes the ten days. Fifteen prayers are the minimum number of prayers for each interval between periods. If she continues bleeding

afterwards (after ten days of praying), she then considers this as menstruation. This follows from the rule: “any blood seen after ten days of praying is menstruation”.

### **Advice for the beginner**

**Dear Muslim girl,** you are obliged to learn about your religious duties of which menstruation and postpartum bleeding are crucial parts. Knowledge is now accessible and easily sought when compared to the past.

Don't shy away from asking and educating yourself about these matters because one has to seek knowledge about his/her religious duties and what's entitled to them “Allah is not shy (to tell you) the truth”. Aysa, may Allah be pleased with her, said “the best of women are the women of Ansaar whose shyness doesn't hinder them from asking about their religious duties”

**A practical way for the beginner:** The following steps guide you to what you should do if you experience menstruation for the first time (If blood with the previous characteristics comes to you, then do the following):

**First:** tell your sister, mother, or a relative.

**Second:** Refrain from praying until you are finished because you are menstruating and the rulings of menstruation apply to you.

**Third:** Start counting your period days from the very hour you bleed, be it a night or morning hour. For example, if you bleed at nine o'clock this morning, then at nine o'clock the next day, this will be your first day.

**Fourth:** Expect the milky discharge anytime between the moment you bleed till the tenth day of your menstruation.

**Fifth:** If your discharge runs clear between three and ten days, supposedly you experience the milky discharge on the seventh day, then you have to purify and pray. Keep a written record of this time, as it will be your time when your period is over and praying is obliged in the future.

**Sixth:** If you continue bleeding till the tenth day, wait for two days and then clean and pray.

**Seventh:** If any of the mucous discharges like yellow secretion or murky secretion continues with you till the tenth day, then you have to wait for a day and night (24 hours). After the tenth day, clean yourself and pray.

**Caution (13):** Establishing a regular and fixed time for the menstruation is upon the arrival of the milky discharge at one period since it is a strong, unquestionable indicator for cleanliness.

**Caution (14):** If you normally clean by vaginal dryness instead of the milky discharge, then start anticipating dryness on the fourth day of your period. If you encounter a day on which you completely dry up - let us say the eighth day - then you have to establish this time as your cleanliness time. If the dryness time continues to be fixed with you for three periods in the future, then your period days are eight days.

Sheikh Ittfish - may Allah rest his soul in heaven - said: “those who experience milky discharge after menstruation ends stick to their times. But those who don’t experience the milky discharge have to keep record of three times -even if separate times- in which they clean by vaginal dryness, then they regard it as their times”

**Caution (15):** Can we use menstrual suppressants?

It is unlawful in Islam to use menstrual suppressants like the Pill without permission from a doctor or having an extenuating reason (like pilgrimage) because stopping the normal menstrual cycle causes harms to women’s health.

As for those who want to perform *hajj* (pilgrimage), then it is permissible for them to use these preventives so that they can do all the rituals of *hajj* in their ascribed manners since *hajj* is timely constrained. Ibn Omar did not see a reason why women who want to perform *hajj* shouldn’t use menstrual suppressants to stop their menstruation. Saeid Bin Mansour narrated that Ibn Omar was asked about a woman who purchased medicine to stop her period so that she could do *tawaf*, he didn’t see a problem and sent her the water of Arak<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Type of herbs.

## **Type Two**

### **Postpartum Bleeding**

**Q2:** What is postpartum bleeding?

**A:** It is the blood, which flows from women who have recently given birth (delivered a child) to either a complete or incomplete (miscarried) child.

**Q:** Who is a confined (in childbed) woman?

**A:** She is the woman who has recently given birth to a baby.

**Q:** When does a pregnant woman refrain from praying and fasting?

**A:** A pregnant shouldn't refrain from praying and fasting until she delivers a child, be it complete or incomplete (miscarried). Sheikh Ittfaish - may Allah rest his soul in heaven - said: "A pregnant doesn't refrain from praying or fasting until she gives birth to a child- even without water or blood. Before the delivery happens however, she is neither menstruating nor confined. On what basis does she give up praying and fasting then?"

**Q:** For how long does postpartum bleeding last?

**A:** The shortest period of postpartum bleeding lasts ten days. The longest is about forty days if the confined woman's discharge doesn't run clear before the forty days are completed. Um Salamah said: "In the Prophet's time, we would confine for forty days if our discharge doesn't run clear before that"

**Q:** How long does the waiting period last for postpartum bleeding?

**A:** If the confined woman continues to bleed, then she should wait for three days. However, if she only has mucous discharges, then she waits for a day and a night similar to the waiting period of menstruation.

**Q:** How does a confined woman purify herself from her first postpartum bleeding?

**A:** She should expect her discharge to run clear from the eleventh day to the fortieth day. If her discharge runs clear meanwhile, i.e. between these two times- let us say, she experiences the milky discharge on the thirtieth day, then she is obliged to clean and pray. She considers the thirty days as her postpartum time in the future. She should keep record of this time and make a reference to it in the future.

If she completes the forty days and she hasn't meanwhile seen any signs of cleanliness, she waits for three days after the forty days are over if she still bleeds. However, if after the forty days are over, she experiences mucous discharges, she waits for a day and night.

**Q:** How does an accustomed confined woman purify from postpartum bleeding?

**A:** An accustomed confined woman is the one who has repeated child deliveries in the past and she has a regular time for cleanliness. For example, her discharge usually runs clear on the thirtieth day, if she also experiences the milky discharge after thirty days of delivering this time, she cleans herself and prays. If her discharge doesn't run clear and she still bleeds, then she waits for three days and then cleans. If she has mucous discharges, she waits for a day and night.

Women who have no regular time for cleanliness should stick to forty days of confinement. If she continues bleeding after the forty days are over, she should wait for three days and then clean herself and pray. If she has the mucous discharges, she should wait for a day and night.

**Caution (16)** If a confined woman has her discharge run clear before she completes the forty days, she considers this time as her time of cleanliness from postpartum in the future.

**Q:** If a woman miscarries, how long will she confine?

**A:** The postpartum period depends on what the miscarried portion is. If she gives birth to a complete child, then she confines for forty days as demonstrated above.

However, if she miscarries and gives birth to an incomplete child, then her postpartum period differs as shown in the table below.

<b>Types of miscarriage</b>	<b>Period of pregnancy</b>	<b>Postpartum periods</b>
- Tiny (tadpole)	40 days.	4 days.
-Blood clot	From 41 to 80 days.	7 days.
- Embryo	From 81 to 120 days.	14 days.
- Bone without flesh	From 121 and on...	21 days.
- Complete baby		40 days.

**Table D**

**Caution (17)** The waiting period after each of the above cases lasts for three days if bleeding continues and for a day and night with mucous discharges.

**Q:** If a pregnant woman bleeds, what should she do?

**A:** If she is confident she is pregnant and she unexpectedly bleeds, she should ignore this blood and pray. Prophet Mohammed - peace be upon him - said: “menstruation and pregnancy don’t coincide”. Sheikh Ittfaish said: “ the truth is what is articulated by Alrabii’ –may Allah be pleased with him- who says: “ If a woman conceives, then she should not refrain from praying and fasting even if she bleeds”

**Caution (18)** If a woman bleeds and refrains from praying and fasting, then she realizes she is pregnant, she has to make up for the days she didn’t fast or pray on. This is due to the fact that pregnancy and menstruation do not coincide.

**Caution (19)** If a woman has doubts on whether she is pregnant or not and she suddenly bleeds, then she should pray and fast. If she later on comes to realize that she is actually menstruating, she should make up for the days she fasted on thinking it wasn’t menstruation she had.

### **Prohibitions on menstruation and postpartum bleeding**

Menstruating and confined women are prohibited from doing the following:

- **Sexual intercourse:** The Qur'an, Sunnah (Prophet's teachings) and unanimous agreement of Muslim scholars consent to forbidding sexual intercourse with menstruating and confined women. Allah the Almighty says in the Qur'an "They ask thee concerning women's courses. Say: They are hurt and a pollution: so keep away from women in their courses, and do not approach them until they are clean. But when they have purified themselves, ye may approach them as ordained for you by Allah for Allah loves those who turn to Him constantly and He loves those who keep themselves pure and clean". (2: 222)

Abu-Hurayrah - may Allah be pleased with him - reports that Prophet Mohammed - peace be upon him - said: "He who has sexual intercourse with a menstruating woman, or wrongly intercourses with a back of a woman, or consults with a fortune-teller has denied what's been

revealed to Mohammed” peace be upon him. With respect to this matter, a unanimous agreement is reached that sexual intercourse with menstruating women is forbidden.

If a man intentionally has sex with a menstruating woman, then he has committed a great sin. He should sincerely repent and pay penance of one dinar if the woman whom he has sex with is still bleeding and half a dinar if she has her mucous discharges.

Ibn Abbas narrated that the Prophet - peace be upon him - said: “If it is red blood, then a dinar should be paid, if it is yellow blood, then half a dinar should be paid”.

Mua’dh Bin Jabal asked the Prophet: "Oh, Prophet, how should I act toward my menstruating wife?" The Prophet - peace be upon him - said: “what is over the wrapper (piece of clothing to cover the bottom) is allowed but chastity is better”.

Islam forbids having sex with menstruating women because this causes physical harm to men, women and children as well. Doctors have extensively pinpointed the harm and illness that might result from intercourse with menstruating women. Blood is the best environment for the growth of microbes and germs.

**-Prayer and fasting:** Menstruating and confined women are obliged to refrain from praying and fasting. They are, however, ordered to make up for the days of fasting. As for praying, they aren’t obliged to make up for the missed prayers so as not to burden them, as Aysha - may Allah be pleased with her - said: “in the Prophet’s time, we would menstruate and make up for fasting but not praying”

**Caution (20)** If a woman bleeds after the time of a certain prayer has started (Maghrib prayer, for instance), she has to make that prayer up as it's her own responsibility.

- **Walking around the Ka'aba (Tawaf):** Menstruating and confined women are exempted from tawaf because tawaf is considered as a form of praying. Praying is restricted to cleanliness. Abdullah Bin Abbas narrated that the Prophet - peace be upon him - said: "If the appointed time (Meeqat of Hajj) arrives, menstruating and confined women have to clean themselves and pray. They may participate in all the rituals of pilgrimage except walking around the Ka'aba"

- **Entering mosques and seclusion for worship:** Menstruating and confined woman should not enter mosques; neither do they enter Al-Haraam in Makkah nor the Prophet's mosque in Al-Madiina. Um Attiyah said: "The Prophet - peace be upon him - had ordered women to detach themselves from the Muslims' place of praying".

Seclusion is accompanied by fasting and praying. It takes place in a mosque. Given the fact that menstruating women aren't permitted to enter mosques, they, thus, refrain from seclusion for worship while they have their periods.

- **Reciting or touching the Qur'an:** Allah the Divine says: "which (the Qur'an) none shall touch but those who are clean".

Jaabir Bin Zayed said: "Prophet Mohammed - peace be upon him - said: "They shall not touch the Qur'an or recite it without being purified".

Students and teachers are excluded from this ruling because menstruating women are forbidden to recite the Qur'an as a form of worship in the first place. However, if they fear

forgetting the Qur'an while menstruating, then it is fine to recite the Qur'an. Sheikh Aamer Al-Shammakhi in his 'elucidation book' said: "menstruating women can perform Dhikr (remembrance of Allah) and recite the Qur'an". No one is prohibited from remembering the Almighty Allah.

- **Getting divorced:** Getting divorced while in the menstruation period is called heresy divorce. It is forbidden in the Sunnah (Prophet's teachings). Divorce takes place in a state of purity and cleanliness.

- **Applying cupping or cutting related parts:** Given the fact that menstruating and confined women are in a physically weak state of health, they are banned from applying cupping or cutting their hair and fingernails as these actions are associated with cleanliness and doing them won't lead to cleanliness in this case.

- **Combing hair, putting Kohl and henna and using Seewak (a wooden brush):** As known, these deeds beautify women and entice their husbands to make love with them. Sexual intercourse is forbidden and hence it is advisable for women to refrain from these actions until their periods are over.

Combing hair should be excluded from this list, as it is an essential part of cleanliness that has to be done on a regular basis.

### **Purification from menstruation and postpartum bleeding**

Allah says: “and do not approach them until they are clean. But when they have purified themselves, ye may approach them as ordained for you by Allah”. Prophet Mohammed - peace be upon him - said: “If menstruation ends, purification is obliged”.

**Time of purification:** If the discharge of a woman runs clear from menstruation and postpartum bleeding (either she experiences the milky discharge or vaginal dryness if she normally cleans by it), she has to purify herself before the time for the prayer ends.

**Example:** If her discharge runs clear at 12 noon, she has to purify herself before Zuhr prayer ends.

**Manner of purification:** Purification from menstruation and postpartum bleeding resembles purification done after sexual intercourse. However, some extra steps are required for the purification of menstruation and postpartum bleeding:

**First:** Wash hands.

**Second:** Take away traces or discharges of blood from vulva.

**Third:** Have the intention (not necessary by saying out loud) that this purification is done for menstruation and postpartum bleeding.

**Fourth:** Rinse water out of both mouth and nose.

**Fifth:** Wash hair with water and soap (shampoo, in other words), comb hair and rinse it thoroughly. Then, gather the hair lost, wash it and conceal it, as it is a private part. The ruling goes that what you conceal while you still have (your hair as you cover it by scarf) should also be hidden from seeing when it separates and gets lost because of washing.

**Sixth:** Wash her whole body and rub it doing the right parts first and moving to the left sides.

**Seventh:** Do ablution (wudu, more accurately)

Aysha - may Allah be pleased with her - narrated that Asmaa Bint Yazeed asked the Prophet - peace be upon him - about washing out menstruation, he said:

- Take your water and nabk.
- Wash nicely.
- Pour water on head and rub thoroughly till water reaches the scalp.
- Pour water over the whole body.

- Take a piece of cloth drenched in musk and cleans the perineum area.
- Asmaa enquired: how does she clean with the piece of musk cloth?
- The prophet responded: Glory to God! Clean with it.
- Aysha clarified: wipe against her vulva moving along traces of blood (to get rid of the bad smell).

**Caution (21)** Ibn Abbas - may Allah be pleased with him - said: “if a woman purifies after *Asr* prayer, she prays both *Zuhr* and *Asr* prayers. If she purifies after *Isha*, she prays *Maghrib* and *Isha*”.

**Caution (22)** If a woman bleeds twice a month, then she is precluded from doing her hair in every purification process (she doesn't have to untie it). She does it once and leaves it untied later exactly as done to purification from sexual intercourse.

**Caution (23)** If a woman has to wash from sexual intercourse and she bleeds meanwhile (before purification happens), then she should intend to wash from both sexual intercourse and menstruation when she purifies after menstrual bleeding stops. Only one purification for both suffices.

**Caution (24)** If a woman can't apply the previous purification steps to clean from sexual intercourse, menstruation and postpartum bleeding, she can wash with clean earth or sand. If she can't wash her hair, she should first wash with clean earth and then wash her body off.

## **Type Three**

### **Prolonged Period**

The blood flowing because of a prolonged period is mild red and has no smell. Therefore, it differs from the menstruation blood. The womb secretes this blood because of illness (a hemorrhage). Prophet Mohammed - may Allah's blessings be upon him - said: "the blood of a prolonged period is a blood vein and not menstruation". He - peace be upon him - also said: "blood of a prolonged period is impure and it nullifies ablution (*wudu*) (renders it void) because it is a blood vein".

A woman who has a prolonged period is the one who continues to bleed in a time which is not her regular menstruation time.

Prolonged period might happen to four types of women –mostly: beginner, accustomed, pregnant and a woman in her menopause.

- **Beginner:** is a woman who in her first menstruation continues to bleed after the tenth day. She should wait for two days after the tenth day. Then, she purifies herself even if blood continues to flow. She prays for ten consecutive days (fifty prayers). If she continues bleeding afterwards, she shall consider herself menstruating based on Imam Alrabii' Bin Habiib's- may Allah rest his soul in peace- rule "Any blood seen after praying for ten days is complete is

menstruation”. Such women are stricken by the prolonged period. Thus, they refrain from praying for twelve days and pray for ten days till Allah the Almighty drives away their worries.

- **Accustomed:** is a woman who continues bleeding after her usual menstruation time is over. She should wait for two days till the ten days are over and then purifies and prays. Afterwards, she considers herself menstruating and refrains from praying during her menstruation period with the waiting time (two days). Then, as this is over, she prays for ten days and so on.

- **Pregnant:** is a woman who bleeds after she conceives. She shouldn't refrain from praying and fasting till she delivers.

- **Woman in her menopause:** is a woman who bleeds after she reaches 60 years of age. As has been established, this woman shouldn't refrain from praying and fasting.

### **Purification from the prolonged period**

A woman who has a prolonged period is obliged to do two purifications: obligatory and desirable purification.

**Obligatory purification:** is the purification, which entails cleanliness and praying. It comprises the same steps of purification from menstruation.

**Desirable purification:** is the purification done before each prayer –during her cleanliness time. Prophet Mohammed-peace be upon him- said to the Ansaari woman –Asmaa Bint Yazeed- when she asked him: Oh Prophet, I bleed extensively. The Prophet said: “ Purify, cram cotton there and pray”.

Women with prolonged period can postpone *Zuhr* prayer and move *Asr* prayer forward, so they can pray them together with one purification. They do the same for *Maghrib* and *Ishaa* prayers. It is narrated that Sahla Bint Suhail had a prolonged period, she then came to the Prophet. He ordered her to purify for each prayer. This had burdened her, so the Prophet asked her to combine *Zuhr* and *Asr* with one purification and combine *Maghrib* and *Ishaa* with one purification. She had to purify for *Fajr* prayer separately though.

If a woman who has a prolonged period suffices with washing before each prayer, then this is fine as the Prophet - peace be upon him - said: “a woman with prolonged period washes for each prayer”. Imam Jaabir Bin Zayed - may Allah rest his soul in peace - said: “She can pray as much as she wants whether obligatory or *Nawafil* (supererogatory or extra prayers) as long as she is still in her purification state”

### **Advice for women with a prolonged period**

The blood of a prolonged period is a hemorrhage. Women who are stricken by prolonged periods should seek treatment especially in our present time when medications and treatments are available- All praise is due to Allah.

### **Crucial Rules to Remember**

(1) The womb secretes three types of blood:

- Menstruation: a normal flow of blood that flows from a physically healthy woman.
- Postpartum Bleeding: blood flowing after child delivery.
- Prolonged period: blood secreting as a result of illness.

(2) Age of menstruation: puberty age or around nine years old.

(3) Menopause: 60 years of age.

- (4) Mucous discharges: have the same rules as what comes before them.
- (5) Basic cleanliness sign: the milky discharge (the whites).
- (6) A woman who doesn't experience a milky discharge is cleaned by vaginal dryness.
- (7) A woman establishes her time of menstruation and postpartum bleeding if experiencing the milky discharge at one period.
- (8) A woman establishes her time of menstruation and postpartum if cleaning by vaginal dryness three periods.
- (9) The milky discharge (the whites) is a strong, unquestionable evidence for cleanliness.
- (10) A woman shouldn't look for menstruation flow or clear discharge herself. These are natural cycles that flow without searching.
- (11) A day of menstruation and postpartum is 24 hours, i.e. from a definite hour of menstrual flow on a day to the same hour the next day.
- (12) A woman establishes a regular time for her menstruation.
- (13) A woman can take several times for her cleanliness time.
- (14) Pregnancy and menstruation don't coincide.
- (15) Any blood seen after praying for ten days is considered menstruation.
- (16) Menstruating and confined women refrain from praying and fasting until they have finished. They only make up for fasting.
- (17) A woman should not delay washing after her discharge becomes clear.

(18) A man should not have sexual intercourse with his wife until she purifies herself. Clear discharge from menstruation alone doesn't suffice. Purification with water is essential.

(19) Whatever a menstruating woman is prohibited from doing; a confined woman is also prohibited from doing.

(20) Purification from both menstruation and postpartum bleeding has the same procedure.

(21) Issues pertaining to blood have five dimensions:

**A. Times.**

**B. Waiting period – shared by both beginners and the accustomed.**

**C. Relating menstrual time to relatives.**

**D. Heavier and lighter menstrual flows: only pertains to the accustomed.**

**E. Irregular bleedings: pertains to beginners.**

(22) Heavier menstrual flow in both menstruation and postpartum bleeding is established after three times and lighter menstrual flow is established after two times.

**Table of times**

<b>Times</b>	<b>Least</b>	<b>Most</b>
Menstruation	3 days	10 days
Postpartum Bleeding	10 days	40 days
Cleanliness	10 days	60 days

**Table E**

**Table of waiting periods**

<b>Waiting in the menstruation</b>	With blood for two days With mucous discharges for a day and night
<b>Waiting in the postpartum bleeding</b>	With blood for three days With mucous discharges for a day and night

**Table F**

## **Conclusion**

By Allah's Grace and His will, this book is complete. I ask Allah to benefit Muslims from it and make this deed exclusively for His sake. If I produce the right, then Allah has blessed me, however, if a flaw is found, then it is because of me and the Devil. I seek forgiveness of Allah. I would appreciate comments and extend thanks in advance.

All praise is due to Allah with whose guidance good deeds are accomplished.

## **The Author**





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