KNOW YOURSELF

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY HEALTH

For Adolescents
A good number of people and organizations have made continuous efforts in creating this nice-looking book called "Know Yourself". Many books on adolescent reproductive health written on the basis of information collected by ICDDR,B's Operations Research Unit, with the financial assistance from USAID, Bangladesh Center for Communication Programs has produced the book under the supervision and cooperation of the following organizations:

- Bangladesh Center for Communication Programs (BCCP)
- Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC)
- Focus on Young Adults
- Operations Research Project (ORP)
- Rural Service Delivery Program (RSDP)
- UNFPA
- UNICEF
- United States Agency for International Development (USAID)
- Urban Family Health Partnership (UFHP)

An expert committee comprising representatives of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, educational institutions and other organizations has reviewed the book in the various stages of producing.

We are grateful to all who have contributed through writing and reviewing this book.
Introduction
Marriage
Family Planning
Conception
Care during pregnancy
Postnatal care of mother and infant
TT vaccine
Abortion
Sterility
Sexual impotency
You know that many changes occur at different stages of a person's life. These changes appear in different forms in childhood, adolescence and adulthood. Childhood is passed in playing – one does not have much idea about life then and thus there is less interest to know more about life. Then it’s the time of adolescence. At this age adolescents learn to understand more, feel more, they want to know more about the outside world and about life, they have many questions in their minds.

For these reasons, we wanted to know about the questions that the children of this age have in their minds, what are they curious about, what are the things that they want to know. From this thought, we have talked to many children of your age, and through various questions, we have tried to find out how much you know and what more you want to know. We were surprised to discover while talking to children of your age that you understand a lot of things, you want to know so much more. We felt very good to see your eagerness to know and your curiosity. We forgot that we were once of your age. What did we not do to find out the answers to our questions! We asked friends, but they too were of the same age. We looked for answers in various books and magazines. Nowhere could we find the correct answers. That's why we wondered how it would be to write something on the basis of your questions. Only then can the adolescents of your age get the opportunity to have a clear, complete and correct idea these matters.

In this book we have discussed about issues like marriage, family planning, conception, care during pregnancy, post natal care of mother and child, TT vaccine, abortion, sterility and sexual impotency. Besides, there are three more books where many of your questions are answered in very simple language. While reading the questions, we felt that these were questions of our adolescent days, which are revealing through you. As you read on, you too might feel that these are your very secret questions. How did they come to know what you had in mind!!!

Actually, this is what happens. We want to know a lot of things about life at this age – this is normal. But what is important is to get the correct answers and to build the life in a correct manner? We are hoping that this book will help you get the answers to the many questions in your mind correctly and will help you build a wonderful life.
Marriage is a religious and social bonding. A boy and a girl begins a new life together after marriage. One has to abide by certain social laws and rules/systems to be able to get married. Let us know about some of these rules.

According to the Law of Bangladesh, a girl has to be at least 18 years and a boy must be 21 years of age to get married.

If one gets married before that, it is considered as child marriage. According the existing laws of the country, child marriage is a punishable offence.

Both the boy and the girl have to give consent for marriage.

Marriage has to be registered. This is the legal and written proof of marriage. Not registering a marriage is a crime.

Registration helps in combating any problem, like if the husband wants to marry for the second time without the wife’s consent or if the girl’s "den mohor" has to be claimed with the help of court.

Two adults have to act as witnesses in a marriage.

In Muslim Law, the husband has to make provision for some money or assets in the name of his wife, this is known as "Den mohor".

"Den mohor" is a form of financial security for the wife and it is her right to get "den mohor" from her husband. It should be determined according to the financial ability of the husband.
According to the present Marriage Law in our country, the ages determined for marriage are 18 years for girls and 21 years for boys. Even so, girls getting married at an early age is a common phenomenon in our country. Usually groom’s side prefers younger girls as prospective bride. Again many bridal sides feel that if girls become older, they will not be able to find a good groom for them.

Many parents in our society suffer from social insecurity for their daughters and therefore get them to marry whenever they find a suitable boy. They think that by getting their daughters to marry, they can save them from terrorists or hoodlums and bad boys. Sometimes the parents get their daughters to marry early if they find a good boy. They think that they may not get such a good boy again later. Sometimes parents get their daughters married at an early age due to societal pressure. Many parents also have their daughters married at an early age due to poverty. Whatever the reason be, marrying off girls at an early age is a punishable crime.

According to the existing laws of the country, child marriage or marriage of girls before 18 years and of boys before 21 years is a punishable crime. For this criminal act one can be sentenced to a maximum 5 years of jail or concurrent sentence with fine, and if a girl below 18 years is given to marriage, then that will come under the act of violence against women and children and punishment will be given accordingly.

Boys and girls should not marry at an early age, because at this age neither the boy nor girl acquires mental and physical maturity to become parents. Besides, many complications arise when the girls are becoming mothers for getting married at an early age. If boys and girls do not marry at early age and become established by studying attentively there remains opportunity of good marriage in future and they can organize life in a better way.
Marriage is a sacred bond, a boy and a girl's future depends on it. So all parents carefully select a partner to wed their son or daughter, so that they can adjust well in terms of mental, economic and social factors with the new family and be happy.

If the girls and boys marry on their own there might be a mistake in choosing the right partner, since they have less experience about life or they get emotionally involved. As this may cause their lives to become miserable, the parents are also put in more distress. But even if parents fix the match, they can find a boy or girl of your choice if you tell them beforehand about what kind of a partner you want. It's better that the boy and the girl gets acquainted with each other before marriage, even if parents make the selection. And if one has one's own choice then that can also be discussed with the parents. Then they will become aware of the matter and can provide the necessary support and advice.

People acquire their skin color, appearance, height etc. through birth. There is nothing that one can do about it. But if someone has a dark complexion, then one should not be upset about it or blame him/herself for it. These are one's external beauty. A person can be genuinely beautiful by means of her/his internal beauty.

By studying attentively and by learning other skills properly one can become independent. And however one's appearance may be, by remaining clean and tidy, by behaving nicely with others, and by being a good human being one can win everyone's heart.
Happiness after marriage depends on many factors. Knowing each other truly, love, respect, sharing happiness and sorrow – all these are very important for contributing to happiness after marriage.

After marriage, the surroundings in the husband’s house is unknown to the girl, the bride is also a new person in the husband’s house. Therefore, peace and happiness in this new environment depends on the ability to adjust with the customs and practices of both sides and their mentality.

Life before marriage is different from the life after marriage. There are many changes in the life of the men and women after marriage. There are more responsibilities. And movement becomes restricted. As the boys cannot mix with their friends as before, girls can not also go to their parents’ house whenever they want to. This is normal, one has to adjust to the changes in life after marriage.
Many boys and girls think about the relationship between husband and wife before they get married. And many are afraid to think what will happen on the night of the wedding or afterwards. There is nothing to be afraid of. It is by means of wedding that a boy and a girl acquires the permission to live together and have sexual relationship (physical relationship). Thus all boys and girls come close to each other, touch and feel each other, and know each other on the wedding night.

But both may feel uncomfortable during their first sexual intercourse and initially it also might hurt. But there is no reason to be afraid of this. This type of feeling can be overcome by knowing and understanding each other’s liking and disliking.

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It is good to know about one thing that at first intercourse on the night of the wedding there is possibility of getting pregnant. Majority of boys and girls do not think of having child at the outset of marriage. At first they want to know each others, understand each other and get a littlebit preparation. So, from the very first night of marriage family planning methods have to be adopted to avoid having child at the beginning.
It is seen that in many cases the parents of the boy asks for or demands money or gifts from the girl’s side. It is known as dowry. Dowry is not a religious rule or condition.

Exchange of dowry is a social tradition in our country. In most cases the groom’s side demands the dowry. But taking dowry is legally a punishable crime. Both offering and accepting dowry are crimes and there are provisions for jail and penalty for this. Many girls in our country fall victim to dowry and are tortured to death. There is a government law to prevent this tradition of dowry. According to the law both - who gives dowry and who takes it can be sentenced to 1-5 years of jail or penalty of Tk.5,000. And can be sentenced with both jail and penalty.

Although, there is governmental law to prevent dowry, law is not sufficient to stop dowry. Everyone has to be aware to prevent the tradition of dowry. You girls will not marry by giving dowry and boys will not accept dowry for marriage – this mentality and promise has to be made from this moment.

I wonder why boys demand so much dowry!

Most people in our country consider dowry as a measure of social dignity. As if the more dowry is offered or accepted in a marriage, the more one's status will go up. Sometimes the boy himself or his parents or guardians claim dowry. Again in many families there is a tradition of exchange of dowry.

In our social system, girls are seen as dependents on others. The groom's side feels that marrying a girl means saving the girl and her parents from a lot of dangers. Therefore, they want to extract some privileges as their rescuers. On the other hand, since the groom’s side has to promise "Den mohor" they want the dowry to compensate for that amount. Many times it depends on the situation. Often they ask for dowry for the boy's education if the groom’s side is not economically solvent or if the boy is unemployed, they ask for dowry to do business.
It is good for the mother’s and the child’s health if one conceives after the age of 20. If anyone becomes pregnant before that, then she encounters various physical complications, for example, the waist bones of the girls do not grow properly at this time, therefore, if she becomes pregnant the baby does not have enough space to grow. Therefore, the child is born lightweight and has lesser immunity.

The delivery passage is also small at early age, therefore, this passage can break due to excessive pressure during delivery, and it becomes sometimes very difficult for the baby to come out. There is a higher risk of mother and infant death if one becomes pregnant at this age.

Besides, boys and girls do not acquire the maturity at an early age. Girls do not have the complete mental development required for caring for and rearing a baby and boys do not acquire enough sense of responsibility of becoming a father.
If someone wants to have children later or do not want any more child, then he/she can adopt various methods which are known as family planning methods. The common family planning methods are pills, condoms, IUD (Copper T), injection, Norplant, female sterilization (ligation) and male sterilization (vasectomy).

All boys and girls should know about family planning before marriage. There is nothing to feel shy about it. Because, if one has clear idea about this then it helps in taking decision as to when to have a baby.

When a husband and wife make plans together to raise a family after taking into consideration all the factors, it is called family planning. Before having a baby the husband and wife would determine when they want the baby and whether they have the necessary physical, mental and economical preparation for it. For example, a girl’s body is not fully mature until she is at least 20 years of age.

Besides, the couple has to have some time after marriage to get to understand and know each other. It also has to be considered before going for a baby whether they have the required time and the adequate income to raise the child with care after it is born.

I asked mom what the family planning methods were – she scolded me. (What are the methods of family planning?)
I don’t know how the different family planning methods work. (How do the various family planning methods work?)

During sexual intercourse (physical relationship) between a man and a woman, the female’s ovum meets with the male’s sperm. This results in a girl’s conception of a baby. There are various family planning methods. By adopting these methods, conception is prevented. Therefore a baby is not born.

People say that one will never have a baby if s/he adopts family planning. When I go to the meeting, I would verify whether it is true or false. (Is it true that by adopting family planning, one will never have a baby?)

There are two types of family planning methods—temporary and permanent methods. One does not get pregnant as long as one uses the temporary method, and one can have a baby once s/he stops using any method. Pills, condoms, IUD (copper T), injection and Norplant are temporary methods. Therefore, those who think that they will never be able to have babies for using these methods are holding a wrong notion.

But if one adopts a permanent method like ligation and vasectomy s/he can never have babies. Therefore, if any couple adopts a permanent method like female sterilization or male sterilization, then they will never have babies.

Having sexual relationship before marriage is not acceptable in our society and religion. But if it is necessary under any special circumstances, then one can use condom or pill. For example, if one establishes sexual relationship out of curiosity or for some other reason, then s/he will have to use condom to be safe from STDs and to avoid unwanted pregnancy. Taking pills can prevent pregnancy, but pills cannot prevent STDs. But pill (Maya) is also used for the treatment of certain diseases.
In our society, many elders want to see a baby right after marriage. They don’t allow the new bride to adopt any family planning method. Many people think that it is not right to use any family planning method at least before having one child. But this is a wrong notion. Newly wed couples can use condoms or pills if they don’t want to take a child immediately after marriage. Condoms and pills are available at any drug store and in many other shops.

One can use temporary family planning measures like pills and condoms if one does not want to have babies right after marriage. On discussing with health worker or doctor, any one of these methods can be selected.

I have married recently. I don’t have any clear idea about family planning methods. That’s why I want to know about the methods. (Which family planning method is good for newly married couples?)

Condoms or pills are appropriate methods for those who have married recently and want to have babies later. You can find out about these matters more from any clinic.

My mother-in-law did not allow me to adopt any family planning method. She said I should have one baby first. Why did she say it?

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Condom is a temporary family planning method for men. It is a thin, soft rubber cap which one has to wear on the penis during sex. If one uses condom, the sperm remains inside it. Since the sperm cannot enter the vagina, pregnancy does not occur. One condom can be used only once. Apart from birth control, the greatest advantage of condom is that it prevents STDs.

She does not allow her husband to use condoms. Because she has heard from a lady in the village that the "balloon" causes an infection in the canal of the wife. Husbands do not use condoms. What if they get sick by using it? We don’t know what disease we may get. (Can the couple get sick or have any difficulty for using condom?)

What is condom? I have heard of condom. What is it actually?
Condom prevents STD, do pills prevent STD too?

Only condom can protect one from STDs. Pills can neither protect men nor women from STDs.

I don’t get any pleasure from sex with condom. My wife cannot stand pills, she feels bad. What method should we use in this case?

Some may feel dissatisfied in using condom. Even if one gets less pleasure from using condoms at first due to inexperience it is seen that if one continues to use condom patiently then they don’t feel dissatisfied, rather gets more pleasure.

Some may face some side-effects or problems at the initial stage of taking pills. But these are gradually reduced. One should consult a health worker regarding problems in using any method and can adopt any alternative method.

Which is better, pills or condoms?

Pills and condoms are both temporary family planning methods. Pills are for women and condoms are for men. Family planning can be done by using both the methods properly.

Sometimes there can be dizziness after taking pills at first, or have vomiting tendency. But condoms don’t have any side effects. Both pills and condoms are good as temporary family planning methods. However, different methods are suitable for different people.
CONDOM:

For whom

Any able man can use condom. Particularly –

- those who are newly married
- whose wife has recently given birth to a child
- those couples who stay in different places and meet each other occasionally
- who have fear of STD or are under treatment.

How to use

- A new condom has to be used for each intercourse.
- Condom has to be worn on the firm penis right before intercourse
- While wearing the condom, the front part has to be held tightly and then it has to be rolled down up to the root of the penis. It has to be ensured that no air goes in (after ejaculation, sperm deposits in this empty front portion.)
- After ejaculation, while the penis is still firm it has to be taken out of the vagina holding the bare of the condom
- After taking off the condom, a knot has to be given and rolled in a paper or packet and thrown into a dustbin
- No oily or slippery substance can be used with condom. This can spoil the effectiveness of the condom or the condom can break
- Condom has to be used during all kinds of sexual intercourse
- Before using it for the first time it is better to learn the rules of correctly using a condom from any health worker or clinic.

Advantages

- Easily available
- It has no side effects
- Prevents pregnancy and at the same time prevents AIDS and all other STD infections
- Effective if always used properly.

Disadvantages

- There are no disadvantages
Will I face any problem in conceiving for taking pills?

What if I am unable to have babies after taking something (pills)?

There is no problem in conceiving in future for taking pills. A woman can conceive again once she stops taking pills.

Many have various wrong notions about pills. For example, that there is terrible burning in the throat due to pills, there is drowsiness, there is some ailment in the uterus, that one becomes sterile, etc. But these notions are not correct. Such symptoms can occur for some other reasons. If something like this happens, then one should contact a health worker.
Some may face some problems at the initial stage of taking pills. For example: spotting, vomiting tendency, heaviness of breast, headache, and increase in weight. But one gets over with it gradually. There is nothing to get worried about these.

**NOTE:** To know about or to adopt temporary methods other than condoms and pills (e.g. IUD, injection and Norplant) one should seek assistance at the clinics.

Will I have any problem if I take pills? Can one encounter problems due to taking pills?

Is it possible that my wife will take pills but there will be no adverse effect?

One should not take contraceptive pills in order to become fat under any circumstances. These are birth control pills. Increase in weight is only a side effect of the pill. Besides, becoming fat doesn’t mean good health, rather it is important to be healthy. For this reason one can maintain good health by eating regularly, doing exercise, and resting.

Can’t one take these pills for becoming fat (bulky)? (Can someone take these pills for becoming fat (bulky)?)

Some may face some problems at the initial stage of taking pills. For example: spotting, vomiting tendency, heaviness of breast, headache, and increase in weight. But one gets over with it gradually. There is nothing to get worried about these.
There are a lot of problems with pills. We don't want to use it. What would be better to use then?

Which family planning method is better? Injections or tablets?

Is injection better? Better than pills? I now take injections. My mother-in-law has asked, why injection? Which is better, pills or injections?

Menstruation has reduced after taking injection, it feels like I have become pregnant. I am asking why menstruation has reduced.

One has to be patient after beginning to adopt a method. If the problems still don’t go away or are aggravated, then some other method may be adopted after consulting a health worker promptly.

Pills and injections are both temporary methods and both are good. But it is better to adopt the method that suits one.

There might be some problems in the first menstruation after taking injection. Like reduced menstruation or no menstruation. There is nothing to be worried about it, because it is gradually cured. But if someone feels that she has become pregnant, then a doctor must be consulted immediately and verified if one has actually conceived or not.
Most girls have periods in 28 days interval. But this can vary. The entire period of menstrual cycle can be divided into 3 parts. There is greater possibility of getting pregnant in the middle 10 days if one has sex. The days before and after these days is the safe period.

But this method is not effective. Pregnancy can occur even after maintaining this method.

What measures do medical centers take so that there are no more babies; do all medical centers do this? (What provisions are there at the hospitals to stop having babies permanently? Do all hospitals have this provision?)

There is no more pregnancy when one takes permanent family planning measures, like female sterilization (ligation) or male sterilization (vasectomy). Permanent methods are for those who do not want to have babies any more. Permanent methods are safe and easy. There are arrangements for this operation at medical college hospital, "sadar" or city hospital, thana health complex, and some NGO clinics.

One can find out about these from all non-government family health clinics and government health and family planning centers, like – community clinic, satellite clinic, union health and family welfare center, thana health complex, sadar hospital, mother and child welfare center, medical college hospitals, and model clinics. Besides, these information can also be sought from health workers and family welfare workers.
Those who are newly married and want to have children later.
Have 1 or 2 children and want to have the next one later.

One has to start with the white pill from the first day of the menstruation.
Almost all strips of pills contain 21 white and 7 red pills.
From the day after one file (white and red) is finished, the next white pill has to be taken without any interval.
If one doze is missed, the missed pill has to be taken the following day as soon as remembered and the next day’s doze also has to be taken at due time.
One pill has to be taken everyday at a certain time.

It is safe for almost all women, does not have any dangerous side effect.
One can conceive again after discontinuing pills.
Pills help prevent diseases like various types of cancer, anemia due to iron deficiency, stomach ache during periods, irregular discharge/bleeding etc.

One may have difficulties in taking pills at first, for example – vomiting tendency, dizziness, spots of blood/spotting between two menstrual cycles, gaining weight. But these symptoms usually go away after a
A girl begins to menstruate at the age of 12-13 and since the onset of menstruation, one ovum matures each month. This ovum usually comes to the canal carrying the egg from the sack of egg between two menstrual cycles. If sexual intercourse takes place at this time, then the sperm of the male reaches the canal of egg through the vagina. There it meets with the ovum and the embryo is formed. This is known as conception. This embryo comes to the uterus after a couple of days and starts growing there to become a baby.

During this time the fetus is joined with the mother’s uterus through the placenta and receives nourishment from the mother through the placenta. Generally in 9 months and 7 days when the mother has labor pain, the baby comes out through the vagina after having fully grown. This is known as delivery. Sometimes if there is a problem then the baby is taken out through an operation.
One does not get pregnant only by sexual intercourse with the husband after marriage, one can also get pregnant by having sex before marriage. Because during sexual intercourse, when the sperm of the male meets with the ovum, then a girl conceives.
Can one become pregnant without menstruation? (Can one get pregnant without having menstruation?)

Usually one cannot have a baby if menstruation does not begin. Menstruation occurs when the ovum is matured. Therefore, if the sperm meets the first mature ovum due to sexual intercourse before the first period in life, then it happens that even though the girl has not started menstruating, she has become pregnant. Therefore it is evident that if there is sexual intercourse before marriage and even before menstruation, it can cause pregnancy.

Besides this, although there is no menstruation for several months after delivery, a girl can get pregnant during this time.

In our country many people think that after delivery if menstruation does not occur one does not get pregnant. Again breastfeeding removes the fear of getting pregnant. But one can get pregnant despite breastfeeding or no menstruation. So after 6 weeks of delivery family planning methods have to be used.
I have heard that one can get pregnant by having sex during menstruation, can one get pregnant by having sex at other times?

Can one get pregnant if she has sex during menstruation?

When one is most likely to get pregnant? Is it during menstruation, before or after menstruation, or at some other time?

One gets pregnant by having physical relationship during menstruation, can one get pregnant by having physical relationship at other times?

Usually the ovum matures and come to the tube carrying egg between two monthly cycles. Therefore, there is lesser chance of pregnancy if one has sexual intercourse during menstruation. But in some cases the mature ovum can come to the tube during menstruation, thus causing pregnancy at this time if there is sexual intercourse. Besides, it is not healthy to have sex during menstruation. There is an associated risk of infection in the uterus.
Periods are missed when one has baby in the womb, can it also be missed when there is no baby?

One can miss periods for several reasons. But the main reason for missing period is conception, therefore if one misses period after intercourse, she should go to any health center to find out whether she is pregnant or not. But period can be missed also due to anxiety, mental pressure and change of place. Besides, menstruation can discontinue also due to some ailment or some medicine or due to adopting some family planning method. But it cannot be said specifically for how long the menstruation will be delayed, it depends on many factors. Besides, in case of most women, menstruation stops for several months after childbirth. This is normal and menstruation begins again in a couple of months. But sometimes one can get pregnant even when no menstruation occurs.

Suppose there is no baby in the womb, period is also missed. For how many days can this continue under normal circumstances?

I feel like vomiting, I asked grandma, why is it happening?

Conceiving causes special changes in the body. For the first few months of pregnancy, there may be some discomfort, like vomiting tendency, vomiting, no appetite, feeling dizzy etc. One gets over with these in a few months. But for some, these symptoms aggravate and stay for the entire nine months. In this case, one should consult a doctor.

Why couldn’t I eat when I conceived? Why do I feel dizzy?

There are several other signs of pregnancy other than missed period.

- Vomiting tendency or vomiting
- Dizzy feeling
- Frequent urination
- Breasts become large and heavy

Why do we feel bad when the baby is inside?
CARE DURING PREGNANCY

You know that a healthy mother means a healthy and strong baby. During pregnancy, every pregnant mother should take care of herself and the baby in her womb. During this time the routine physical tests of pregnancy should be done regularly. It is the responsibility of all the family members to ensure regular care of the pregnant mother and a safe delivery. If you know what care is necessary during pregnancy, you can help your relatives or acquaintances who are pregnant and take care of yourself when you get pregnant.

To give birth to a healthy child, a pregnant mother requires various types of care. The pregnant mother should visit a doctor or a health worker within 3 months of becoming pregnant. During this time, she has to consult a doctor or health worker almost every month. One has to take 2 dozes of TT vaccine between 5-8 months. One should take appropriate amount of nutritious food and drink a lot of water during this time. During pregnancy, one should not perform any heavy work. At this time one has to be cheerful and take rest for 1-2 hours during the day and sleep for eight hours each night.

It is safe to have the delivery done at any health center or clinic. If that’s not possible, then it should be done by a trained nurse. But if any complication arises during pregnancy then the doctor has to be contacted as soon as possible.

What are the things that I should do (during pregnancy)?

How can a healthy baby be given birth to?

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Besides going to health center, some of the care has to be ensured by the mother and all other members of her family. For example:

Mother’s Food: During pregnancy one should have a little more nutritious food for the well being of both the mother and the child. Especially, one should have more protein like fish, meat, egg, milk to help the child grow. Besides, green vegetables, yellow vegetables and fruit provide the necessary vitamin and minerals to the mother’s body. One should have adequate quantity of food, which contains iron, like green banana, spinach, kochu (an edible root), kochu leaves, liver, etc. And one must have large quantity of water (8/10 glasses per day) and iodine salt everyday.

Many think that if the mother eats too much then the baby inside would grow bigger than usual and there will not be a normal delivery. At certain localities, taking certain food is prohibited. For example, milk, meat, certain fishes etc. These food are certainly not forbidden, rather the health of the mother and the child would be better, the mother would gain strength to bear the stress of delivery and will form more breast milk if she takes more food.

Rest: One needs adequate rest during pregnancy. The pregnant mothers should take rest for 1-2 hours after lunch and sleep 8 hours at night.
Personal Hygiene: One should take bath everyday, brush teeth, comb hair, and wear clean clothes during this time. This helps keep the body and mind fresh. If the nipples are cleaned properly during taking bath, it is easier to milk the baby later on.

Heavy work: Carrying out normal activities is good for health at this time but heavy works like washing clothes, carrying filled pitchers, lifting heavy bucket or bowl/pan should be avoided. All members of the family have to be vigilant so that the pregnant person does not have to do this type of work. They should help her in doing these works.

SOME WRONG NOTIONS

1) Much eating causes the baby to grow big, and thus there is difficulty in delivery.

2) Delivery is easier if one does a lot of work and a lot of heavy work.

3) Delivery is difficult if one takes rest or lies down too much.
As long as the baby is not born, one should regularly visit the health care center and have health check-up and take medicine according to doctor’s advice. There is no risk of having bad effects on the child if one takes medicine according to doctor’s advice.

It is safer to go to the health center for delivering the child. Giving birth to a child is a very important moment in a mother’s life. Any type of problem may arise at this time. Doctors, nurses, necessary drugs and equipment are always available at the health center. Thus if required, any emergency can be handled. But these arrangements are not available at home.

If there is no other alternative but to have the delivery at home, it must by done by a trained nurse and there should be good arrangement to tackle all sorts of complications.

A little while after the delivery, the placenta falls off on its own. And if it doesn’t fall off, one should visit the nearest health center immediately.

When I consulted a doctor while pregnancy, I used to be nervous – what if there are bad effects on the child if I take medicine?

What if I die due to childbirth? If I die (during childbirth)!

Which place is safe for child delivery? Home or health center?

I have heard that there is a placenta inside the womb. What if the placenta does not come out?

Conceiving a baby and having one is a normal process in a girl’s life. Once pregnant, if one goes for regular check-up at the health center with the help of experienced doctor, act according to the doctor’s advice and gets the baby delivered by an experienced service provider, then usually the mother is free from any risk.
Complications during pregnancy, delivery and after delivery:

From the time of conception to 42 days after delivery girls may face some complicated problems. These problems are very dangerous, the lives of both the mother and the child can be in danger if measures are not taken immediately. Therefore, the mother should be taken to the nearest health center if any of the problems as shown in the picture arises.
The baby should be given breast milk right after birth. The breast milk at this time is thick and yellowish. This is known as shaaldooodh, in Bangla. Many people don’t want to feed this milk to the baby. This milk is very helpful for the baby and it works as the child’s first vaccine. It contains the necessary nutrients and components for resisting diseases. Babies who take this initial milk, suffer less from diarrhea, measles and cold etc.

The baby should be breastfed for two complete years after birth. For 6 months after birth, the baby has to be given only breast milk. Up to the age of 6 months, breast milk is the only ideal balanced diet for the baby. The more the baby takes breast milk the more milk will be formed. After 6 months, the baby has to be given other food along with breast milk. For example: vegetable, rice with pulses (khichuri), egg, banana, pumpkin, pulses, red leaves/fiber (laal-shaak), farina etc.

Breast milk contains a lot of protein and calcium, which helps in the growth of bones and teeth. Up to the age of two, the baby grows very quickly and therefore breast milk is essential at this time.
For 6 weeks after a baby is born, special care is needed for both the mother and the child. If proper care of the mother is taken after delivery, she remains well and can take care of the baby.

**REST**

The mother is very tired on the day of the delivery, thus has to take rest for the whole of that day. She has to slowly start moving from the next day. Her fatigue will go away if she sleeps adequately.

**FOOD**

The mother has to take adequate nutritious food to keep herself well and to be able to give breast milk to the baby. She should take all sorts of food like rice, pulses, fish, egg, meat, milk, milk products, green and yellow vegetables and any seasonal fruit regularly after delivery. During this time, she should take plenty of boiled or safe tubewell water and should use iodized salt for cooking. One has to particularly keep in mind that one has to take all kinds of food during this time without making any fuss.
PERSONAL HYGIENE

Have to take bath everyday and wear clean clothes dried in the sun. During this time, various parts of the body, particularly the breasts and genitals have to be kept clean.

CARE OF THE BREASTS

The baby should be given breast milk frequently and properly. If milk is not given properly and frequently, then the baby’s appetite will not be fulfilled, she/he will cry and will not be interested to suck the breast milk. Besides, if the breast milk is not given in proper manner then the nipple can crack, there may be pain and even boils can grow.

EXERCISE

One feels good if one does light exercise everyday, or walks for a while. For 2 weeks after delivery, if the mother lies face down for half an hour in the morning and in the evening, then the uterus quickly goes back to its original place.

VITAMIN ‘A’

The baby gets vitamin A from breast milk. During this time, within 2 weeks of delivery, all mothers have to be given one vitamin a capsule (2 lacs iu). This capsule is available at the union health and family planning center, thana health complex and in some NGO clinics.
The baby has to be given the colostrum milk after birth and for the first 6 months it has to be only breast fed.

After 6 months the baby has to be given other food along with breast milk for up to 2 years.

Within 6 weeks of the birth of the child, it has to be given vaccine for the 6 dangerous diseases, like: tuberculosis, diphtheria, hooping cough, tetanus, measles and polio and all the vaccines have to be given within 1 year.

As the child grows up, s/he should be given proper quantity of nutritious food and food with vitamin, according to the ability of the parents.

The health center has to be visited regularly to check if the child is having a proper growth.

The child should be given vitamin-A capsule after every 6 months up to 1-5 years of age.

One has to look after the baby’s cleanliness, healthy habits, sleeping at the right time, exercise etc.
One has to take TT vaccine as preventive measure against Tetanus. Many mothers in our country give birth to children in a very unhygienic surrounding. Therefore, both the mother and the baby remain at the risk of getting tetanus. The germs of tetanus enter the body if unclean knife or blade and thread is used to cut the baby’s chord and many infants die of this disease. For this reason all women who are at the reproductive age should take this vaccine.

Like girls, boys too should take TT vaccine 5 times in a lifetime. Any person can get tetanus any moment through injury. Since many newborn babies die of tetanus in our country, there are government and non-government programs to give TT vaccine to all girls between the ages of 15-49.
In a lifetime, one has to take TT vaccine 5 times. This vaccine can be taken at any time. But according to government program, one should start taking the vaccine from the age of 15 and take TT vaccine 5 times according to the schedule given below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dosages</th>
<th>When to take</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st Dosage</td>
<td>Any time after 15 years of age or from the fourth month of pregnancy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Dosage</td>
<td>4 weeks after the 1st doze</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd Dosage</td>
<td>6 months after the 2nd doze or during next pregnancy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th Dosage</td>
<td>1 year after the 3rd doze or during next pregnancy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th Dosage</td>
<td>1 year after the 4th doze or during next pregnancy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
You know that an embryo is formed as the sperm and the ovum meet. It takes 9 months and 7 days for this embryo to become a full-grown baby. When the delivery time approaches, the mother experiences labor pain and the baby is born. Sometimes it is seen that the baby inside the womb dies before attaining full growth. This is known as abortion.

If one has abortion or if there is fear of abortion then the mother bleeds. But this should not happen while the baby is inside. Any form of bleeding, even a few drops, is dangerous while the baby is inside. If this happens then one must contact the health center immediately.
It is seen that many people do not have babies after getting married. They are not using any family planning method and they want to have a baby. Sometimes conception may be delayed even for no apparent reason. But, sometimes conception may not take place due to physical problems of the husband or the wife. It is called infertility.

Probable reasons of infertility:

- Some problem in the reproductive system
- For not treating STD in time and properly.
- Besides, taking alcohol, dopes or drug addiction can reduce sexual potency, and result in such problems.

There are some misconceptions in our country about not having babies. Such as, one can not conceive if she is cursed, or possessed by evil spirit. Many of these causes can be prevented and one can have a child after treatment. But both the husband and wife should go to an experienced doctor for treatment. Doctors give treatment according to the problem identified through tests. Therefore, there is a possibility of having a child after treatment.

In our country, girls are usually blamed if she does not conceive and they are insulted and tortured in many ways for being "sterile". It is seen most of the times that the wife alone goes to a doctor, quack or faith healers (peer-fakir). But the husbands don’t want to go for treatment. Because it is believed that having or not having a baby entirely depends on the girls. Sometimes the husband gets married again with the hope of having a baby. But it is of no use if the wife goes alone for treatment if the problem is with the husband. Rather if both of them go for treatment together, there is a chance of having a baby later.
Many adolescent boys become curious about themselves at this age. They want to be assured of their abilities. They want to know if they are growing up to be real men. Sometimes young boys are anxious to find out about their sexual abilities. Some take medicines from quacks and faith healers. This is not right, rather this can cause damage. Some young boys like you wanted to know about sexual inability. Let us know about it.

In the normal circumstances, the male penis becomes firm and erects when aroused sexually and remains like that till ejaculation. The duration of this erection varies from person to person. If in case of a person the penis does not become firm despite sexual excitement or it becomes soft/weak before ejaculation, then it is known as sexual impotency. In most cases, this is caused due to some mental/psychological problems. But it can also happen due to some physical ailment or reaction to some drugs.

In many cases, there is early ejaculation when the couple is newly married or due to excessive excitement or due to nervousness. If this continues for sometime, the husband himself or the wife may consider the husband sexually incapable, and it results in misunderstanding in the married life. But these problems can be easily solved with the sincere cooperation and understanding between the husband and wife.

Girls can also have sex related problems. For example, fear of sexual intercourse and various mental and physical problems can cause some girls to get pain during intercourse and they may not take the matter easily. Mutual understanding and sincere love between the husband and wife can best solve such problems.

But if such problems continue, then they should consult a doctor or health worker. In effect, they can have a healthy and normal conjugal life and also have babies.
If someone feels that s/he is suffering from sexual inability, then s/he should consult a doctor frankly before getting married. Because one cannot become sure about sexual impotency without medical investigation.

If someone is sexually incapable, he can get well with treatment. After getting well, he can have sex with wife and there is also no problem in having a child later.

This is very rare. If a man feels that he is sexually incapable during having sex, then he must consult a doctor. His idea may turn out to be wrong.

Should one get married if s/he has sexual inability?

How will a man know whether he lacks sexual ability?

Can a sexually incapable man ever become a father?
Where to go to know more or for health care

If you have more questions in your mind after reading this book, or you want to know something then you can talk to someone you trust and you think can tell you specifically about these things. This person may be your elder sister, elder brother, someone in the family, some trusted friend or some health worker in a clinic. You can know more about adolescent reproductive health by asking them questions.

In case you need any advice or health care regarding the things that are written in this book then you can go to various popular NGO clinics of the country, family welfare center, UFHP, RSDP, BRAC Sushasthya Clinic, Mary Stopes Clinic. Besides, there are trained and good depot holders in the rural areas who can let you know about these and can refer you if needed. The main thing is to find out the right person or clinic/center with whom you can talk, know about anything, and get the service if required.

If you need to know something or get the service then it is you who has to go to the facility. Therefore, you have to contact them without inhibition whenever you feel it is necessary.