

LESSON ASSIGNMENT

LESSON 3

Personal Hygiene and Preventive Medicine Measures.

LESSON ASSIGNMENT

Paragraphs 3-1 through 3-8.

LESSON OBJECTIVES

After completing this lesson, you should be able to:

- 3-1. Recognize proper personal hygiene practices associated with the care of the skin, hair, hands, mouth & teeth and clothing.
- 3-2. Recognize proper personal hygiene practices associated with the care of the feet.
- 3-3. Identify nutritional elements associated with maintaining good health.
- 3-4. Identify physical fitness factors associated with the maintenance of good health.
- 3-5. Recognize personal hygiene practices used to avoid diseases and injuries associated with the environment.
- 3-6. Identify mental fitness concepts associated with the maintenance of good health.
- 3-7. Recognize proper guidance for avoiding illness in the field.
- 3-8. Identify personal hygiene concerns for female soldiers.

LESSON 3

PERSONAL HYGIENE AND PREVENTIVE MEDICINE MEASURES

3-1. PERSONAL CLEANLINESS

Personal hygiene is very important. Although many of the personal cleanliness measures discussed are considered routine, some are often forgotten, or become less of a priority, to the deployed soldier. Keeping the body and clothing clean is a simple, yet effective means of reducing the number of disease agents that could invade the body.

a. Skin Care.

(1) The body should be washed with soap and water from head to toe as often as possible. If a shower is not available, take sponge baths to wash all the body creases (armpits, groin, and crotch), the face, the hands, the feet, and the genitalia.

(2) Seek prompt medical attention for all infected cuts and burns.

(3) Special considerations – Arctic conditions.

(a) Washing in an Arctic environment may be accomplished by dry washing with snow.

(b) Shave at night to allow oil replacement by morning.

b. Hair Care.

(1) The hair should be kept trimmed, preferably 2 inches or less in length, and combed.

(2) Efforts should be made to wash your hair as often as possible.

(3) Shave facial hair daily.

(4) Grooming devices (brushes, combs and razors) - are not to be shared with anyone due to the chance of exchanging infection.

c. Hands.

(1) Keep fingernails trimmed short and clean.

- (2) NEVER bite your nails.

d. **Clothing.**

- (1) Dirty clothing harbors disease and germs that may cause infections.
- (2) Change out of dirty or wet clothing as often as possible.
- (3) Dirt and grease render the BDU ineffective as an insulator.

e. **Care of the Mouth and Teeth.** The mechanical cleaning of the mouth and teeth immediately after and just before retiring constitutes the basic fundamentals of oral hygiene.

(1) The toothbrush.

(a) If you do not have access to a toothbrush, a certain amount of oral hygiene can be accomplished with a stick or tissue paper wrapped around a clean finger.

(b) Both the inside and outside surfaces of the teeth are best cleaned by vigorous horizontal strokes combined with a twisting motion.

(c) As part of your oral hygiene program you should lightly brush the tissue of the mouth.



(2) Toothpaste or toothpowder. If toothpaste is not available, table salt, baking soda or even just plain water used with a toothbrush will remove decay forming food particles lodged between teeth.

(3) Prosthetic Devices and Fillings.

(a) The degree of successful usage of dental prosthetic appliances (dentures, bridges) is dependent on the amount of maintenance given them by the wearer and the dental officer.

(b) As much consideration should be given to cleaning the prosthetic devices as is given to the cleaning of your natural teeth.

NOTE: Although prosthetics are not your actual teeth, care must still be given to the inside of the mouth and tongue where bacteria can easily grow.

(c) Distorted or damaged dentures can be injurious to your mouth tissue and should be evaluated and corrected by a dental officer as soon as possible.

(d) Fillings, crowns, inlays and other types of restorations are simply substitutes for tooth structures and as such have a certain degree of functional limitations. The use of sound judgment regarding the limitations of these structures is essential in maintaining the effectiveness of them and that of surrounding teeth.

(e) Replace lost or damaged restorations ASAP.

3-2. FOOT CARE

a. General Foot Hygiene.

(1) The feet should be washed with soap and water at least once a day, paying particular attention to between the toes and under the nails.

(2) The feet should be thoroughly dried all over and aired before putting clean socks back on. If your feet perspire a great deal it is wise to use foot powder on them at least twice a day.

(3) Foot powder. Apply foot powder lightly and evenly over the top and bottom surface of the feet as well as between the toes. In addition to the foot powder helping to eliminate moisture (one of the essential elements needed to support the growth of fungus) it contains an anti-fungal agent. Antiperspirants can also be applied directly to the feet to keep perspiration to a minimum when foot powder is unavailable.

(4) Clean feet by rubbing them with foot powder in cold climates or where water is not available.

(5) Shoes. There should not be any pressure points or binding spots. Nor should shoes be so large that the foot to moves inside the boot.

(6) Socks. Socks should be changed daily and washed. They should be large enough to allow the toes to remain straight, but tight enough to minimize wrinkling.

(a) Woolen socks should be purchased one size larger than cotton socks to allow for shrinkage.

(b) Socks with holes or poorly darned socks may cause blisters and should be discarded.

(c) Different types of socks are provided for various footgear. Their proper use should be learned upon issue.

b. **Common foot problems.** Many of the foot problems common to the soldier can be avoided by following these guidelines.

(1) Blisters. Avoid getting blisters by wearing properly fitted socks and boots. Also be sure that boots are properly broken in before wearing them on long hauls, such as road marches.

(2) Ingrown toenails result from cutting the toenail to the contour of toe rather than straight across. Avoid ingrown toenails by ensuring that the nail is cut straight across the toe.

(3) Athlete's foot infection is one of the most common skin diseases. Avoid serious trouble with athlete's foot by practicing good foot hygiene as outlined above.

c. **Foot care on road marches.** The foot march is the most severe test of fitness of the feet. Unless special attention is given to the feet of marching troops, serious casualties from foot trouble will result.

(1) Preparing for the road march. Well in advance of the march, leaders should perform an inspection to ensure that all soldiers are equipped with the proper type of well-fitted, broken in footwear; that they are carrying an adequate number of clean socks without holes; that their feet are free from blisters or other problems; and that they have an adequate amount of foot powder.

(a) Deficiencies in supply or properly fitted gear should be taken care of at this time.

NOTE: Never attempt to break in new boots on a march!

(b) Blisters or other problems with the feet should be taken care of before the march.

(2) On the road march.

(a) On the march the feet should be kept as dry as possible. If socks become damp from perspiration or wetting they should be changed for dry ones at the first opportunity.

(b) Tender pressure points should be relieved promptly by adjusting gear or applying moleskin or adhesive tape.

(3) Once or twice daily while on the march you should attempt to dust your feet with powder.

d. Care of the feet during rest periods.

(1) Inspect your feet carefully for potential trouble spots.

(2) Wash your feet.

(3) Elevate your feet to reduce swelling and muscle congestion.



e. Care of the feet after the march.

(1) All used socks should be washed thoroughly with soap and water, stretched to facilitate drying, and hung in the sun or in an air current to dry.

(2) Woolen socks should be washed in cold water to prevent shrinkage.

(3) Feet should be inspected for potential trouble spots. Soldiers with blisters or infections should seek medical attention immediately.

3-3. NUTRITION

For proper strength, development and survival, the human body requires protein for muscle development, fats and carbohydrates for energy, minerals for blood and bone development, and certain essential vitamins, and water.

a. The army ration provides these essential food elements in adequate amounts and in the proper balance. It is also varied enough to meet the special requirements of climate and activity.

b. A normal intake of food usually provides all of the essential elements needed by the body, but supplements are occasionally needed such as extra amounts of salt in hot climates or vitamins for special situations.

NOTE: Coffee, tea, alcohol, etc., taken in moderation will not extensively hurt the body, but juices, milk and plain water should be the beverage of choice for the healthier you.

3-4. PHYSICAL FITNESS

a. Regular exercise is necessary to maintain stamina and good health. Most military duties provide a considerable amount of exercise and activity. This is usually

injected into the schedule, but for some reason if it is not, you should participate in some type of exercise or sport to develop and maintain stamina.



b. **Rest and Relaxation.** Our bodies require rest to restore our mental and physical vigor. Seven or eight unbroken hours of sleep a night is desirable, but in the military, situations often make this impossible. It is up to the individual soldier to learn how to take advantage of spare time, and to relax, even if they cannot sleep.

3-5. PROTECTION FROM THE ENVIRONMENT

a. **Protection from the elements.** Both in training and in combat the soldier is often exposed to the full force of the elements. If a soldier is to survive, they must discipline themselves to be conscious of their surroundings and situation and govern their actions accordingly. It is also up to the individual soldier to learn to use the protective equipment that was provided for them.

b. **Protection against disease-bearing insects.** The uniform is specially designed to protect you. It, when used in conjunction with the DoD arthropod repellent system, is your primary defense against the diseases spread by arthropods.

- (1) Keep your uniform and body as clean as possible.
- (2) Observe the proper use of repellents.
- (3) Observe the proper wear of uniform.

c. **Avoid Possible Sources of Disease.** Through a variety of measures, the Army attempts to make the soldier's surroundings as healthful as possible. It is important to note, however, that the individual soldier makes the difference. Every soldier has a responsibility to himself and to the other soldiers in his unit to follow the basic guidelines necessary to avoid unnecessary exposure to disease organisms.

(1) Army basic protective measures. Provisions for food and water that is free from disease organisms and poisons, sanitary disposal of body wastes and the elimination of insects and rodents are all ways the Army protects its soldiers from disease.

(2) Army special protective procedures. Drug prophylaxis, immunizations, and the detection and treatment of cases of communicable disease are additional measures that can be implemented.

(3) Individual's basic protective measures. Each soldier must avoid food and water that may be contaminated; they must take personal protective measures against insects, such as wearing the uniform properly and using repellents; and they must not expose themselves needlessly to potential sources of diseases such as venereal disease, malaria, or dysentery.

NOTE: Special protective measures. Each geographical area, climate, and living situation has its own special health hazard. These hazards may require additional special protective measures to ensure the safety of the soldiers in your unit and may include the use of bed nets, prophylaxis, iodine tablets, and etcetera.

3-6. MENTAL HEALTH CONCEPTS

For total health you need a healthy mind as well as a healthy body. The two are unbreakably linked. The soldier incapacitated by battle fatigue is as much a casualty, and as big a statistic, as the person who is wounded. By following these basic concepts you can do a lot to strengthen your total well being.

a. **Friendliness.** No man is an island. You need the companionship of others to round out your personality, and help you achieve what you are capable of achieving.

b. **Tolerance.** Apply the golden rule. The Army is composed of individuals of various ages, backgrounds, and religious beliefs. The right of each individual to his own beliefs and habits should be respected, as long as they do not interfere with proper military discipline.

c. **Combating worry.** Although worry cannot be shut off like a faucet there are always ways of combating it. Help is out there if you accept it. Your commander, First Sergeant, and NCOs can guide you towards the help you need if you give them a chance.

d. **Combating fear.** Fear is a normal reaction. It serves an important purpose of preparing the body for action, for self defense. Fear is only a problem when you let it control you. The best defense against overpowering fear is familiarity with the sensations involved - the trembling, jumpiness, the pounding heart, the sick stomach, the sweating, and the momentary freezing. This is why you are exposed to battlefield situations in basic training. It conditions you to concentrate on the job at hand and not what you perceive to be happening around you.



3-7. GUIDANCE FOR AVOIDING ILLNESS IN THE FIELD

- a. Don't consume foods and beverage from unauthorized, unapproved sources. When using water from an unapproved source, use some form of purification; iodine tablets, chlorine, boiling, etc.
- b. Don't contaminate the ground with urine or feces. Use available latrine facilities, or if you are on the move, dig a cat hole.
- c. Keep fingers and other contaminated objects out of your mouth. Always wash your hands after using the latrine, and before eating.
- d. Avoid unnecessary exposure to wet and cold. Wear clothing suited to the temperature, weather conditions, and type of activity.
- e. Avoid insect bites by keeping your body clean, wearing your uniform in the proper manner, and using repellents and bed nets as instructed.
- f. Don't share personal items with anyone (i.e., comb, razor, toothbrush, towels, etc.).
- g. Don't take a laxative for pain in the stomach. See a doctor instead.
- h. Don't throw food scraps, cans, and refuse about the camp area. This only serves as a breeding ground for pests and disease.
- i. Avoid unnecessary contact with sources of disease, especially in areas where native sanitation is poor.
- j. When possible, get six to nine hours of unbroken sleep each night.

3-8. PERSONAL HYGIENE AND FEMALE SOLDIERS

a. Women comprise approximately 12% of the U.S. Army and constitute a substantial part of units deployed around the world. During Operation Desert Storm, forty thousand female service members were deployed. Their medical and health concerns are different from male soldiers. There are some special considerations in a field environment, however, when addressed appropriately, these requirements should have limited impact on the mission.

b. **Supplies.** Females have different cleanliness requirements than males, and to compensate for a lack of shower facilities, certain items must be added to the packing list:

(1) Baby wipes. They have multiple uses and should be mandatory for females to bring during operations or training exercises.

(2) Panty liner/sanitary pads should be added to the packing list even if they do not expect their menstrual cycle during the exercise. They should be worn continuously and changed at least 3 times a day, if possible.

(3) Undergarments. Underwear should be designed as cotton, and bras should be sports bras or similar type designed for support. Underwear should be worn loose. During cold weather, soldiers should wear long underwear made from polypropylene.

(4) Non-deodorant tampons with cardboard applicators. Given the many stresses associated with the field exercises or deployments, some women may experience changes or disruption of their menstrual cycle. Unscented, non-perfumed personal hygiene supplies are preferred, as scented products may cause skin irritation and attract biting insects.

(5) Contraceptives supplies. Use of birth control pills may reduce menstrual cycle problems that occur during the field or deployments.

(6) Yeast infection medication. Fungal and bacterial vaginitis may occur during field exercises or deployments. Limited showers increase difficulty in maintaining good hygiene, especially during the menstrual period.

c. **Bathing and Menstrual Period.** Female soldiers should have access to bathing facilities daily during their menstrual period. This does not mean they need to have a fixed facility with hot and cold running water. It would be adequate to provide a place with privacy and drainage where the soldier could take a “bird bath” using a 5 gallon container. It would be optimal for the soldier to have access to a normal shower every third day or so if possible under mission constraints. Female soldiers should not be restricted from certain duties or missions when they are having their menstrual cycle.

d. **Care of Female Reproductive Tract Diseases.** Increased incidences of urinary tract infections may occur during field exercises or deployments. These diseases can become serious if left untreated. Medical care is necessary for vaginal discomfort, sores (painful or painless), swelling of lymph nodes in groin, unusual vaginal discharge, painful or burning urination, or lower abdominal pain.

e. **Water Consumption and Field Mobility.** Maintaining adequate hydration is important in all climates. All soldiers should drink adequate amounts of water to reduce risk of disease and non battle injury. Female soldiers may be at greater risk of dehydration in the field because of their reluctance to use the latrine due to privacy or time constraints. Female soldiers need more time and effort to urinate in the field than men because at least some disrobing is involved. Unit leaders need to plan long enough breaks to ensure that female soldiers do not voluntarily dehydrate due to lack of private facilities. Female soldiers who hold urine are susceptible to urinary tract infections.