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ONSET OF MENSES AT A YOUNGER AGE AND UNHEALTHY EATING HABITS CAUSING ANAEMIA IN INDIAN WOMEN

Early puberty robs India of iron-women

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When 15-year-old Bandra resident Priya Gupta complained of irregular menses, her mother took her for a check-up. Priya was suffering from anaemia. "Apart from periods at irregular intervals, she was bleeding profusely. Her haemoglobin levels were nearing 6.5 gm/100 ml of blood," said Dr Anjali Talwalkar, the gynaecologist at Kohinoor Hospital, Kurla. "With menarche setting in early, excessive blood loss leads to sapping of iron from the body. This leads to dipping haemoglobin levels and high risk of anaemia," she said.

Anaemia is a blood disorder. One of its major causes is deficiency of iron, and it is one of the issues sup-



Warm-up session with Micky Mehta at Phoenix Market City, Kurla



WARM-UP CAMP

DNA is organising a free pre-marathon camp with fitness expert Mickey Mehta at High Street Phoenix, Lower Parel, from 3.30pm to 5pm today. ● Warming up to the half marathon, p2

ported by the DNA iCan Women's Half Marathon. A UNICEF report says more than 55% of Indian ado-

lescent girls suffer from anaemia. "Dipping concentration, excessive fatigue and profuse bleeding dur-

ing menses are some of the symptoms," said Dr Talwalkar.

A study conducted amongst 450 teenage girls in Dharavi found 60% were anaemic. Dr Duru Shah, consultant gynaecologist at Jaslok Hospital said, "While haemoglobin levels of 11 gm/100 ml are considered normal, these girls had a level ranging between 8-10 gm/100 ml."

"Anaemia hits across socio-economic levels, especially since teenage girls don't pay attention to their diet," said Dr Talwalkar. Doctors advise annual blood check-ups as a preventive measure against anaemia. "If haemoglobin levels dip below 11 gm/100 ml, iron supplements might be needed," said Dr Shah.