

Abstract

Menstrual blood loss (MBL) was evaluated in 74 nulliporous Kenyan women aged between 20 and 27 years. The hemoglobin levels were all in normal range with the mean of 13.65 \pm 0.8, 13.84 \pm 1.2 and 13.04 \pm 1.2 g/100 ml respectively in 3 populations. The MBL was comparable in the 3 populations with the mean of 35.1 \pm 12.6, 30.6 \pm 8.7 and 32.2 \pm 9.4 ml respectively. There was no difference of statistical significance between the 2 periods studied per each individual. This study objectively assesses the menstrual blood loss in 3 population groups--2 urban and 1 rural. The data can be used to evaluate menstrual blood loss before and after initiation of various contraceptives used in Kenya. Subjects were volunteers who were not on any contraception except barrier or natural rhythm methods, not under psychological stress and who exhibited normal physical female characteristics on examination. Those who wished to drop out, became pregnant or desired contraception, were excluded. The study confirms the individual constancy of the menstrual blood loss in this population. This has important practical implications since a single determination of the menstrual blood loss may be a fairly good expression for the average blood loss in a woman. The immediate effect of various treatments such as IUD insertion or oral contraceptives on the MBL may easily be evaluated quantitatively by measurements in consecutive periods using only 1 period as a control. The quick method can be easily used in evaluating pathological conditions e.g. iron-deficiency due to heavy bleeding, IUD-associated hemorrhage, menorrhagia and uterine fibroid.