

## **IS 17514 : 2021 Reusable Sanitary Pad / Sanitary Napkin / Period Panties — Specification**

Menstruation is a natural process in adolescent girls and women. Menstrual Health and Hygiene (MHH) is essential to the well-being and empowerment of women and adolescent girls. When girls and women have access to safe and affordable sanitary materials to manage their menstruation, they decrease their risk of infections. Knowing the importance of subject BIS published IS 5405 for sanitary napkins way back in 1969 and revised it in 2019 to include the technological advancements made in this sector. These disposable sanitary napkins generate more than a billion napkins waste and requires a strong system to dispose them off.

To reduce the generation of waste, new products are available in the market in the form of re-usable sanitary napkins, period panties and pads. BIS has published IS 17514: 2021 for the same to ensure girls and women have access to safe and hygienic products.

Sanitary napkin is an absorbent material used to absorb fluid discharged during menstruation. As compared to cloth and other materials used during menstruation, it provides better hygiene and protection against leakage.

IS 17514 covers the requirements for reusable (multiple use) sanitary pad/sanitary napkin/period panties for external use. The reusable sanitary pad/sanitary napkin/period panties generally consist of following major components:

- a) cover or the top sheet- which comes in contact with skin of wearer
- b) absorbent core - middle layer(s) consist of filler materials
- c) bottom layer- made of suitable material(s) that prevents the leakage when used.

This standard stipulates the requirements for size and other physical parameters. Emphasis has been laid on hygienic requirements like total microbial count, bacterial and fungal bioburden and biocompatibility which includes cytotoxicity, skin irritation and sensitization etc.

As these are washable napkins, hence the number of cycles upto which can be reused giving same performance as fresh napkin and the same is to be declared by manufacturer depending on the material used. Instructions for washing and drying are also to be defined by manufacturer.

The most important aspect to get the napkins of quality stated above is good manufacturing practices to be followed and same have been detailed in the standard.

Knowing the importance of women health hygiene government has brought a QCO and brought IS 17514 under mandatory compliances of BIS Certification since October 2024.

