

Learning by Ear – Hygiene: How to avoid diarrhoea

Episode 09 “Stunted Child”

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Scene	Characters	
1	1. SAM 2. CHEMU	SAM – 17, m. MARIA – 43, f.
2	1. SAM 2. CHEMU	EDITH – 40, f.
3	1. SAM 2. CHEMU 3. EDDI	EDDI– 36, m. DR SALLY – 34, f.
4	1. SAM 2. CHEMU	CHEMU – 15, f. NARRATOR

INTRO

MUSIC: THEME MUSIC

01. NARRATOR HELLO AND WELCOME TO EPISODE **NINE** OF OUR “LEARNING BY EAR” SERIES CALLED HYGIENE – HOW TO AVOID DIARRHOEA. IN THE LAST EPISODE SAM AND CHEMU WERE WORRIED ABOUT THE STATE OF THEIR SCHOOL PIT LATRINES. THE LATRINES WERE FULL OF FLIES AND WERE VERY DIRTY. AFTER ADVICE FROM UNCLE EDDI, A HEALTH COMMUNITY WORKER, THE LATRINES WERE MADE HYGIENIC BY PROVIDING COVERS FOR THE HOLES, REGULAR CLEANING AND BY SPREADING ASH ON THE FLOORS. BY DOING SO, THEY HAVE REDUCED OR EVEN STOPPED THE SPREAD OF DIARRHOEA CAUSED BACTERIA AND PARASITES.

SAM AND CHEMU HAVE LEARNED AND IMPLEMENTED KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS ON GOOD SANITATION AND HYGIENIC LIVING. IS THERE STILL MORE TO LEARN?

JOIN THEM AND FIND OUT.

SCENE 1: MARIA'S HOME COMPOUND

02. SFX: FAST FOOT STEPS

03. SAM (shouting) Chemu... Chemu....are you there? Are you at home?

SILENCE

04. SAM Chemu! Chemu! I know you are in here somewhere...

05. SFX: DOOR CREEKS OPEN.

06. SAM Chemu, are you in here?

07. CHEMU (from a bit far) Ssssh..... not so loud!

08. SAM Why? Why will you not answer me?

09. CHEMU Ssssh... quiet... I am in here. In Mum's room.

10. SFX: DOOR CREAKS OPEN SLOWLY.

11. CHEMU (hissing) Quiet, you will wake the kid.

12. SAM (loud whisper) Oh, I did not know you were baby-sitting your neighbour's child again.

13. CHEMU (loud whisper) You forgot today is the day his mother goes to the market and I baby-sit for the day.

14. **SAM** Sorry, I forgot. **(PAUSE.)** How old did you say this child is?
15. **CHEMU** First, his name is Kwaku. Second, he is eight years old. Let's get out of here before you wake him up. It took me so long to get him to sleep and he is a hare!
16. **SAM** Hare?
17. **CHEMU** Sleeps very lightly. Wakes up often and starts scratching his skin.. look... he has all these marks on his skin.
18. **SFX: DOOR OPENS AND SHUTS**
19. **SAM** What's wrong with him? He looks like... like he is only three or four years old.
20. **CHEMU** Well, they all seem to be small in their family. Remember his sister in school, Jane? She is my age and yet only half my size.
21. **SAM** You mean the pretty, skinny girl with a sweet smile?
22. **CHEMU** **(angry)** She is not pretty. She is just a skinny, sickly girl. She misses classes a lot.
23. **SAM** **(apologetic)** Ok.. ok.. she is not pretty. But why does she miss class?

- 24. CHEMU** Remember when you had diarrhoea and missed two weeks of school. Well, she is always having diarrhoea and missing school.
- 25. SAM** But why does she not get treatment?
- 26. CHEMU** **(angry)** Sam, I am her classmate not her mother!
- 27. SAM** Well, I am just wondering... I mean, I feel sorry for her.
- 28. CHEMU** **(angry)** Why her? You don't even know her. She is not your friend.
- 29. SAM** **(apologetic)** Sorry Chemu, you are my friend but you are not sick like her.
- 30. CHEMU** **(sneering)** Well, you should know she is so daft. She is slow... and she is...
- 31. SAM** Stop being mean to your classmate.
- 32. CHEMU** Sam, I am telling you, even when she attends all the classes, she still comes last.
- 33. SAM** **(shouting)** Chemu, you are jealous!
- 34. SFX: KID WHIMPERS**
- 35. CHEMU** Now, see what you have done.

BRIDGE MUSIC

36. NARRATOR WELL... EVEN FOR CHEMU AND SAM, THEY CAN TELL WHEN OTHER CHILDREN ARE TOO SMALL FOR THEIR SIZE OR ARE TOO SLOW IN CLASS. LET'S LISTEN ON AND FIND OUT WHY JANE IS SLOW IN CLASS AND KWAKU IS TOO SMALL FOR HIS AGE.

SCENE 2: EDITH'S HOME

37. EDITH Eddi and Dr Sally, you know how grateful I am for your frequent visits. You are a good brother-law. And Sally, with all your work at the hospital! My husband, your brother, must be watching us from above and smiling at you! May he rest in peace.

38. EDDI Edith, it is our duty to keep an eye on you and Sam. Especially after what happened to Baby Fatu.

39. EDITH May she also rest in peace. But now I am really relieved about these test results. No more diarrhoea in my family, and the same with Maria and Chemu. You know, I was a bit afraid when we all took the tests..

40. **EDDI** I know.
41. **DR SALLY** How is Sam's health? Where is he?
42. **SFX: DOOR BURSTS OPEN. THREE PAIRS OF FOOT STEPS RUSH IN.**
43. **SAM** Uncle Eddi! Auntie Sally!
44. **CHEMU** Uncle! Dr Sally!
45. **EDDI** How are you Sam and Chemu? We were just talking about the two of you.
46. **DR SALLY** Chemu, you have brought us a visitor?
Whose is the child?
47. **CHEMU** It's Kwaku, I was babysitting our neighbour's child and Sam woke him up. Then we heard your car.
48. **EDDI** It is very nice of you to baby-sit.
49. **SAM** (**teasing**) Chemu baby-sits a very small child..
50. **EDITH** Sam, come on.. that is unfair...
51. **CHEMU** Sam, it is not his fault.... he just seems to stay small for a very long time.... He is not growing much.

- 52. EDITH** And every time I see this child, he is scratching his skin like he has fleas all over.
- 53. DR SALLY** Poor child. **(To Kwaku)** Kwaku... Kwaku, my child, come here, come, let me examine you. And he's so silent as if he couldn't speak.
- 54. SAM** Auntie Sally, we should also call his pretty sister so that you can examine her, too. She is very skinny and is always sick....
- 55. CHEMU** **(interrupts)** She is not pretty.. She has diarrhoea and she is very slow... slow in the head.
- 56. EDITH** **(to Sam and Chemu)** Stop it, you two.
- 57. DR SALLY** Eddi, have a look at this... he .. do you recognise those markings on the skin. And he is definitely underweight.
- 58. EDDI** We have a big problem here. Kwaku has stunted growth.
- 59. EDITH** Eddi, watch out what you say about our neighbour's children. We could get into a lot of trouble!

- 60. DR SALLY** I don't care much about what the neighbours say, but what I can tell you is that this child needs immediate medical help.
- 61. CHEMU** Oh no... Dr Sally, can you make him grow tall?
- 62. DR SALLY** Kwaku is too small for a child his age. He has what we call stunted growth.
- 63. CHEMU** What does he stay so small?
- 64. EDITH** Chemu, I am sure Dr Sally will advise Mama Kwaku on how to make him better. But now, I think his mother has returned. Take him back and tell his mother that Dr Sally is coming to see her shortly.
- 65. SFX: FOOTSTEPS. DOOR OPENS AND SHUTS.**
- 66. SAM** So, what is wrong with him?
- 67. DR SALLY** Sam, you remember the worms you had when you had diarrhoea. Well, Kwaku has worms, but different ones. It is possible he has hookworms.
- 68. EDITH** Worms, how did the child get them?

- 69. EDDI** Edith, remember what we learnt earlier about why we should wash our hands, boil water and clean our food? Well, these worms live in the intestines. For them to grow, they have to feed on the child.
- 70. SAM** Oh no.. that is mean.
- 71. EDITH** Poor child.
- 72. DR SALLY** Well, let's put it this way, they share the food that Kwaku should use for his normal growth. The hookworms also obtain nutrients by sucking blood from the child. Each worm taking a little. An infected child can have as many as hundreds of worms. And the more the situation is ignored, the more the worms increase and the more the effects.
- 73. SAM** Ooh no...this is just too mean. And people just don't know how to prevent it. It's so easy. **(to himself)** We have to do something about it...
- 74. EDDI** And as if this is not enough, the child also gets acute diarrhoea, accompanied by fever.

- 75. EDITH** Oh, Eddi, this is sounding real bad. What about his skin? You saw all those marks and scratches.
- 76. DR SALLY** You see, the hookworm larvae..
- 77. SAM** **(interrupts)** Larvae? What is that?
- 78. EDDI** Good question, Sam. It is .. well, let's say it is an immature form of the worms.
- 79. DR SALLY** When one is exposed to these larvae, which are found in many unhygienic environments the immature worms, penetrate the skin. When they do, that area gets itchy and some markings appear. The larvae then migrate into the bloodstream. They can also get into the windpipe and lungs.
- 80. SAM** It sounds like this ... these larvae are going on safari in a human body.
- 81. EDDI** Interesting way of putting it. But it is a very harmful safari.
- 82. EDITH** Sally, please continue, I am really getting alarmed.

- 83. DR SALLY** Eventually, these larvae get into the small intestines and finally develop into adult worms.
- 84. SAM** **(alarmed)** Auntie Sally, please let's go now. Let's go get Kwaku and take him to hospital. And then we really have to find a way of letting the community know...
- 85. SFX: DOOR BURSTS OPEN.**
- 86. MARIA** **(shouting)** Has anyone seen that lazy girl of mine?
- 87. EDDI** Morning to you, Maria. What's so urgent that you do not even wish us a good morning.
- 88. MARIA** Aaah... good morning everyone. But personally, I am not having a good morning. Is Chemu here?
- 89. EDITH** She is over at Mama Kwaku's. We are about to head there ourselves.
- 90. MARIA** Why? Has Mama Kwaku become a tourist attraction? She is just the mother of a dwarf and a daft girl.
- 91. DR SALLY** Kwaku has hookworms and for .. What was her name?

- 92. MARIA** The stupid, slow girl? She is called Jane.
- 93. DR SALLY** She is not mentally slow. She is unwell.
- 94. MARIA** Of course she is.. unwell in the head.
- 95. EDITH** **(exclaiming)** Maria! At times you are so mean!
- 96. EDDI** Please.. can we listen? This is very important.
- 97. DR SALLY** Jane has probably had the same hookworms in her for a long time. The combination of chronic diarrhoea and the worms feeding from her nutrients, means she ends up also with slow growth and slow development. Her cognitive abilities are slowed down too.
- 98. MARIA** The difference is the same. She is slow in the brain.
- 99. EDDI** I just hope we all have not left it too late.
- 100. MARIA** We... we? Eddi, you tell me how I come into this? It is not my fault. What I should be doing right now is running over there to rescue my bright little girl before she gets infected with the mental slowness. I am going.
- 101. EDITH** **(shouting)** Maria! You are so mean.

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Radionovela: Episode Nine – Stunted Child

102.DR SALLY We are all going to Mama Kwaku's. Her
 children must go to hospital immediately.

103.MARIA Then what are you waiting for? Let's go.

BRIDGE MUSIC

OUTRO

104.NARRATOR IMAGINE HAVING TO SHARE YOUR FOOD WITH HUNDREDS OF WORMS! NO WONDER KWAKU’S GROWTH IS AFFECTED. HOW MANY OF US HAVE WORMS IN OUR INTESTINE AND ARE NOT AWARE OF IT?

NOW SAM IS THINKING ABOUT WHAT HE CAN DO TO NOT KEEP ALL THIS KNOWLEDGE WITHIN THE FOUR WALLS OF HIS OWN HOME. THERE MUST BE A WAY TO SHARE WHAT HE AND HIS FAMILY HAVE BEEN LEARNING OVER THE PAST WEEKS. MAYBE IF THEY ALL SIT DOWN THEY CAN COME UP WITH A PLAN...

TUNE IN NEXT TIME FOR THE LAST EPISODE OF OUR ‘LEARNING BY EAR’ SERIES TO HEAR HOW THE STORY WILL END! MEANWHILE, YOU CAN VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT WWW.DW-WORLD.DE/LBE FOR MORE INFORMATION AND STORIES. FOR NOW, GOOD BYE!