



# Puberty FAQ

# **P&G** School Programs

## **Puberty**

Do your students have questions about puberty? If so, you might find answers here. We did our best to cover the basics.

**How will I know when my period will start?**

**What should I use for menstrual protection?**

**What should I do if I get cramps?**

**How can I change my pad at school?**

**How can I bring my protection to school?**

**When will my breasts start growing?**

**What is that white discharge? How do I deal with it? When will it stop?**

**How can I keep this a secret?**

**How can I ask the teacher to let me change my pad?**

**Can I take a bath or shower when I'm on my period?**

**Can I still play sports?**

**Why are my first periods irregular?**

**What are the signs that a girl will start having periods?**

**What is acne?**

**How do I stop body odor?**

**For more answers to sensitive questions, ask the experts on [BeingGirl.com](http://BeingGirl.com)**

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## Puberty

### How will I know when my period will start?

Although most girls get their period between 11 to 14 years old, you could start your period anywhere from 8 to 17.

You could narrow that down by taking clues from your body. During puberty, when your body becomes sexually mature, you'll have some of these changes that show your period's on its way. (By the way, these changes may happen in a different order than listed here.)

- \* **Developing Breasts.** First, you'll get breast "buds." (Your breasts then can take up to three to four years to fully develop.) Generally, you will get your period two to three years after your breasts start developing.
- \* **Growing Pubic Hair.** Right after your breasts start to form, you'll start developing pubic hair. It will be soft and thin at first, then gradually become coarser. Your period usually arrives around one to two years after the hair development.
- \* **Discharge.** This is the big sign. You'll start to experience vaginal discharge that will be either white or yellowish. Your period should start around 6-12 (but up to 18) months after the start of discharge.

There's one more way to figure out when you'll start menstruating: Ask your mom. You'll probably get your period within a year or so of when she got hers.

### What should I use for menstrual protection?

Choose feminine protection products based on the amount of your flow. If you have light to moderate flow, Always® Slender (pink color) fits the best. For moderate flow, use Always Regular (yellow); for moderate to heavy flow, use Always Super (green); and for heavy flow, use Always Maxi (red). Always also offers Always Overnight (orange) for your overnight protection. Some women use pantliners at the beginning and end of their period when their flow is light, or for added protection when using a tampon.

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### What should I do if I get cramps?

Pain killers with ibuprofen seem to work the best on menstrual cramps. Keep a menstrual calendar and try to predict when your period will come. (This can be a difficult task for the first year or so.) Then start taking the pain killer the night before you get your period. If the cramps stop you from participating in your life, ask your mom to take you to see a gynecologist.

You may also want to try [ThermaCare® Menstrual HeatPatches](#). Use ThermaCare Menstrual HeatPatches at an early stage of pain (and use them almost anywhere). Combined with exercise, this can help keep menstrual pain under control. For tips about how to use exercise to combat cramps, visit [ThermaCare](#).

### How can I change my pad at school?

Every girl needs to deal with this awkward situation, and like other girls, you'll find the best way for you. When you change your pad, wrap it with toilet tissue and put it in the appropriate trash container. If you are using tampons and the applicator is biodegradable and not plastic, you can flush everything in the toilet. Plastic applicators need to be disposed of in a trash container, not flushed.

### How can I bring my protection to school?

As a rule of thumb, it's always a good idea to always carry a purse, fanny pack or backpack with you so that every time you go to the bathroom, you always have your comb, tissues, makeup, etc. with you. That way, when you're carrying your feminine protection, it won't look obvious. If you aren't sure when your period is due, wear a pantiliner daily to avoid any accidents.

Also, check out the location in your school where emergency menstrual products are kept. Sometimes it is the school nurse, the health/physical education teacher or even the school secretary.

## Puberty

### **When will my breasts start growing?**

One of the first signs of puberty is when your breasts start developing. Many girls start to get "breast buds" (mounds or bumps around or under the nipple) at 11, but that's average. If you're a few years younger or older than 11 when you develop breast buds, that's totally normal, too.

Next, your entire breast will start to get larger. Your nipple and areola (the area around the nipple) will get darker and form a separate, small mound. This whole process, from "flat" to "finish" takes from two to three years. Some girls develop more quickly than others, and it's not unusual for one breast to grow faster than the other. Sometimes it can take a while for things to "even out." But even some adult women have one breast that's bigger than the other.

Breasts get a lot of attention during puberty because they're new and not everyone gets them at the same time. Remember that everyone's breasts are different. What's important is the way you feel about your breasts and that, whatever their shape or size, you come to accept them as another unique and beautiful part of you.

### **What is that white discharge? How do I deal with it? When will it stop?**

It is normal to get a daily vaginal discharge. It begins a year or so before you start to menstruate and lasts for most of your adult life. Some days during your cycle the discharge is wet and liquidy, other days it is thick and rope-like. If you don't like the way it feels or you want to protect your undies, you might want to wear an Always Pantliner each day. The pantliner will absorb the vaginal discharge and help you feel fresh and dry.

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### How can I keep this a secret?

Perspiration or secreted or excreted fluid may create an odor when in contact with bacteria on your skin. You can use an antiperspirant if the odor occurs under your arms, and you can use antibacterial wipes, Always Feminine Wipes, or wash your pubic area with soap and water if you detect a vaginal odor. Scented menstrual/sanitary pads help disguise the menstrual odor. You can use tampons to reduce menstrual odor too. Since tampons collect menstrual discharge before it leaves your body, there is very little odor.

Some odors are related to vaginal infections. If you have a discolored discharge and any itching or burning associated with this odor, ask your mom to take you to see a gynecologist.

### How can I ask the teacher to let me change my pad?

It is best to change menstrual protection before or after lunch to avoid this problem. Most teachers are aware of your need to change your menstrual protection during class time. If you find the rules of the school do not allow you to use the bathroom during class, have your mom write a letter to your school principal and your classroom teachers that asks permission for you to use the bathroom when you feel it is necessary. The letter can indicate that you have need to use the bathroom for normal personal hygiene.

### Can I take a bath or shower when I'm on my period?

It is very important to continue to shower or bathe regularly (daily) when you are menstruating. In the shower, any discharge will go down the drain with the running water. This is not a problem.

### Can I still play sports?

You can certainly continue to participate in sports. As a matter of fact, you'll probably feel better if you are active during your period. If your sport is very active or involves swimming, you may want to consider using tampons as a menstrual protection.

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### Why are my first periods irregular?

Periods can be quite irregular during the first couple of years, and you can relax about this. Being extremely lean can affect your period. Chances are you will gain weight now that you are menstruating and your body is getting a fuller shape. Your periods will change over the next couple of years and become longer and on a regular cycle. The average period lasts three to seven days. Keep a menstrual calendar and you will be able to see when your periods become regular.

### What are the signs that a girl will start having periods?

As a rough guide, a girl's periods will probably start:

- \* About two years after her breasts start to develop
- \* Soon after she grows pubic hair
- \* After she starts to notice some vaginal discharge

### What is acne?

Acne (or "pimples") is a natural occurrence. It starts when the skin's pores become blocked with dead skin cells and sebum, which slows down the flow of sebum to the skin surface. Bacteria can then develop in the clogged pore, causing a pimple.

### How do I stop body odor?

The best ways to prevent body odor are to shower or take a bath daily, making sure you pay attention to your underarms also, wear clothes that breathe like cotton, and use a deodorant or antiperspirant.

Deodorants will not stop the sweat; they just partially cover up the smell. Antiperspirants help stop the sweat before it starts with a chemical called aluminum chlorohydrate. It actually stops the perspiration process.

Deodorants work best when they go on after you have showered and the skin under your armpits is slightly damp. It's a personal choice. To find out what works best for you, try the [Secret® Website](#).



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and growing up*

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girl's guide



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All the words in **teal bold type** in this booklet are defined in the glossary.



# Puberty

## **YEAH, IT'S A WEIRD WORD, BUT IT DOESN'T MAKE YOU WEIRD**

**Puberty** is a series of changes that your body—and all your friends' bodies—will go through as you grow up. Like the word, puberty may seem strange because it's new to you. But the more you know about it, the more comfortable it will be. This guide will help with that by:

- Letting you know what changes to expect and helping you understand them.
- Helping you prepare for what's ahead so you can feel more confident.
- Giving you helpful tips and answers to many girl questions.

It also helps to talk about puberty. It may seem embarrassing—that's normal—but it will help you feel more relaxed and confident. Here are some tips:

- Ask someone like your mom or older sister to answer your questions. They've "been there, done that," so their experience may help.
- If it's hard to ask your question face-to-face, leave it in a note.
- Visit **beinggirl.com**, a site just for girls, where you can learn and talk with other girls about growing up—like how your body and feelings change.

# It's not summer vacation, but it is a great journey

During puberty, you'll experience changes to your body, skin, hair and even your emotions. It may seem like a wild ride sometimes, but chances are you'll be happy with the outcome—the same “you,” just a more grown-up version.

## WHERE IT ALL BEGINS

Your **pituitary gland**, located beneath the front of your brain, starts puberty. Your pituitary gland sends a signal to two other glands—your **ovaries**—telling them to make a special chemical, or **hormone**, called estrogen. **Estrogen** is the main female hormone that triggers most of the changes you'll see and feel. Boys have a different hormone, **testosterone**, that causes most of their changes.



## ARE WE THERE YET? ARE WE THERE YET?

Puberty usually starts between the ages of 8 and 13 and lasts a few years, but every girl is different. Some girls' pituitary glands are eager; some take their time. The important thing is that your pituitary gland will start your puberty when it's right for your body. However, if you haven't experienced any puberty changes by age 14, you may want to talk to your doctor.

## OPEN UP THE CONVERSATION

It's completely normal to be nervous about having a talk with your mom, or another trusted adult like your dad, aunt or stepparent, about your first period. Adults will help get the right answers to your questions. And it's not so bad once you get started. You just need to start the conversation. You can do it!

### Conversation tips for talking about your period:

- Keep it casual
- Write it down (*leave a note saying you'd like to talk about your first period if it makes you feel more comfortable*)
- Be direct



## WHAT YOU'LL SEE ALONG THE WAY

Many changes will happen over time and at different rates for every body. Some may be quick and some may take longer. But the more you know about it, the more comfortable it can be. Here's a rundown of the main physical changes you'll go through:

- Your body grows taller and broader.
- You begin to grow underarm hair, as well as pubic hair in your **pubic area**.
- Your body may sweat more and you may develop body odor.
- Your skin may become oilier and you may get pimples.
- Your hair may become oilier.
- Your breasts begin to grow.
- Vaginal discharge begins.
- Your period starts.



## WHAT YOU'LL FEEL ALONG THE WAY

The emotional changes you'll experience during puberty may not happen at the same time that your body matures. You could feel older before you look older or the other way around. In any case, here are some things to expect:

- You'll start to think more like an adult does.
- You'll begin to make more sense of your feelings—both positive and negative ones—and express them better.
- You may get angry more easily and go through mood swings. Plus, you may cry more—over little and big things.
- You may become more self-conscious.
- You may compare yourself to your friends and feel like something is wrong with you. But there's not!
- You may feel and act more feminine.

## Take some time to shine up your self-image

A healthy body image depends on a healthy attitude—and that's something you can control. As your appearance changes, women you see on TV or online may leave you with questions about how you should really look. The simple answer is we're all unique and healthy bodies come in various shapes and sizes. Remember: no one is perfect, so just enjoy being you!

### SOME WAYS TO BOOST YOUR SELF-ESTEEM:

1. Find something you do well—like a sport, an art or a school subject—and focus on succeeding at it.
2. Find time each day to focus on you and write down three things about yourself that you wouldn't change.
3. Set realistic expectations. Aim for accomplishment, not perfection.
4. Concentrate on your abilities and accomplishments instead of your faults.
5. Do a good deed. Making a difference will help you feel like a better person.
6. Move your body with physical activities. You'll unload stress and feel stronger and happier.



### Things will begin to shape up for you

You know puberty has kicked in when you start growing taller and begin to take on a more feminine shape. Your hips will widen, your breasts will begin to grow and, naturally, you may gain weight and your body fat will increase. With so many changes, you may feel awkward. It's important that you take care of yourself with good nutrition and physical activity.



### EAT WELL AND FEEL WELL—INSIDE AND OUT

Eat a range of foods to get all the vitamins and nutrients you need. Try to eat lots of protein (like fish, meat, cheese, milk, eggs and beans). You also need complex carbohydrates (like whole wheat breads, pasta and cereals) and fresh fruits and vegetables.

### MAKE GOOD DECISIONS

In addition to the physical changes happening to your body, you'll experience other changes. You're probably starting to earn more freedom at school and at home—and probably more responsibilities, too! As a result, you'll be making more decisions on your own than when you were younger. You'll need to evaluate and make sense of all the influencing factors in your life such as friends, parents, teachers and things you see in the media and read on the Internet. At times, it can be difficult to know what to think and how to act.

Learning to make the right decisions for YOU is an important part of growing up. It's easy to get into situations that are challenging when you don't take the time to think about your decisions. Can you think of a time when you got into trouble because you acted “without thinking”?

**Remember:** great decision-making skills are learned—no one is born with them!

## Starting from the top...

During early puberty, the first stage of breast development happens, called “budding.” From there, your breasts grow gradually; you probably won’t notice it most of the time. One breast may grow larger than the other—that’s okay. Just like your legs and arms, your breasts will never be exactly alike—no one’s are.

### BREASTS AND BRAS—BOTH COME IN LOTS OF SHAPES AND SIZES

Once your breasts develop, wearing a bra provides support and coverage that can help you feel more comfortable. Plus, bras come in tons of fun colors and designs, so you can find ones that match your personal style. Just make sure your bra fits you properly.

### THE SCOOP ON BRA SIZING

Many stores that sell bras have experts who can tell you your correct size by measuring you. They do it all the time, so don’t feel weird. You can also have a friend or trusted adult measure you using the following guide:

1. Measure around your chest just below your breasts.
2. If it’s an odd number, add 5. If it’s an even number, add 4. This is your frame size.

**For bra hints and tips,**  
check out the bra guide  
on [beinggirl.com](http://beinggirl.com).



3. Now find your bust line size by measuring around your chest over the fullest part of your breasts.
4. Compare your frame size and bust line size to determine your cup size:  
If they are the same, you need an AA-cup.  
If they differ by 1, you need an A-cup.  
If they differ by 2, you need a B-cup.  
If they differ by 3, you need a C-cup.  
If they differ by 4, you need a D-cup.
5. Your bra size is your frame and cup sizes together.

$$\begin{array}{r} 27 \text{ chest} \\ + 5 \\ \hline 32 \text{ frame} \\ \\ 33 \text{ bust line} \\ - 32 \text{ frame} \\ \hline 1 \text{ A-cup} \\ \text{Bra size} = 32\text{A} \end{array}$$

## Feeling good in your skin

Of the many things your body goes through during puberty, changes in your skin are among the most noticeable. **Acne** is a natural occurrence during puberty. It starts when bacteria develops in blocked pores and turns into pimples.

Acne can’t always be prevented (even by washing all the time), but by making skin care part of your everyday routine, you can help your skin stay as clear as possible.

### 3 STEPS TO BETTER SKIN

- 1. Clean**—To help get rid of everyday dirt and oil on your face, wash twice daily with a gentle soap or cleanser. It can be medicated or non-medicated. Deep cleanse with a cleanser containing salicylic acid. (Look for “salicylic acid” to be listed in the active ingredients on the back of the bottle.)
- 2. Prevent**—To help prevent pores from becoming clogged, use a salicylic acid product all over your face. Make sure to moisturize after each wash so your skin stays hydrated.
- 3. Treat**—To help eliminate pimples quickly, use a benzoyl peroxide product to unclog pores.

### ACNE DOs AND DON'Ts

- Don't squeeze any pimple—this can cause scars and may even cause more acne!
- Do use hair and other beauty products with care. Look for the word “non-comedogenic” on the label. These products don't clog pores.
- Don't get too much sun. Over time, this can make your acne worse.
- Do wear the proper sunscreen products for your face and your body.
- Don't scrub skin hard. This may actually spread acne or make it worse.
- Do eat a healthy diet and make sure to get regular exercise and proper rest.

## Heads up!

### YOUR HAIR MAY NEED MORE ATTENTION

Puberty may cause your hair to become oilier, thicker, coarser—even curlier or straighter. The important thing is to keep it healthy with regular care.

### GOOD HABITS FOR HEALTHY-LOOKING HAIR

- Shampoo regularly (daily or every other day is best for most hair types).
- If you're African-American, your hair may be dry and delicate. So you only need to wash your hair 1 to 2 times a week.
- After shampooing, use a light conditioner to add moisture, control and strength.
- When you're swimming or in the sun, use an intensive conditioner with UV protection.
- When your hair is wet, use a wide-tooth comb. A brush may break your hair strands.



### Got a question?

For answers to your hair and skin care questions, visit [beinggirl.com](http://beinggirl.com).

### DON'T FORGET YOUR TEETH

Part of having a healthy body is making sure you keep your teeth clean. To keep them strong and healthy, make sure you brush them properly every morning and every night with a good toothpaste.

Crest® Pro-Health For Me Anticavity Toothpaste helps fight cavities, strengthen teeth enamel and freshen breath. Oral-B® Pro-Health For Me Cross Action Toothbrush with soft, angled CrissCross bristles cleans between gaps in your changing teeth (like teeth with braces).



For best results, brush from gum to teeth and don't forget your tongue. You should also floss daily in between your teeth. A rinse, such as Crest® Pro-Health For Me Anticavity Fluoride Rinse, also helps reach places that brushing may have missed.

## Getting active!

Daily physical activity and exercise are great ways of keeping your body healthy—they help to make you strong and agile, and they make your heart and lungs work better, too. There are lots of things you can do, either with friends or by yourself—the secret is to find something you enjoy and keep at it. Here are some ideas for getting active:

- Go rollerblading, skating, hiking or swimming with friends.
- Walk up the stairs instead of using the elevator.
- If you go to the beach, walk or jog barefoot on the sand—it's great for your legs.
- Dancing is a great way to burn off calories and have some fun—so turn up the music and get moving!
- Walk, longboard, skateboard or cycle to school instead of taking the bus.
- Take a younger brother or sister to the park or playground and play some ball games.
- When you're texting friends, do some exercises such as tightening then relaxing your stomach muscles. Lift light weights, hold a yoga pose or do a wall sit. Keep connected with friends while being active!
- Find out how to get involved in physical activities at your school—perhaps join a sports team or participate in intramurals with your friends.

## Sweating is good for you. So why the big stink about it?

Everybody sweats, or perspires. It's a normal and important function—it helps regulate your body temperature. But once you hit puberty, sweating can also cause body odor.

Body odor is triggered by your **apocrine glands**—the kind of sweat glands that kick in at puberty. Your other sweat glands—**eccrine glands**—start working at birth. Eccrine glands produce clear, odorless perspiration, but apocrine glands produce perspiration that can smell bad when it comes in contact with bacteria on your skin.

Since a lot of apocrine glands are under your arms, many people use underarm deodorants or antiperspirants.

**Deodorants** counteract odor to help you smell better.

**Antiperspirants** reduce sweating and underarm wetness. Since these are the main causes of body odor, antiperspirants help prevent odor before it starts.



### BODY ODOR BUSTERS

- Shower or bathe daily to wash dirt and oil off your skin.
- Make sure to wash your underarms thoroughly.
- Apply deodorant or antiperspirant at least once a day.
- Wear clothes made of material that breathes, like cotton.
- Always shower or bathe after you exercise. If you can't do it right away, at least change out of your sweaty clothes and into clean ones.

### WHEN YOU'RE READY FOR DEODORANT

There are many types of antiperspirants and deodorants. What kind you need or want depends on you. How much you sweat (we're all different), whether you like a more noticeable scent (or not), and even how the product feels can all help you figure out which type is best for you.

#### Did you know?

- Sweat glands are everywhere on your body except your lips and ears.
- Females have a lot more apocrine glands than males.
- Females and males do sweat differently. So their deodorants and antiperspirants are different, too. For the best protection, pick one that's made for girls or women.



## Vaginal discharge—a sign that your period is on its way

**Vaginal discharge** is a clear or whitish fluid that comes from your **vagina** (an opening between your legs). This type of discharge is healthy and normal. It keeps the vagina from drying out and helps prevent infection. When you notice it in your underwear (a creamy white stain) for the first time, it usually means your first period is coming soon. To avoid getting discharge in your underwear between periods, you can wear a pantiliner (for more info, see pages 29 and 33).

If you have any discharge that is thick, yellowish or darker, smells unpleasant or causes itching or burning, it could be a sign of a vaginal infection. Check with your doctor. Most vaginal infections can be easily treated.

### Good hygiene can help protect you from infections:

- After going to the bathroom, wipe from front to back to avoid spreading bacteria from your anus to your vagina.
- Avoid heavily perfumed soaps or shower gels—these can sometimes irritate the delicate skin around your vagina.
- Remember, if you're taking antibiotics, vaginal infections are more likely to occur.

## Your period. Celebrate it with an exclamation point!

Getting your period is probably the biggest change you'll experience during puberty. It's a very normal, healthy and positive part of growing up! It's part of a natural cycle (the **menstrual cycle**) that prepares the body to have children.

### A QUICK DEFINITION

Your period is when you shed tissue, fluid and blood (also called menstrual discharge) from your uterine lining. It leaves your body through your vagina. For most girls and women, it usually happens each month and lasts between 3 and 7 days. It may come as a surprise when you get your first one—that's okay. A lot of girls aren't quite prepared.

### THE WHOLE STORY

The complete explanation may sound like science class. But understanding the menstrual cycle will help take the mystery out of your period. Plus, it will also help you predict when your period will come each month once your cycle starts.



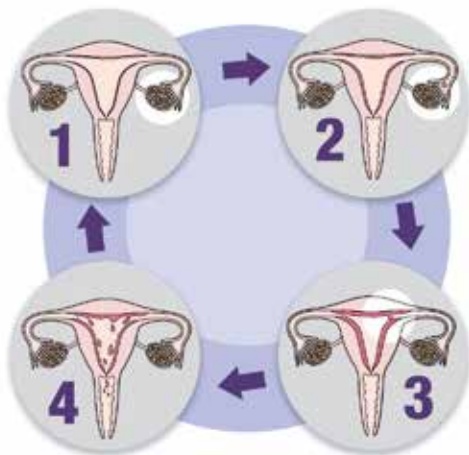
## THE PHASES OF THE MENSTRUAL CYCLE

- 1. Pre-Ovulation**—Females have two ovaries that contain thousands of eggs (**ova**). Estrogen tells an ovary to release an egg every month. (Only one ovary releases a single egg each month.) At the same time, the soft lining (**endometrium**) of the **uterus** (the place where a baby can grow) starts to thicken.
- 2. Ovulation**—This occurs when a mature egg is released from the ovary. After the egg is released, it travels through the **fallopian tube** to the thickening endometrium. If a **sperm** (the male reproductive cell) **fertilizes** the egg, a baby develops.
- 3. Premenstrual**—If the egg isn't fertilized, it breaks down and the endometrium isn't needed. As a result, hormone levels drop, causing the endometrium to shed.
- 4. Menstruation**—The endometrium leaves the body through the vagina as a reddish fluid containing blood. This is a period.

## THE CYCLE REPEATS ITSELF

A complete menstrual cycle runs from the first day of one period to the first day of the next. The average time this takes is 28 days, but anywhere between 21 and 35 days is normal. Then the cycle starts again.

1. An ovary gets ready to release an egg.
2. The egg is released. The endometrium starts to thicken.



3. The egg travels through the fallopian tube to the thickening endometrium.
4. The endometrium is not needed and most of it is shed through the vagina.

# Period tracker

Everyone's menstrual cycle is unique. Use this calendar to keep track of your unique cycle and help you prepare for your next period.

Using X's, mark the days on which you have your period each month. Use 1, 2 or 3 X's to show the level of flow for each day.

X light XX medium XXX heavy

Count the days from the first X of one period to the first X of the next. This is the length of your menstrual cycle. Try to work out when your next period will start. Check to see if you were right!

**Want to know when you can expect your period?**  
Go to [beinggirl.com](http://beinggirl.com) and use our Period Calculator!

Year 20__	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
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## WHEN WILL YOUR PERIOD START?

Most girls get their first period between the ages of 9 and 16, but there is no “right” time. Your period will start when your body is ready. If you haven’t started by the time you’re 16, you may want to talk to your doctor.

As a rough guide, your period will probably start:

- About two years after your breasts begin to develop.
- Within a year or so after you’ve developed pubic and underarm hair.
- After you start to notice some vaginal discharge in your underwear.

### Being irregular is a regular thing.

In the beginning, your period may be irregular. You could have one period and then wait as long as 6 months for the next one! Or one period may last one day, while the next one lasts 10 days. This happens to a lot of girls. Oftentimes, it takes a while before a girl’s body settles into a regular cycle. In fact, it may take up to 2 or 3 years.



## SOME POPULAR QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR PERIOD

### Is it okay to take a bath or shower when I have my period?

Yes. During your period is an important time to keep yourself fresh and clean.

### Is there anything I won't be able to do when I have my period?

No. It doesn't have to stop you from doing the things you usually do. You can still go to school, help at home, see your friends, play sports and so on.

### Will anyone notice when I have my period?

No. Not unless you tell them!

### How much blood will I lose during my period?

The average female loses about 4 to 12 teaspoons of menstrual fluid during her period. But only a small amount of that is blood. Since your body contains more than 5 quarts of blood, it doesn't miss the little bit lost during a period—and your body makes up for it quickly.

## SOMETIMES YOUR PERIOD BRINGS UNINVITED GUESTS—CRAMPS

A lot of girls and women experience “period cramps” caused by the contraction of the uterus. If you get cramps, you may feel aches in your abdomen, your lower back or even down your legs.

### WAYS TO PUT CRAMPS IN THEIR PLACE

- Take a warm bath, unwind and listen to some tunes.
- Place a heating pad or heat wrap on your abdomen. Then kick back, relax and read a magazine or watch TV.
- Do some mild exercise that you enjoy, like walking your dog or riding your bike with a friend.

If cramps continue to be a problem for you, make sure you check with an adult before taking any kind of medication.

### WHAT IS PREMENSTRUAL SYNDROME (PMS)?

**PMS** refers to the symptoms some girls and women experience 1 to 14 days before their period. These symptoms are caused by changing hormone levels and may include: headaches, backaches, food cravings, depression, moodiness, breast tenderness, pain in the joints, general tiredness, and weight gain or a bloated feeling. Skin blemishes may also flare up.

Here are a few things you can do to help relieve PMS:

- Exercise regularly.
- Limit caffeinated drinks, like colas.
- Avoid salt.
- Ask your doctor for remedies.
- Some symptoms can be treated with over-the-counter medication. Ask a trusted adult if there’s a medication you can take to help relieve aches, bloating or other PMS symptoms.



# What to use during your period

**Period protection** refers to the products girls and women use to absorb their menstrual flow or to stay feeling fresh, comfortable and confident every day.

## THERE ARE 3 TYPES OF PERIOD PROTECTION

(You'll find more details about these on pages 27 to 35.)

- Pads
- Pantliners
- Tampons

## WHERE TO BUY THEM

You can find pads, pantliners or tampons in many places like supermarkets, drug stores and discount stores. Talk to your mom or a trusted adult to help you determine what products you will need.

### What is right for you?

Some girls and women prefer pads and pantliners, some prefer tampons, and some like to use pads on some days and tampons on others. We recommend you start off with pads and pantliners, and if you want to use tampons, talk to your mom, school nurse or another adult you trust.

**Pads** are worn in your underwear during your period to absorb your menstrual flow. A pad has a soft, cotton-like layer on the top and a sticky tape on the back to keep it firmly placed in your underwear.

Some flows are heavy, some are light, and some are in-between. That's why pads, like Always®, come in different shapes, lengths and absorbencies. Some pads also have wings that wrap around your underwear to fit securely. Pads also come in scented or unscented form.

To find the pad that works best for you, ask someone like your mom or a school nurse for help, see pages 33 and 34, or go to [beinggirl.com](http://beinggirl.com) to learn more about the different types of pads.

## HOW TO USE A PAD



1. Pull off the paper strip that covers the sticky part on the back.



2. Attach the sticky part securely to the inside center of your underwear.



3. When you need to change your pad, just pull it off to remove it.

## HOW OFTEN TO CHANGE A PAD

Change it every 4 to 6 hours or more often if your flow is heavy. Also, if you're wearing a smaller pad or one with less absorbency, you may need to change it more frequently. Your pad may begin to leak if you wear it too long.

## TYPES OF ALWAYS® PADS

### Always Radiant Infinity® and Always Infinity®

A super-absorbent thin pad made with a super-soft cover and unique material that feels incredibly light. Look for the Always Radiant Infinity® and Infinity pads in a box.



**Ultra Thin.** A thin pad that provides great protection and comfort without the bulk of a maxi pad. Look for the green Always® bag.

**Maxi.** A thicker pad with a close body fit and gentle, panty-hugging shape for comfort. Look for the blue Always® bag.

## HOW TO GET RID OF A PAD

1. Fold it up.
2. Wrap it in tissue, toilet paper or the wrapper of your new pad.
3. Put it in the trash. (Most restrooms have a trash can in each stall for feminine products.)
4. Don't flush pads down the toilet because they can clog it.
5. Be sure to wash your hands.

**Pantliners** can be part of your daily hygiene routine, like brushing your teeth, to help keep you feeling clean and confident.

A pantliner is worn on the inside of your underwear like a pad, but most are smaller and thinner than pads and can feel invisible.

Pantliners are great for:

- Vaginal discharge
- Absorbing perspiration from sports or daily activities
- Light period days
- Extra confidence when you're getting used to tampons

## PANTILINER TYPES

Girls and women are all different shapes and have different levels of natural moisture. That's why pantliners, such as Always®, are available in different lengths and absorbencies. (See page 33 for more information.)

## HOW OFTEN TO CHANGE A PANTILINER

You can wear one daily and change it as often as you need to feel fresh and clean. To dispose of it, treat it like a pad.

**To feel fresh all day,  
try pantliners.**

## BE READY AT SCHOOL

Until your cycle becomes regular, your period may take you by surprise—especially your first one. So it helps to be prepared, particularly at school.

- Use a pantiliner daily to always feel fresh and protected.
- Prepare a locker or backpack “emergency kit.” Keep a pantiliner, a pad and a pair of clean underwear in a discreet bag.
- Keep a pantiliner or a pad in your purse.
- You can use toilet paper or tissue until you can get a pantiliner or a pad. Your period won’t start all at once, so you have a little time.
- Ask a friend, a school nurse or a teacher for help. Most schools keep extra pantliners or pads for times like these.

**Tampons** provide protection that is worn inside your body, in your vagina, during your period. A tampon is made of soft absorbent material compressed into a small oblong shape with a string securely sewn through it for removal. It is held into place by the muscular walls of your vagina and gently expands to absorb your flow. Many girls first start using tampons when they want to go swimming while on their period. Some girls find them more comfortable to wear when they’re active in sports during their period. But the choice is up to you.

## HOW DO I CHOOSE A TAMPON?

Tampons come in different absorbencies. Choose one with the minimum absorbency needed to control your flow. For your first time, try Tampax Pearl® Active plastic lites; they’re designed to protect you—even when you run, swim, jump and dance.



## HOW DO I PUT IN A TAMPON?

It’s easy with just a little practice. Check out the instructions in the box or visit [beinggirl.com](http://beinggirl.com) for a helpful demo. Try Tampax Pearl® Active plastic lites; it’s a perfect first-time tampon with a smooth plastic applicator for comfort and easy insertion.

## HOW OFTEN SHOULD I CHANGE A TAMPON?

It depends on how heavy your flow is, but a tampon should be changed regularly, about every 4 to 8 hours. Although a tampon can be worn up to 8 hours, never leave a tampon in for longer than that. If you plan to use a tampon at night, but you may sleep longer than 8 hours, use a pad instead. Use tampons **ONLY** during your period. If you think you may be starting soon, use a pantiliner to help keep you clean and confident.



## SHOULD I USE TAMPONS IF I'M INVOLVED IN SPORTS OR DANCE ACTIVITIES?

Tampons are a great choice for athletic activities because they allow you to move fully and comfortably. Of course, tampons are the only suitable form of period protection for swimming, since they are worn inside your body.

## WHAT IS TOXIC SHOCK SYNDROME (TSS)?

TSS is a very rare but serious disease associated with using tampons. Be sure to read and keep the leaflet that comes with every box of tampons and talk to an adult if you have questions. The most important thing to know is that if you get a fever and feel sick while you are using a tampon, take it out right away. Tell an adult you are worried about TSS and contact your doctor. Tell the doctor you've been using a tampon so you can get the best treatment quickly.



## Which *always*® product is made for you?

Always® has different products to fit your body type, menstrual flow and preferences. If you need help choosing what's right for you, use the following product guide or go to [beinggirl.com/products/always](http://beinggirl.com/products/always) to learn more about our products.

*always*® Perfect products for teens on your period days and every day.

### ALWAYS® INCREDIBLY THIN LINERS

Perfect for feeling clean on your light days and in between.

- Invisible-feel protection
- Perfect when you want to feel comfortable and discreet
- Stay-in-place adhesive helps keep liners secure
- So thin and flexible, it's your little everyday secret



### ALWAYS RADIANT INFINITY® TEEN PADS

Protection you need. Security you love.

- Up to 8-hour absorbency...can last longer than your average school day
- Stay-Secure™ Flexi Wings are a girl's best friend
- Thin and flexible, so wearing a pad is no biggie



## ALWAYS® PADS

A range of panty protection for *your* period needs. Always® pads come in different lengths and absorbencies—and some are also available in Fresh/Scented. Use this product selector to find what's right for you:



## FOR WHEN YOU'RE READY...

Tampax Pearl® Active plastic lites

- It's slender, so it's a perfect first tampon!
- Smooth plastic applicator for comfort and easy insertion
- Designed to protect you—even when you run, swim, jump and dance



## Glossary

**Acne** An inflammatory disease of the sebaceous glands that causes pimples to break out, especially on the face.

**Antiperspirant** A substance used to reduce perspiration under the arms in order to prevent body odor.

**Apocrine glands** Sweat glands (mostly under the arms and in the genital area) that produce perspiration that can mix with bacteria to cause body odor. Apocrine glands become active during puberty.

**Deodorant** A substance used under the arms to counteract or mask odors caused by perspiration.

**Eccrine glands** Sweat glands (all over the body) that produce clear, odorless perspiration. Eccrine glands are active at all ages.

**Endometrium** The soft, spongy lining of blood and tissue that thickens inside the uterus. It nourishes a developing baby during early pregnancy, or else it is shed during menstruation.

**Estrogen** The female hormone produced in the ovaries that is responsible for many of the changes that take place in females during puberty.

**Fallopian tubes** Two tubes through which eggs travel from the ovaries to the uterus.

**Fertilize** When a male sperm joins a female egg to form an embryo (the beginning of a baby).

**Hormones** The special chemicals that regulate the growth and activity of body tissues and organs.

**Menstrual cycle** The time measured from the beginning of one period to the beginning of the next.

**Menstruation** The monthly process of shedding the lining of the uterus that passes out of the body through the vagina.

**Ova** The eggs found inside the ovaries. They are the female reproductive cells.

**Ovaries** Two glands, one on either side of the uterus, that contain a woman's eggs and produce the hormones estrogen and progesterone.

**Ovulation** The periodic release of a mature egg from one of the ovaries.

**Period protection** The products girls and women use to absorb their period flow and to stay fresh, comfortable and confident.

**Pituitary gland** A small gland beneath the front of the brain that is responsible for triggering the production of hormones that start puberty.

**Premenstrual syndrome (PMS)** A combination of emotional and physical symptoms such as tension, worrying, breast tenderness and bloating. These may occur and last 1 to 14 days before a period starts.

**Progesterone** A female hormone that causes a soft, spongy lining of blood and tissue (endometrium) to thicken inside the uterus. It also prepares the body for pregnancy.

**Puberty** The stage of life when human males and females develop physical and emotional changes and become capable of reproduction.

**Pubic area** The V-shaped area between your legs where your legs meet your torso.

**Sperm** The male reproductive cell.

**Testosterone** A male hormone that is responsible for many of the changes that take place in males during puberty.

**Uterus** The female organ lined with soft, nourishing tissue that carries a baby until it is born.

**Vagina** A flexible passageway leading from the uterus to the outside of the body through which menstrual fluid flows.

**Vaginal discharge** A clear or whitish fluid that comes from your vagina. It's the way the vagina cleanses itself and helps prevent infection.

# Got girl questions?

CHECK OUT **BEINGGIRL.COM**

**Your destination for puberty and period advice!**

- Find out what to expect when it comes to getting your period with the “Period Diaries” videos.
- Use the Period Calculator to find out when to expect your next period, and check out the Body Guide to get more information about what happens to your body during puberty.

Brought to you by:

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**BEINGGIRL.COM**



These materials have been reviewed by the American Association for Health Education and accepted as educationally appropriate.

*always*  
*changing*<sup>®</sup>  
**AND GROWING UP**



boy's guide

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All the words in **teal bold type** in this booklet are defined in the glossary.

## Puberty. What's happening?

This is a booklet about growing up. Now that you're growing up, you'll probably notice that your body is changing in all sorts of ways. You'll notice changes in the way you look and also in the way you feel. This is because you're going through a stage called **puberty**. This is an exciting time—it's when you start to change from being a boy to becoming a man.

**Remember:**  
changes won't suddenly  
happen overnight.

Puberty for boys usually starts between the ages of 10 and 17 and lasts for a few years. Everyone is different, though, and it doesn't matter when you start—your body will decide when the time is right.

You'll notice that some changes happen quickly, but others take place slowly over a few years. This guide will help you know more about puberty by:

- Letting you know what changes to expect and helping you understand them.
- Helping you prepare for what's ahead so you can feel more confident.
- Giving you helpful tips and answers to many of your puberty questions.

Just remember that puberty is a normal and healthy part of life—and it happens to everyone!

### QUESTIONS ABOUT PUBERTY?

Asking questions about "private stuff" isn't always easy, and it's normal to feel a little awkward or embarrassed. But talking with someone you trust makes it a lot easier. Try talking with an adult you trust, like your dad, older brother, grandfather, uncle, mom, coach or doctor.



## Changes that happen to boys

Puberty starts when a gland just beneath the front of your brain—the **pituitary gland**—sends a signal for your body to start making some special chemicals. One of these chemicals—or **hormones**—is called **testosterone**, and it is produced in your **testicles**. Testosterone is responsible for many of the changes that are beginning to happen. Females have a different hormone responsible for their body changes called **estrogen**.

You'll know you are starting to go through puberty when you suddenly start to grow taller. You'll also notice that your muscles will develop more, your chest will become broader and you'll probably start to gain weight. Don't worry if your friends seem to be growing more quickly than you. Everyone's body develops at a different rate.

### BOYS GO THROUGH MANY CHANGES DURING PUBERTY. THE MAIN ONES ARE:

- Your body grows taller.
- Your muscles develop more and your chest gets broader.
- Your body may sweat more and you may develop body odor.
- Your hair may become quite oily.
- Your skin may become oily and pimples may develop.

- Hair starts to grow under your arms, on your legs, in the pubic area around the base of your **penis**, on your face and sometimes on your chest.
- Your voice begins to sound deeper and may “crack” as you talk.
- Your penis and testicles become bigger and sperm begins to be produced.

### DON'T WORRY...

Some of these changes don't sound like a lot of fun—who wants body odor, oily hair and pimples? But they are all normal and can be managed with good hygiene habits. Remember, your body is your responsibility. Treat it with respect.

**“Puberty means when you get older and you start finding out more about your body and how it's changing.”** —Marco, 11

### HOW DO YOU GET YOUR PARENTS TO ACCEPT THAT YOU'RE ALMOST AN ADULT?

Even preteens feel grown up, so you may resent the fact that your parents still see you as a child. When you disagree with them about being ready for new responsibilities, talking honestly with them about your disagreement is the only way to resolve it.

Puberty can be difficult for parents, too. Be patient as you prove you're ready for more freedom.

## Body growth

### **Is it normal to put on weight during puberty?**

Definitely. As you begin to grow to have a broader and more muscular body than a young boy, your body fat will increase. With so many changes, you may feel awkward. However, it's important you take care of yourself with good nutrition and physical activity, such as exercise. Eat a range of foods to get all the vitamins and nutrients you need. Try to eat lots of protein (like fish, meat, cheese, milk, eggs and beans). You also need complex carbohydrates (like whole wheat breads, pasta and cereals). Limit the amount of fatty and sugary foods you eat.

### **Help: I think I'm growing breasts.**

Don't worry, you're not turning into a girl. It's normal for boys to have some swelling around the breasts and nipples. This area can also feel a bit sore. It won't last for long and will soon go away.

### **Why do some parts of the body mature more quickly than others?**

Growth of the testicles is typically the earliest sign of puberty, but body changes can occur in a different order and still be normal. There's also a wide range of individual differences in the growth of other parts of the body—feet, hands, shoulders, legs, etc. Many different growth patterns are normal; everybody—and every body—is unique.

### **How tall will I be?**

It's difficult to predict, but height is usually determined by heredity—how tall your parents and grandparents are. If both of your parents are tall, chances are you will be tall. If both of your parents are short, you may be shorter. But this is not always true—everybody is different. Occasionally, a boy will continue to grow or get another growth spurt in his late teens.

### **Does a lot of body hair mean you have more testosterone?**

No. Testosterone is the hormone that starts your body hair growing. How much hair you have is determined by your racial/ethnic group and heredity.

### **VOICE CHANGES**

As you mature, your voice will deepen. You may experience your voice “cracking” or changing pitch in mid-sentence. That's because your vocal cords are growing and changing just like the rest of you.



**“My dad sat me down one day and gave me the idea of what it was all about and what was going on with my body, so that kind of helped.” —Dan, 12**



## Feeling good in your skin

Of the many things your body goes through during puberty, changes in your skin are among the most noticeable.

**Acne** is a natural occurrence during puberty. It starts when bacteria develops in blocked pores and turns into pimples.

Acne can't always be prevented (even by washing all the time), but by making skin care a part of your everyday routine, you can help your skin stay as clear as possible.

### 3 STEPS TO BETTER SKIN

- 1. Clean**—To help get rid of everyday dirt and oil on your face, wash twice daily with a gentle soap or cleanser. It can be medicated or non-medicated. Deep cleanse with a cleanser containing salicylic acid. (Look for “salicylic acid” to be listed in the active ingredients on the back of the bottle.)
- 2. Prevent**—To help prevent pores from becoming clogged, use a salicylic acid product all over your face. Make sure to moisturize after each wash so your skin stays hydrated.
- 3. Treat**—To help eliminate pimples quickly, use a benzoyl peroxide product to unclog pores.

### ACNE DOs AND DON'Ts

- Don't squeeze any pimple—this can cause scars and may even cause more acne!
- Do use hair and other skin products with care. Look for the word “non-comedogenic” on the label. These products don't clog pores.
- Don't get too much sun. Over time, this can make your acne worse.
- Do wear the proper sunscreen products for your face and your body.
- Don't scrub skin hard. This may actually spread acne or make it worse.
- Do eat a healthy diet and make sure to get regular exercise and proper rest.

### Facial hair and shaving

At some point when you notice hair on your upper lip and chin, you'll probably want to start shaving. Before you try shaving, talk to someone like your dad or a relative; ask for advice and your own razor. At first you may not need to shave very often but, eventually, as it grows faster and thicker, you may start shaving more regularly or even daily. Like most things, the more you shave, the better you get at it!



## Healthy-looking hair!

### HEADS UP!

Puberty may cause your hair to become oilier, thicker, coarser—even curlier or straighter. The important thing is to develop a routine for taking care of your hair, just as you do for your skin.

### GOOD HABITS FOR HEALTHY-LOOKING HAIR

- Shampoo regularly (daily or every other day is best for most hair types).
- If you're African-American, your hair may be dry and delicate. So you only need to wash your hair 1 to 2 times a week.
- After shampooing, use a light conditioner to add moisture, control and strength.
- When you're swimming or in the sun, use an intensive conditioner with UV protection.
- When your hair is wet, use a wide-tooth comb. A brush may break your hair strands.

### Shampoo tips:

- Shampooing is good for your hair because it helps remove deposits, such as dirt, sebum and styling products.
- Shampoo your hair regularly (daily if you want to) instead of using soap. Shampoos are specifically made to clean hair. If your hair looks or feels dirty between washes, you may need to shampoo more often.

## Smile! Sponsored by **Crest**

### DON'T FORGET YOUR TEETH

Part of having a healthy body is making sure you keep your teeth clean. To keep them strong and healthy, make sure you brush them properly every morning and every night with a good toothpaste.

Crest® Pro-Health For Me Anticavity Toothpaste helps fight cavities, strengthen teeth enamel and freshen breath. Oral-B® Pro-Health For Me Cross Action Toothbrush with soft, angled CrissCross bristles cleans between gaps in your changing teeth (like teeth with braces).



For best results, brush from gum to teeth and don't forget your tongue. You should also floss daily in between your teeth. A rinse, such as Crest® Pro-Health For Me Anticavity Fluoride Rinse, also helps reach places that brushing may have missed.



## Making good decisions

In addition to the physical changes happening to your body, you'll experience other changes. You're probably starting to earn more freedom at school and at home—and probably more responsibilities, too! As a result, you'll be making more decisions on your own than when you were younger. You'll need to evaluate and make sense of all the influencing factors in your life such as friends, parents, teachers and things you see in the media and read on the Internet. At times, it can be difficult to know what to think and how to act.

Learning to make the right decisions for YOU is an important part of growing up. It's easy to get into situations that are challenging when you don't take the time to think about your decisions.

Can you think of a time when you got into trouble because you acted “without thinking”? Remember: great decision-making skills are learned—no one is born with them!

### **I-D-E-A-L problem solving:**

**IDENTIFY** the problem

**DESCRIBE** all the ways you might solve the problem

**EVALUATE** all the possible solutions

**ACT** on one of the solutions and try it out

**LEARN** if your solution solved the problem effectively

## Getting active!

Daily physical activity and exercise are great ways of keeping your body healthy—they help to make you strong and agile, and they make your heart and lungs work better, too. There are lots of things you can do, either with friends or by yourself—the secret is to find something you enjoy and keep at it. Here are some ideas for getting active.

- Go rollerblading, skating, hiking or swimming with friends.
- Walk up the stairs instead of using the elevator.
- If you go to the beach, walk or jog barefoot on the sand—it's great exercise.
- Walk, longboard, skateboard or cycle to school instead of taking the bus.
- Ride your bike around your neighborhood, either by yourself or with your friends.
- Take a younger brother or sister to the park or playground and play some ball games.
- When you're texting friends, do some exercises such as tightening then relaxing your stomach muscles. Lift weights, do leg lifts or do a wall sit. Keep connected with friends while being active!
- Find out how to get involved in physical activities at your school—perhaps join a sports team or participate in intramurals with your friends.

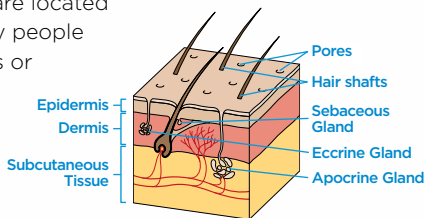
## No sweat!

Another body change during puberty is that your sweat glands produce more sweat (perspiration). Perspiration is normal and important—it helps your body regulate its temperature. But once you hit puberty, sweating can also cause body odor.

### YOU HAVE 2 DIFFERENT KINDS OF SWEAT GLANDS

The first type—**eccrine glands**—produce perspiration that is clear and odorless. These glands start working at birth. The second type—**apocrine glands**—become active only when you start puberty. They produce a different kind of perspiration that can smell unpleasant when it comes in contact with bacteria on the skin.

A lot of apocrine glands are located under your arms, so many people use underarm deodorants or antiperspirants to control the smell.



### THERE ARE 4 DIFFERENT KINDS OF PRODUCTS:

- **Underarm deodorants** counteract odor and help you smell good.
- **Antiperspirants** reduce perspiration and underarm wetness to help prevent odor before it starts.
- **Deodorants/antiperspirants** do the job of both a deodorant AND an antiperspirant.
- **Body sprays**, with cologne-like fragrances you can apply to your body, help you smell good everywhere. (Just remember to not overdo it: a little goes a long way!)

### WASH REGULARLY—ESPECIALLY AFTER EXERCISE

To stay looking and feeling your best, take a bath or shower at least once a day. Any time you get sweaty, you should bathe more often. For odor protection, use body wash or soap. Then grab some clean clothes (body odor stays on clothes) and apply deodorant to help keep body odor away. If you are concerned about underarm wetness, try a deodorant/antiperspirant that fights not only odor but wetness, too.

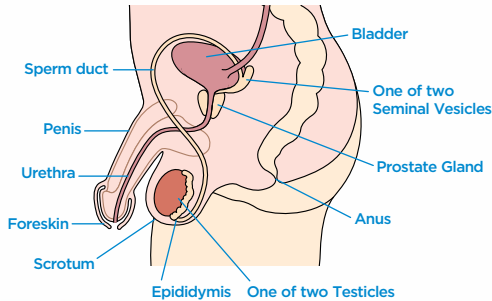
### Did you know?

- Males have fewer apocrine glands than females.
- All your eccrine glands working at maximum output could produce about 10.5 quarts of perspiration a day!
- You have about 2.5 million sweat glands all over your body, except on your lips and ears.

## Your reproductive system: the way it works

The reason you have a reproductive system is because it provides the **sperm** needed to fertilize a female's egg, which can then grow to be a baby. During puberty, the levels of the hormone testosterone in your body begin to rise. This causes your penis and testicles to get bigger and the testicles to produce sperm. The testicles cannot make sperm before puberty.

Sperm are the male reproductive cells, in the same way that the eggs inside a woman are the female reproductive cells. (The sperm and the egg need to meet to make a baby.) Sperm look like tadpoles, with what appear to be a head and a tail.



Sperm are made in the testicles, which hang outside your body in a sac (scrotum) just beneath your penis. The testicles make a lot of sperm—about 1,000 sperm per second. Sperm are stored in the epididymis, which is the tube you can feel at the back of each testicle.



Sperm are damaged or killed by heat. Because of this, the penis and scrotum hang outside your body to keep the sperm cooler than your body temperature. If you become cold, you may notice that your penis and scrotum shrink. They are drawing themselves closer to your body to keep warm. When you are hot, they will hang loosely, away from your body.

Sperm are released from the testicles and epididymis and move through the sperm ducts toward the penis. Along the way, sperm mix with fluid so they can move more easily. The sperm and this fluid are now called **semen**. It is whitish and sticky. The sperm are too tiny to see—a drop of semen the size of the period at the end of this sentence would contain more than 1,000 sperm.

Semen leaves the penis through the **urethra**. This is the tube that runs through the middle of your penis. Urine also leaves the body through the urethra but never at the same time as semen.

## ERECTIONS

When a boy or man is sexually excited, or sometimes for no reason at all, his penis becomes harder and stands away from his body. This is called an **erection**.

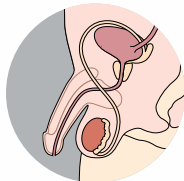
### **Do men stop having erections when they get older?**

No. Healthy males of all ages, from babies to old men, can get erections. The difference is that only after puberty do males produce sperm and semen. Then they produce sperm for the rest of their lives.

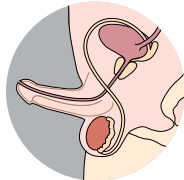
### **Why does it get hard?**

It gets hard because the blood vessels in the penis fill with blood when you get excited. Your penis doesn't have any muscles in it, which is why you can't move it around very much. You can get an erection any time your penis is touched or rubbed, you have happy or exciting thoughts, or if you see someone attractive. There are lots of causes for erections, even if you aren't thinking about girls or sex. You can get an erection for no reason at all—even when you don't want to have one—which might take you by surprise!

But don't worry: it's the same for all boys and men. And don't worry that someone will notice—erections are not as



Soft



Hard

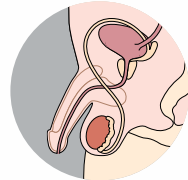
noticeable as you think. Try to ignore the erection, and it will go away on its own.

### **Does it matter what size your penis is?**

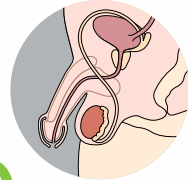
Not at all! Penises do vary in length and shape from person to person but not as much as you may think. Remember, the size of your penis has nothing to do with how manly you are or whether you can become a father.

### **What is circumcision?**

This minor surgical procedure, usually performed soon after birth, removes all or part of the **foreskin** of the penis. A **circumcision** is not usually considered medically necessary, but often it is performed for religious or cultural reasons or because it makes it easier to keep the penis clean. To help prevent the growth of bacteria, uncircumcised boys and men should wash under the foreskin every day.



Circumcised



Uncircumcised

**You might notice a ridge down the back of each testicle.** This is normal. What you feel is the epididymis where the sperm is stored. There is an epididymis down the back of each testicle. If you find any other lumps, you should visit your doctor to get a full checkup.

## EJACULATION

Sometimes semen spurts out of the penis. This is called an **ejaculation**. It happens when muscles at the base of the penis start to expand and contract (tighten). This pushes the semen through the urethra and out through the tip of the penis. But this won't happen every time you have an erection.

## WET DREAMS

Sometimes you can ejaculate when you are asleep. This is called a nocturnal emission, more commonly known as a "**wet dream**." It happens without you knowing about it, and it's not necessarily because you are dreaming about sex. You may notice that your pajamas or sheets feel wet or sticky when you wake up. This is nothing to worry about—most boys have wet dreams.

### *I have been having wet dreams for a while now. Will they ever stop?*

You will experience wet dreams less frequently after your body has gone through puberty. Generally, as you grow older, you will have more control over your body. Some boys experience wet dreams regularly, while others have very few. It is nothing to worry about.



## WHEN DO I NEED TO WEAR A JOCKSTRAP?

This is a personal decision. As your body changes, you may be more comfortable with an athletic supporter when you run or participate in other sports. In some sports, boys and men wear a plastic cup to protect their genitals. It can be very painful to be hit on the penis and testicles. Check with a parent, your coach or a physical education teacher if you have questions.

## WHAT IS "JOCK ITCH"?

Jock itch is a skin infection caused by a fungus. Its symptoms can include a scaly, itchy rash in the genital area. To help avoid jock itch, wear clean cotton underwear and loose-fitting pants. Don't use anyone else's towels or clothes. Jock itch can be treated with antifungal medications available at the drug store without a prescription. You may want to ask a parent, coach, physical education teacher or school nurse to help you choose the right product. If the rash continues, see your doctor.

### **Did you know?**

One of your testicles may be higher than the other. This is normal. No one is perfectly the same on both sides. Generally, the right one is slightly higher than the left one.

## Glossary

**Acne** An inflammatory disease of the sebaceous glands that causes pimples to break out, especially on the face.

**Apocrine glands** Sweat glands (mostly under the arms and in the genital area) that produce perspiration that can mix with bacteria to cause body odor. Apocrine glands become active at puberty.

**Circumcision** A medical or religious procedure in which a doctor or clergy member cuts away the foreskin from the penis. Circumcision is usually performed during the first few days of a baby's life.

**Eccrine glands** Sweat glands (all over the body) that produce clear, odorless perspiration. Eccrine glands are active at all ages.

**Ejaculation** Forceful release of semen from the penis.

**Erection** Hardening of the penis.

**Estrogen** Female hormone, produced in the ovaries, that is responsible for many of the changes that take place in females during puberty.

**Foreskin** This fold of skin covers the end of the penis. A boy who has been circumcised has had his foreskin removed.

**Hormones** Special chemicals that regulate the growth and activity of body tissues and organs.

**Penis** The male reproductive organ, also used for urinating.

**Pituitary gland** A small gland beneath the front of the brain that is responsible for triggering the production of hormones that start puberty.

**Puberty** Stage of life when human males and females develop physical and emotional changes and become capable of reproduction.

**Semen** A sticky fluid that contains sperm and various other secretions.

**Sperm** The male reproductive cell.

**Testicles** The male reproductive glands, which produce sperm and the male hormone testosterone.

**Testosterone** The male hormone that is responsible for many of the changes that take place in males during puberty.

**Urethra** A canal that carries urine from the bladder to the outside of the body. In males, the urethra is also the passageway for semen.

**Wet dream** The ejaculation of semen out of the penis during sleep. This is also called a nocturnal emission.



# Want to know more about puberty?

## **Check out:**

[www.kidshealth.org](http://www.kidshealth.org)

-Lots of activities, games and answers to your health questions

[www.brainpop.com](http://www.brainpop.com)

-Online movies and more on puberty, health and lots of other topics

Brought to you by:



These materials have been reviewed by the American Association for Health Education and accepted as educationally appropriate.

## Reproductive Health Lesson for Maturation

### Objectives

- Students will understand the physical and emotional changes that will occur as they grow and mature.
- Students will review the structures and functions of the male and female reproductive systems.
- Students will understand the necessity of hygiene practices and products.

### 1. Introduction: Discuss with the student when and why puberty happens

- a. Girls typically began showing signs of puberty between 8 to 11 and boy between 10 or 15 years old.
- b. Puberty is the name for when your body begins to develop and change from a child's body into an adult's body. A boy's body physically changes into a man's body and a girl's body changes into a women's body. During childhood, growth is slow and steady; in puberty, change is rapid and dramatic. During puberty an adolescent may experience growth spurts, the average young person grows 12 inches in height and gains 20-30 pounds. All parts of the body do not grow and develop at the same time or rate. Typically the hands and feet are faster growing than the arms and legs. Adolescents will often feel awkward and gawky. That is quite normal because the body is out of proportion during this time period because of growth spurts. One out of five adolescents typically experience actual growing pains. These can be in the forms of aches in the shins, calves, or thighs. The attacks are usually short and often occur at night.

### 2. Pass out a 3x5 card and explain if they have any questions they can write it down during the video.

### 3. Show the video – “Always Changing, Always Growing”

### 4. Discuss video – What are physical and emotional changes that occur during maturation

- a. Males: Taller, pimples, voice, weight gain, hair (arms, legs, underarms, and private parts), body odor, and muscles
- b. Females: Taller, pimples, breast, weight gain, small hair (arms, legs, underarms, and private areas), muscles, and menstrual cycle begins.

### 5. Pass out diagrams and go over the answers with the students.

### 6. Hand out true and false cards. Have the students hold up the correct answer as you read the following statements. Or use the True and False worksheet. Explain each one.

- a. Mouthwash is better to use than brushing your teeth. (False)
- b. Deodorant stops people from sweating. (False)
- c. Squeezing pimples helps them go away. (False)
- d. Flossing teeth is only for people who can't brush their teeth. (False)
- e. Feeling sad, confused and hungry can be due to normal changes. (True)
- f. Puberty in boys starts at age 13 and is over by 14. (False)
- g. Muscle aches often happen from growing and stretching. (True)
- h. A “cracking” voice is a normal sign of puberty in a boy. (True)
- i. It is only necessary to bathe when one feels dirty. (False)
- j. Keeping clean helps one to stay healthy. (True)

### 7. Answer the students' 3x5 questions

# True or False

## Maturation

	True	False
1. Mouthwash is better to use than brushing your teeth.		
2. Deodorant stops people from sweating.		
3. Squeezing pimples helps them go away.		
4. Flossing teeth is only for people who can't brush their teeth.		
5. Feeling sad, confused, and hungry can be due to normal changes.		
6. Puberty in boys starts at age 13 and is over by 14.		
7. Muscle aches often happen from growing and stretching.		
8. A "cracking" voice is a normal sign of puberty in a boy.		
9. It is only necessary to bathe when one feels dirty.		
10. Keeping clean helps one to stay healthy.		



## Reproductive Health Resource Books

### Elementary

- Schafer, Valorie Lee. (1998). *American Girl – The Care & Keeping of You, The Body Book for Girls.*
- Gravelle, Karen & Gravelle, Jennifer. (1996). *The Period Book: Everything you don't want to ask, but need to know.*
- Loulan, JoAnn & Worthen, Bonnie. (2001). *Period: A girl's guide.*

### Middle School

- Madaras, Lynda & Madaras, Area. (2000). *My body, My self for boys.*
- Madaras, Lynda & Madaras, Area. (2000). *My body, My self for girls.*
- Blackstone, Margaret & Guest, Elissa Haden. (2000). *Girl Stuff: A survival guide to growing up.*
- Erlbach, Arlenne. (2003). *The Middle School Survival Guide.*



## HIV/AIDS Health Lesson

### Learning Objectives

- Define HIV and AIDS
- Identify how HIV is and is not transmitted
- Identify ways people can protect themselves from infection with HIV and other blood-borne infections, including not touching blood and used hypodermic or tattoo needles
- Explain that it is safe to be a friend of someone who is living with HIV or AIDS

### Lesson Synopsis

- Introduce the topic and define HIV and AIDS
- Administer a pre-test
- Watch and discuss the video
  - AIDS : Facts for Kids
- List ways people do not get HIV, and the too most common ways people do get HIV
- Reinforce how to avoid becoming infected with HIV
- Review the difference between HIV and AIDS
- Complete the post-test and compare pre- and post-test answers
- Discuss ways to interact with someone who is infected with HIV
- Read and sign a list of promises that will avoid transmission of HIV and promote compassion for those infected.



# HIV Infection and AIDS

*HIV stands for Human Immunodeficiency Virus. It is the virus that causes people to become sick and eventually get AIDS.*

*AIDS stands for Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome. This is the name of the disease caused by HIV.*

**Fact  
or  
Myth?**

**Directions:**

Part 1: Mark your answers in the Pre-Test column on the right side of this page. Fold your page on the dotted line.

Part 2: After the video, mark your answers in the Post-Test column. Unfold your page and compare your answers.

	<b>Post-Test</b>	<b>Pre-Test</b>
1. HIV and AIDS keep the immune system from fighting diseases and infections.	_____	_____
2. People who take care of themselves and take their medicine will be cured of AIDS.	_____	_____
3. Only people who inject drugs need to know about AIDS.	_____	_____
4. It is safe to go to school with someone who has AIDS.	_____	_____
5. When a person has AIDS, he or she is always sick or in the hospital.	_____	_____
6. Once people know the facts about AIDS, they usually react with fear and panic.	_____	_____
7. The main ways people get HIV are from injecting drugs or having sex with someone who is infected.	_____	_____
8. HIV attacks the cells of the skin, and then the person gets better.	_____	_____
9. HIV is hard to get if a person isn't sharing needles or having sex with an infected person.	_____	_____
10. It is possible for a person to have HIV, and not have AIDS.	_____	_____
11. Scientists are studying HIV and AIDS so they can find a cure or treatment.	_____	_____
12. People who have AIDS should be left alone.	_____	_____

## Informational Resources: Websites and Phone Numbers

The following websites and phone numbers offer reliable HIV information. Many of the sites are noted in the lesson. Other sites are included as references for you. Check the Educational Materials Center website for additional Internet links that have been placed on their site as a service to you.

- Educational Materials Center: [www.emc.cmich.edu/links](http://www.emc.cmich.edu/links)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Information on HIV and Other STIs: <http://www.cdc.gov/>
- American Red Cross, Information on HIV and Other STIs: <http://www.redcross.org/services/hss/hiv aids/>
- American Social Health Association, Information on HIV and Other STIs: <http://www.ashastd.org/>
- Michigan Department of Community Health, Information on HIV and Other STIs: [www.michigan.gov/mdch](http://www.michigan.gov/mdch)

### Resources available by phone:

- CDC INFO: 1-800-232-4636 (English and Spanish; available 24/7)
- Hearing impaired hotline: 1-888-232-6348
- Teen Hotline: 1-800-440-8336 Hours: 6 pm to midnight Fri-Sat.
- Michigan AIDS Hotline: 1-800-872-2437
- Family physician
- Local Public Health Department
- Local AIDS Hotline



