

# GROWING UP!

**A Handbook on Puberty and Maturing**





# PUBERTY

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The key word when it comes to puberty is **CHANGE**. Your body is changing, your feelings are changing and your relationships with those around you are changing. You're growing up and becoming an adult. This change from being a child to becoming an adult is called **puberty**.

- You're growing up. Celebrate it and celebrate yourself.

Somewhere between the ages of about 8 and 16 puberty will begin. Puberty doesn't happen all at once, it comes in stages and takes many years. Try not to compare yourself to others. You will grow and mature in your own way and at your own pace. By the time you're around 18 to 20 years old, puberty will be finished.

- You will grow and develop in your own way, at a pace that is different, but just as normal as everyone else's experience.

Puberty is a normal part of life. But it is still common to feel nervous, excited and confused about it. Knowing what to expect can make puberty changes less weird or stressful. Talking to parents or other adults you trust also helps. After all, they have gone through puberty too.

- You're growing up okay!



## CHANGING BODIES

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During **puberty**, you're going to grow faster and start to develop an adult body. Hormones in your body start these changes. **Hormones** are chemicals that are made by organs called **glands**.

The most important gland is the **pituitary gland**. This tiny gland, found at the base of the brain, prompts other glands to start making hormones. In males, the **testicles** start to make the male sex hormone **testosterone**. In females, the **ovaries** start to make the two female sex hormones, **estrogen** and **progesterone**. The pituitary gland also makes the **human growth hormone** in both males and females. This hormone makes the bones and muscles grow faster during puberty.

Some of these hormones cause changes only to males. Other changes happen only to females. Let's start by looking at the changes that happen to both males and females.

### *Skin*

During puberty, your skin can get oily. Sometimes your **pores** might become blocked with oil. If this happens, you might get pimples or **acne**.

### *Body Hair*

Both males and females will start growing hair on their legs, under their arms and in the pubic area. Males will also grow facial hair and possibly chest hair. The amount of new body hair that grows is different for every person.



## **Breasts**

Females will notice that their breasts change during puberty. Their breasts might tingle and hurt just a bit as they grow and develop. They may not both grow at the same rate or to the same size. It is normal for one breast to be a bit smaller than the other one.

It is also normal for male's breasts to change during puberty. They may swell and hurt a little. These feelings will stop after puberty.

## **Growth**

Growth can be very quick. You can have growth spurts and shoot up several inches in a short time. This fast growing might give you achy growing pains. You might also feel clumsy while you get used to your new size. Remember that everyone will grow at their own rate. You might suddenly find that you're a head taller or shorter than a friend who's the same age as you!

As you grow taller, it is important that you also gain some weight. Male's shoulders and chest will broaden, while females will develop breasts and broader hips.

## **Perspiration**

Both males and females start to perspire (sweat) more during puberty. Perspiration may also have a stronger smell.

## **Voice**

The voices of both males and females will deepen. This change will be greater in males. As a male's voice box (larynx) grows, his voice can suddenly go from high to low or from low to high. The cracking can be a bit embarrassing sometimes. In time, these voice changes will stop happening.

## **Masturbation**

Touching and rubbing your **genitals** can feel good. This is called **masturbation**. Males and females of any age may choose to masturbate or not to masturbate; both choices are normal.

# THE MALE BODY

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## Penis

The penis is the male reproductive organ. Both urine and sperm leave the body through the penis, but never at the same time. During puberty the penis becomes larger. Penis size and shape is different for all males.

## Bladder

The bladder is the organ where urine is stored.

## Prostate Gland

The prostate gland is one of the organs that add fluid to sperm to create semen.

## Seminal Vesicles

The seminal vesicles are two small organs that add some of the fluid to sperm to create semen.

## Vas Deferens

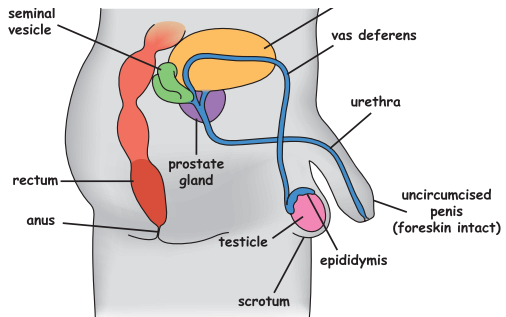
The vas deferens are tubes that carry sperm from the testicles to the prostate gland.

## Testicles

The two oval-shaped glands that hang inside the scrotum are the testicles. These glands make the male sex hormone testosterone. During puberty, testicles also start making sperm. Sperm are the tadpole-like male reproductive cells that can join with a female's egg cell to start a pregnancy. Like the penis, the testicles grow during puberty. It is normal for one testicle to hang a bit lower than the other one.

## Scrotum

The scrotum is the sack of loose skin just behind the penis. The scrotum holds and protects the two testicles and keeps them at the right temperature for making sperm.



Note: colours do **not** represent actual colours of organs

## ***Urethra***

The urethra is the tube that carries both urine and semen through the penis and out of the body, but never at the same time.

## ***Rectum***

The rectum is the last portion of the large intestine. The rectum stores feces until it leaves the body through the anus.

## ***Anus***

The anus is the opening from which feces leave the body.

During puberty, the **reproductive organs** mature. In males, first the testicles and then the penis will grow larger and begin to work a bit differently. Like all the changes you'll have during puberty, these changes won't happen all at once. Give yourself time. You will develop at your own pace.

## ***Erections and Ejaculations***

After puberty starts, the testicles begin to make the male reproductive cells. These are called sperm. The sperm travel from each testicle in a tube called the vas deferens. The vas deferens takes the sperm around the bladder and through the seminal vesicles and the prostate gland. In the seminal vesicles, liquid is added to the sperm, and then the prostate adds more liquid. The mixture of these liquids and sperm is called semen. Semen leaves the male body through the penis.

When a male is sexually aroused, extra blood fills the spongy tissues in the penis. The penis becomes larger and stiffer, and it stands out from the body. This is called an erection. When a male's sexual arousal reaches its peak, muscles force semen out of the penis. This is called ejaculation. During ejaculation, about one teaspoon of semen is ejaculated from a male's penis. After ejaculation, the penis becomes soft again. Many things can cause sexual arousal and an erection – even wearing pants that rub against the penis. Sometimes erections just happen for no reason at all. This can be embarrassing, but is very normal.

- The basic function of the male reproductive system is to produce sperm.

## ***Wet Dreams***

Sometimes the penis can get erect and ejaculate semen while a male is asleep and dreaming. This is called a wet dream or a nocturnal emission. It can happen to males of all ages. It can be embarrassing to wake up in damp pyjamas and sheets, but wet dreams are just a normal sign that a male's body is growing up.

## ***Circumcision***

Penises often look different from one another. This may be because some penises are circumcised and others are not. Circumcised and uncircumcised penises both work the same way.

### ***Circumcised Penis***



A circumcised penis has had the foreskin surgically removed from the penis. This procedure is usually done by a doctor.

### ***Uncircumcised Penis***



An uncircumcised penis has the foreskin attached. The foreskin is loose skin that covers the tip of the penis.

## ***THE FEMALE BODY***

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### ***Uterus***

The uterus (also called the womb) is the muscular organ that can hold a fetus while it grows, until it is ready to be born. When a female is not pregnant, the uterus is about 7.5 cm long.

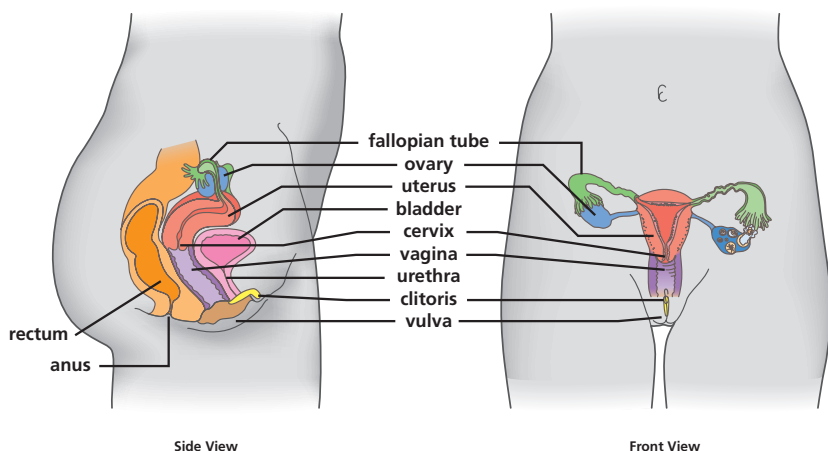
### ***Bladder***

The bladder is the organ where the urine is stored.

### ***Urethra***

The urethra is the tube that carries urine out of the body.





## Vagina

The vagina is the passage that goes from the uterus to the outside of the body. It's about 9 cm long.

## Fallopian Tubes

These tubes carry ova (eggs) from the ovaries to the uterus. The fallopian tubes are about 10 cm long and about as wide as a piece of spaghetti.

## Anus

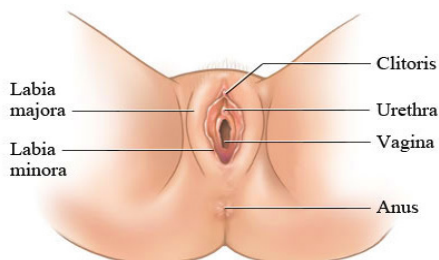
The anus is the opening from which feces leave the body.

## Ovaries

The ovaries hold the ova (eggs) and make the female hormones estrogen and progesterone. Each ovary is about the size of an almond.

## Vulva

The vulva is another word for a female's pubic area. It means all the reproductive organs outside her body.



## Labia

The labia are the two folds of skin that cover the clitoris, urethra and vaginal opening. The labia are part of the vulva.

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## Clitoris

The clitoris is a sensitive pea-sized organ. It enlarges slightly when it is touched or when a female has sexual thoughts or feelings.

## Rectum

The rectum is the last portion of the large intestine. The rectum stores feces until it leaves the body through the anus.

During puberty, a female's reproductive system reaches maturity. Her hips broaden, her breasts develop and she will begin to **menstruate** (have monthly **periods**). These changes do not happen overnight. Puberty changes will take a different amount of time for each female. Try not to compare yourself to others.

## Menstruation

Most females will start to menstruate sometime between the ages of 9 and 16. Each female is going to start menstruating on her own time. Don't worry if you start earlier or later than your peers.

All females are born with thousands of **ova** (egg cells) already in their **ovaries**. It is not until puberty that the ova begin to ripen and leave the ovaries one at a time. This is called **ovulation**.

About once a month an ovum (egg) leaves an ovary and travels down a **fallopian tube** into the **uterus**. The lining of the uterus is made up of a thick mixture of blood and fluid. If a sperm (the male reproductive cell) **fertilizes** the ovum, a pregnancy will occur. The blood-rich lining in the uterus will help to support a growing fetus. If it is not fertilized, the pin-point-sized ovum either dissolves or flows out the vagina with the usual vaginal **discharge**. You won't even notice it. Soon after the ovum is gone, the lining of the uterus also leaves the body through the vagina. This is called **menstruation**.

During menstruation, about 4 to 6 tablespoons of blood and fluid leave a female's body through her **vagina** each day. It usually happens around every 28 days and lasts between 2 and 7 days. The exact length of time and amount of fluid are different for each female.

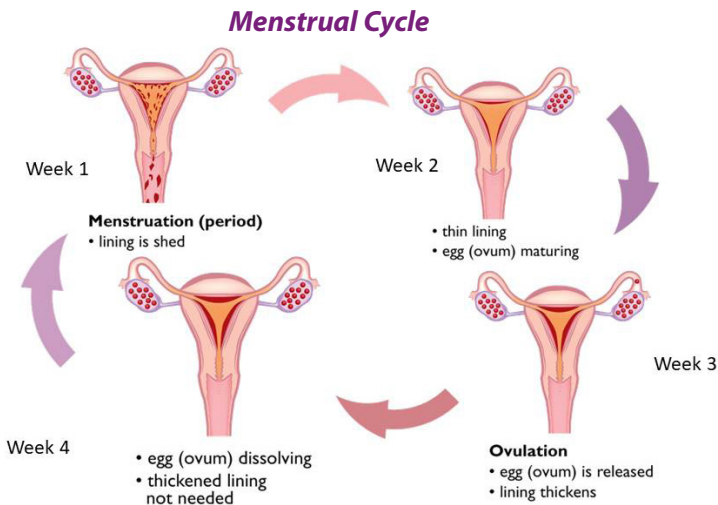
- One of the biggest changes that happen to a female during puberty is menstruation.

### **Tracking Your Menstrual Cycle**

Many females like to keep track of their **menstrual cycle**. It helps them figure out when they will probably get their next period. You can keep track of your personal menstrual cycle by circling the days on a calendar that your period starts and ends. The day you begin to menstruate is the first day of your menstrual cycle. Each time you menstruate, count the number of days that have passed since your last period started. After a few months, it will be easier to tell when your next period should occur.

At first, your menstrual cycle might not be very regular. You might even skip your period for a month or so and then it will start again. Sometimes it can take a while (even a couple of years) for a female's body to get into a regular pattern.

Most females will develop a regular menstrual cycle, which means that it will be approximately the same number of days each month. Some females may continue to have an irregular menstrual cycle, which means that the number of days for each menstrual cycle can vary.



*Adapted with permission from Niagara Region*

## Questions and Answers about Menstruation

**Question – What do you do about the blood when you have your period?**

**Answer** - During her period, a female can use either **pads or tampons** to absorb her **menstrual flow**. Pads attach to the inside of underwear with small sticky strips and catch menstrual flow outside of the body. Tampons, on the other hand, are small absorbent rolls that are inserted into the vagina. Some females find it easier to use pads when they first start menstruating.

If you decide to use pads, make sure you change them several times each day and again before you go to bed. This will help to stop odour and leaks.

Tampons also need to be changed every 4-6 hours. It is important that females choose the absorbency that is best for them. Using tampons the right way can prevent a very rare but serious infection called **toxic shock syndrome**.

Tampons are safe and can be very comfortable, but using them can take some practice. When inserted properly, you shouldn't be able to feel a tampon at all. Tampons are usually inserted into the vagina using an applicator. Don't worry about the tampon getting lost inside your body or falling out. The muscles in the walls of your vagina will hold the tampon in place until you're ready to take it out. The tampon will have a string that hangs out of your vagina for easy removal.

Every box of tampons or pads comes with a sheet of instructions and diagrams. Read these carefully. You can also talk to a parent, an older sister, nurse or another trusted adult about what to do when you start menstruation.

**Question - What if you get your period unexpectedly?**

**Answer** - Many females worry about getting their first **period**. They wonder what to do if it starts while they're at school or away from home. If you're at school, you can:

- Keep pads in a bag or locker for unexpected periods.
- Ask a teacher or friend for a pad.

- Check the bathroom for a machine that sells pads or tampons.
- Make a pad out of toilet paper or paper towel to use until you get home.

**Question – Can you still do all the things you usually do? What about bathing or sports?**

**Answer** - A female who is menstruating doesn't need to act any differently than she usually does. She can exercise, dance, play sports and bathe normally. She can even swim if she uses a tampon. Feel free to do what you would normally do.

Menstruation is a normal and healthy part of every female's life. It's nothing to be embarrassed about.

- Your period is a normal and healthy part of life – you can and should continue your usual activities.

**Question – How do you feel during your period? What about cramps?**

**Answer** - Most females are only a little uncomfortable just before and during their period. Before menstruation, females may feel bloated, and find that their breasts are tender. They may also feel a bit moody. During menstruation, some females also have **menstrual cramps**.

Here are some things you can do to make cramps less painful:

- Mild exercise or stretching.
- Take a hot bath.
- Use a hot water bottle or heating pad on your abdomen or back, depending on where you have cramps.
- Take a pain reliever, such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen. Always speak to a parent or trusted adult before taking any medication.
- If your cramps are always very painful, you should see your doctor.

## ***Questions and Answers about Breasts***

During puberty, breasts begin to grow and develop. There is no set time that this will start. It is different for every female. There is also no one normal size or shape for breasts. There are as many different sizes and shapes of breasts as there are females.

### ***Question – How long does it take for breasts to be fully developed?***

**Answer** - It takes a different amount of time for every female's breasts to develop. While your breasts begin to grow they might feel uncomfortable and tingle.

### ***Question – What if one breast is bigger than the other one?***

**Answer** - Often females have one breast that is a bit larger than the other. It usually isn't noticeable. Sometimes one breast can grow just a bit more quickly than the other one.

### ***Question - Will breasts hurt while they grow? Can they pop or burst?***

**Answer** - Some females find that their breasts itch and hurt a little while they are developing. Growing breasts will not pop or burst. Breasts develop slowly allowing the skin to grow along with them.

### ***Question – What if a nipple doesn't stick out?***

**Answer** - This is called an inverted nipple. A nipple that is inverted may change to an outward nipple as the breast grows. Even if it looks different, an inverted nipple will work the same way as a nipple that is not inverted. There is nothing wrong with an inverted nipple.

### ***Question – Is there any way to change the size of your breasts?***

**Answer** - There are no exercises or creams that can change breast size. All sizes of breasts are normal.

### ***Question – Do you have to wear a bra?***

**Answer** - You don't have to wear a bra, but most females find it more comfortable and supportive to wear a bra.

## TAKING CARE OF YOUR BODY

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Your changing body has changing needs. During puberty, you'll need to start paying more attention to caring for your body. Here are a few pointers that should help you:

### *Bathing*

If you don't already, you might want to start taking a daily bath or shower.

### *Deodorant and Antiperspirants*

The changes to your hormones will give your sweat a distinct smell. This is especially true for your underarms. Daily showers or baths will help reduce body odour, so will using deodorants or antiperspirants. Deodorants cover odour and antiperspirants close off sweat glands. No sweat – no smell! You might want to ask a parent or nurse if you're not sure which is best for you.

### *Hair*

Just like your skin, your hair might be oilier than it used to be. Washing it more often will keep it clean. You will also notice more body hair. You may want to talk to someone you trust about how to shave your body hair if you chose to. Not everyone chooses to shave. For some, it's a personal choice; for others, it's a cultural or religious choice.

### *Skin*

During puberty, your skin might get oilier. All that extra oil can block your pores and cause pimples or **blackheads**. Washing your face at least twice a day with soap and water should help you decrease pimples and blackheads.

Some people may get a severe case of pimples and blackheads called **acne**. Acne usually gets better after puberty. Until then, you can ask a doctor about medicine that might help.

- During puberty, your skin can become oily due to increased oil gland activity.

## *Dental*

Floss and brush your teeth for at least two minutes, twice a day: once in the morning and once at night. For extra fresh breath, be sure to brush your tongue.

## *Underwear*

Both females and males should wear cotton underwear. Cotton is a natural fibre that allows the skin to breathe and prevents the trapping of moisture that can lead to infections. If you choose underwear that is made of another material, make sure it has a cotton crotch. Males can choose either boxers or briefs, as long as they aren't too tight. Underwear should be changed every day.

## *Shoes*

Smelly feet can usually be controlled by wearing a clean pair of socks every day. It's also a good idea to wash the insoles of your shoes every now and then. You can buy sprays that fight foot odour, but often a light dusting of baking soda in the bottom of your shoes can help control odour too.

## *Genital Area (males)*

It is very important to keep the **genital** area clean. Males need to wash around their genitals and anus with mild, unscented soap and water. During a bath or shower, males who are not circumcised should clean beneath the foreskin of their penis, with mild soap and water, and carefully rinse thoroughly.

## *Genital Area (females)*

To keep their external genital area clean, females need to wash the vulva, the area around the vagina and the anus with mild, unscented soap and water, and carefully rinse thoroughly. The inside of the vagina cleans itself naturally. The vagina's natural cleaning can leave a slight creamy yellow, odourless discharge on your underwear. This is normal. Taking regular baths and showers should leave you feeling clean and fresh.

Females should try to wipe from front to back after they go to the washroom. This will help stop harmful bacteria from the anus from getting into the vagina.



## STAYING HEALTHY

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Now is a great time to decide to live a healthy life. The earlier you start forming healthy habits, the more likely you are to continue to keep up with them throughout your life. Eating right, being active, getting enough sleep, and staying away from smoking, drugs and alcohol can make your life longer and happier.

### ***Eating Right***

As you gain more independence, you'll have more freedom to choose the foods that you want to eat. We are born with the ability to know when we are hungry and full; try to listen to what your body is telling you when it comes to when and how much to eat. To give your body the nutrients and energy it needs to be healthy, enjoy a variety of foods from Canada's food guide; fill 1/2 your plate with vegetable and fruit, 1/4 with protein foods, and 1/4 with whole grains. Choose foods like candy, chips and pop less often as they do not have as many of the nutrients that our bodies need.

Dieting is never a good idea especially during puberty. They can also harm your health in the future. Besides, gaining weight during puberty is a good sign your body is growing. For more information, visit Canada's Food Guide at [healthcanada.gc.ca/foodguide](https://healthcanada.gc.ca/foodguide)

**Vegetables and fruit** (e.g., broccoli, peppers, bananas, carrots, apples, oranges, berries, peas, leafy greens, cucumber, asparagus, sweet potato, tomatoes)

**Whole grain foods** (e.g., brown rice, quinoa, oatmeal, whole grain pasta, bread or pita)

**Protein foods** (e.g., nuts and seeds, beans, peas and lentils, tofu, unsweetened fortified plant-based beverages, eggs, lean meats and poultry, fish and shellfish, lower fat dairy products)



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## ***Being Active***

Getting enough physical activity is also important. Not only will it help build strong bones and muscles, it also gives you a chance to take part in some fun activities. Being physically active can help manage stress and the emotional ups and down of puberty.

## ***Sleep***

Sleep is very important. During puberty you'll need about nine hours of sleep every night. This should keep you alert during the day and give your body some growing time.

## ***Other Healthy Choices***

Choosing to eat right, stay active and get enough rest is a big step toward a long and healthy life. But you should also stay away from alcohol, smoking and other drugs. These risky activities won't make you cooler and they can hurt your health.

- Caring about yourself and your body will help you make healthy choices.



## STAYING SAFE

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It's natural to be sexually attracted to other people, but it's not acceptable to touch or kiss someone if they don't want you to. It's not even acceptable to tease people in a sexual way. These types of behaviours are called sexual assault and sexual harassment, and are against the law.

If these types of things have happened to you, don't keep it a secret. Tell a parent or an adult you trust. Sometimes people who have been sexually assaulted or harassed feel embarrassed, ashamed or even guilty about what happened. Sometimes a person who has hurt you is someone close to you or someone with power or authority. This person can be an adult, male or female, or someone close to your age. You might find it very hard to tell someone, but it's important that you do. No one – including relatives, friends and strangers – has the right to touch your body against your wishes.

It might seem easier not to tell, but many people who have been sexually assaulted or harassed say that keeping it a secret only made them feel worse. By telling, you can get the help you need.

## CHANGING EMOTIONS

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As if all the changes to your body weren't enough, you'll notice that your emotions are changing too. You might discover that you have new interests, concerns and attitudes. You might also find that all those hormones are making you moody. You might feel terrific one minute and sad the next. Your feelings might surprise you. They might even make you a little worried. Try not to worry – you and your friends are all going through the same things.

### *Feeling Grown Up*

In many ways, you're starting to feel like an adult. You probably want to be more independent and make more of your own choices. You might want to have more privacy or be taken more seriously; you'll even find that you don't like some of the same games, books or TV shows you used to enjoy. New interests and feelings are taking the place of old ones.

## ***Body Image and Self Esteem***

You might be more interested in your looks than you used to be. Your body is changing and it is normal to feel this way. It is important to remember that we are surrounded by unrealistic images every day in the media and that these images have often been altered to make the person look a certain way. Just know that healthy bodies come in a variety of shapes and sizes. We cannot know how healthy someone is by the way they look.

## ***Feeling Liked***

During puberty, you might find that you're more interested in being liked by others. It's normal to worry about being liked. Still, you shouldn't have to act like someone else or do things you don't want to do just to fit in. Sometimes you might feel awkward or even left out and lonely. Don't be afraid to talk about these feelings with a parent, a friend or a teacher you trust. Believe it or not, most of your classmates are feeling the exact same way!

## ***Sexual Feelings***

You and your friends are also starting to have new sexual feelings. You might discover that a certain book or show sexually excites you. A certain person might seem attractive to you. You might imagine what it would be like to be in love or to kiss or touch someone. Sexual feelings can occur towards someone of the opposite sex or the same sex. It can take some time to get used to these strong new feelings. Remember, you can always ask a parent, teacher, doctor, nurse or another trusted adult if you have any questions.



## CHANGING RELATIONSHIPS

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As you grow up, the way you interact with those around you is likely to change. Your relationships with your family and peers are different when you're a pre-teen or teen than they were when you were a young child. In some ways, relationships may be more complex.

### *Friends*

As you gain more independence, your relationships with your friends might seem more important than your relationship with your family. It can seem like your friends just understand you better. You may want to be in with a certain group, make new friends or drift away from friends you've outgrown. The desire to fit in can be very strong. Remember that the best friendships are based on respect and trust. You have to respect others and you have to respect yourself.

- A healthy part of growing up includes friendships with both sexes.

### *Dating*

In the next few years, you may experience new types of relationships. Some of these situations may feel awkward. Just be yourself! Others should like you for who you are and respect the choices you make.

### *Family*

Even though your friends might seem more important to you right now, your family doesn't have to become less important. Part of growing up is learning to juggle the many kinds of relationships most of us have. Your family members might be good to talk to when this puberty thing has you concerned. You're growing up. It might seem like everything is changing, and changing fast, but remember this is a normal part of puberty.

- Keeping close and honest relationships with your family and friends can help you adjust to the changes during puberty.

# DECISIONS, DECISIONS

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Growing up means you'll get to make more decisions for yourself.

## ***How do you go about making the right decisions?***

Using the WHOA Model can help you think things through, understand the problem or situation, and make the best decision for you.

### **WHOA** (Wait, Have a Brain, Options, Action)

**W** – WAIT- No matter how urgent it seems, put on the brakes. Stop and think about what is happening before you decide what to do, not after.

**H** – Have a Brain- Identify the pressures and emotions at work when you're put on the spot to make a choice. Understanding those forces can help you see beyond the rush of the moment. Think about the conflict or problem, and define it in a sentence.

**O** – Consider your options for solving the problem. Ask yourself what might happen if you decided on each one. Would the problem be solved or made worse? Make a list of pros and cons of each solution evaluate all of the solutions.

**A** – Pick the option that fits best with your own goals, and take the action that will get you there. Your answer will not only affect how you see yourself but how others see and respect you.

- When you look back at your decision ask three questions:

1. What happened?
2. Would you make the same decision again?
3. Why or why not?

## GLOSSARY

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*It's good to know and use the correct terms to talk about sexuality. Using these words will help others to know exactly what you're talking about.*

**Acne:** Very bad pimples and blackheads that are hard to get rid of.

**Anus:** Opening where feces leaves the body. Both males and females have an anus.

**Blackhead:** A pimple with a black top.

**Bladder:** The organ that holds urine before it leaves the body. Both males and females have a bladder.

**Circumcision:** When the penis' foreskin is surgically removed.

**Clitoris:** A small, sensitive organ found above the urethra in females.

**Dermatologist:** A doctor who specializes in skin issues.

**Discharge:** The term for a substance that is released from anywhere on or in the body.

**Ejaculation:** The release of semen from the penis.

**Erection:** When the tissues of the penis fill with blood making the penis larger and harder.

**Estrogen:** One of the two female sex hormones made by the ovaries. Estrogen causes body changes in females during puberty. The other hormone is called progesterone.

**Fallopian tubes:** The two tubes the ova (eggs) travel down to get from a female's ovaries to the uterus.

**Fertilization:** When a sperm makes its way into an ovum (egg). This starts a pregnancy.

**Foreskin:** The loose skin that covers the tip of an uncircumcised penis.

**Genitals:** The outer sex organs of both males and females.

**Hormones:** A chemical from a gland that makes cells or tissues act in a specific way.

**Inverted nipple:** A nipple that points in.

**Labia:** The inner and outer “lips” or folds of the female vulva. Labia are on both sides of the vagina.

**Masturbation:** Touching your own genitals to make them feel good.

**Menstrual cycle:** The female cycle that starts with menstruation and then continues as the lining of the uterus builds up and then breaks down again. It usually takes around 28 days.

**Menstruation (Period):** Shedding the lining of a female’s uterus that has formed in preparation for a fertilized ovum (egg).

**Nocturnal emission:** The ejaculation of semen while a male is asleep. It is also known as a wet dream.

**Ovary:** The female gland that ripens egg cells (ova) and makes the female hormones estrogen and progesterone.

**Ovulation:** The release of an ovum (egg) from a female’s ovary into a fallopian tube.

**Ovum (plural: ova):** Egg cells produced in a female’s ovaries.

**Pad:** A product that attaches to the inside of a female’s underwear to catch and absorb menstrual flow. It is also called a menstrual pad, sanitary napkin or feminine napkin.



**Penis:** The tube-like outer sex organ of a male.

**Period:** The common name for the time when a female is menstruating.

**Pituitary gland:** A gland that secretes hormones that cause growth and affect the activities of other glands. Both males and females have pituitary glands.

**Pores:** Tiny openings in the outer layer of the skin. Both males and females have pores.

**Progesterone:** One of the two female sex hormones made by the ovaries. Progesterone causes body changes in females during puberty. The other hormone is called estrogen.

**Prostate gland:** An organ that adds fluid to sperm to create semen. The seminal vesicles also add another fluid to the sperm.

**Puberty:** The time of change and growth when males and females start to become adults. Puberty usually begins between the ages of 8 to 16 and can take several years to complete.

**Pubic area:** The area of the male or female body where the outer sex organs are found.

**Rectum:** The rectum is the last portion of the large intestine. The rectum stores feces until it leaves the body through the anus. Both males and females have a rectum.

**Reproduction:** When a fertilized egg results in a pregnancy.

**Scrotum:** The sack of loose skin just behind the penis. It contains and protects the two testicles.

**Semen:** A mixture of fluid and sperm that is released from the penis during ejaculation.

**Seminal vesicles:** Two small pouches that add fluid to sperm to make semen. The prostate gland also adds another fluid to the sperm.

**Sexual intercourse:** Often refers to penetration involving the penis and vagina. It can also mean any type of sexual activity that involves the insertion into a body opening including mouth(oral sex) or anus(anal sex).

**Sperm:** The male reproductive cells made in the testicles.

**Tampon:** A small roll of absorbent material worn inside the vagina to catch and absorb menstrual flow.

**Testicles:** The male sex glands. Testicles make sperm and the male sex hormone testosterone.

**Testosterone:** The male sex hormone that is made by the testicles. Testosterone causes the changes in males during puberty.

**Urethra:** The tube that carries urine out of the body for both males and females. In males, semen also leaves the body through the urethra.

**Uterus:** A muscular organ located in the female's pelvic region. It can hold and nurture a fetus until a baby is born. The uterus is sometimes called the womb.

**Vagina:** The passage that connects a female's uterus to the outside of her body.

**Vas deferens:** The tube through which sperm moves from the testicles to the prostate gland.

**Vulva:** The outer female sex organs.

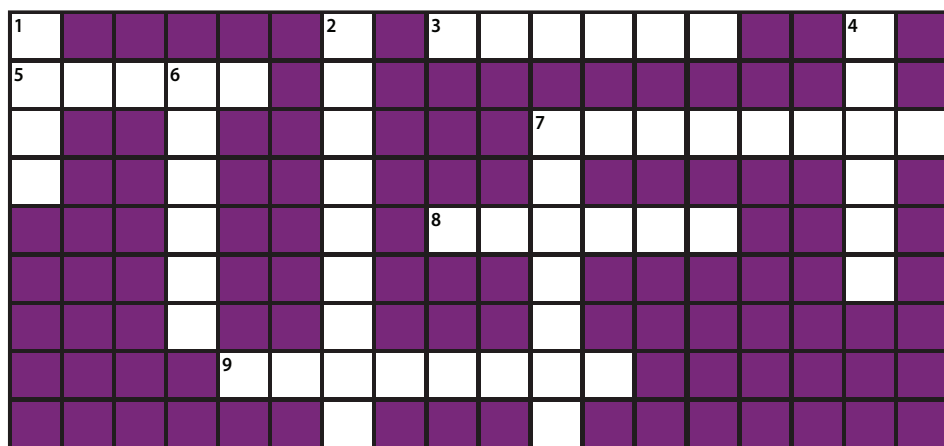
**Wet dream:** A common name for a nocturnal emission or the ejaculation of semen while a male is asleep.

## PUBERTY TRUE / FALSE QUIZ:

- T   F   1. Females should not exercise during their period.
- T   F   2. Puberty happens at different times for different people.
- T   F   3. The fluid released from the penis during ejaculation is made up of sperm and urine.
- T   F   4. The size of a male's penis determines the amount of sperm he produces.
- T   F   5. Sometimes it is hard for children and parents to talk to each other about sex.
- T   F   6. You should always do what your friends want to do.
- T   F   7. There is no "right time" to begin dating.
- T   F   8. There is no such thing as a "perfect body".
- T   F   9. If a person has a question about sex, the best place they can go to get an answer is a friend.
- T   F   10. It is common for a female to have one breast that is slightly bigger than the other.

See page 26 for Answers.

# PUBERTY CROSSWORD PUZZLE



## ACROSS

3. By the end of puberty, males usually end up a little \_\_\_\_\_ than females.
5. Puberty is the time when a person changes from a child into an \_\_\_\_\_.
7. During puberty, a female's body produces a hormone called \_\_\_\_\_.
8. The \_\_\_\_\_ is the part of the uterus that extends into the vagina.
9. People start growing quite fast during puberty because of \_\_\_\_\_.

See page 27 for Answers.

## DOWN

1. During puberty, \_\_\_\_\_ begins to grow under a person's arms and in the pubic area.
2. The \_\_\_\_\_ gland in the brain causes the body to produce growth hormones.
4. Menstruation is the periodic shedding of the lining of the \_\_\_\_\_.
6. During puberty, both male's and female's voices change because the \_\_\_\_\_ grows bigger. This is also know as the Adam's apple.
7. Females usually reach puberty a little \_\_\_\_\_ than males.

## PUBERTY TRUE/FALSE QUIZ ANSWERS

- 1. FALSE:** Some studies indicate that exercise can relieve discomfort from cramping. Active teens sometimes seem to have less trouble with cramps.
- 2. TRUE:** Puberty is the stage of life at which members of both sexes become functionally capable of reproduction. Puberty is a period of rapid physiological changes that occur between the ages of approximately 9 to 16 for females and 9 to 18 for males.
- 3. FALSE:** Although urine and sperm are both excreted through the urethra, the two functions do not (and cannot) occur at the same time. The fluid released from the penis during ejaculation contains sperm and seminal fluid. Urine is excreted only during urination.
- 4. FALSE:** There is a wide range of penis sizes. A male's penis size has no effect on his testicles' ability to produce sperm.
- 5. TRUE:** Parents and children may or may not have a difficult time discussing sex. There are many resources available to assist with developing or improving communication regarding puberty.
- 6. FALSE:** Peer pressure is when 'friends' try to force their ideas, opinions and actions on to others. You need to trust their own judgement when making decisions. Your judgements should be based on personal and family values and beliefs.
- 7. TRUE:** As with puberty, there is no one 'right age' for dating or experiencing the feelings or desires to initiate a relationship. The 'right time' may be based on personal or family values.
- 8. TRUE:** Every individual's body size, type and measurements are based on their personal genetic makeup. The definition of 'perfect' differs from individual to individual. It is important to

keep a positive body image and accept yourself as you are. By having a realistic body perception, you will feel better about yourself and your body.

**9. FALSE:** A friend may not be able to provide all the correct information. A better resource to obtain accurate information about sexual health could be a parent, trusted adult, teacher or health educator.

**10. TRUE:** Bodies are never exactly symmetrical. It is common for one breast to develop faster than the other and to remain asymmetrical. The same is true for male's testicles.

## PUBERTY CROSSWORD PUZZLE ANSWERS

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1. hair
2. pituitary
3. taller
4. uterus
5. adult
6. larynx
7. estrogen (across)
7. earlier (down)
8. cervix
9. hormones





**For more information, call 1-800-660-5853 or visit [www.healthunit.org](http://www.healthunit.org)**

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