

Precocious puberty and Delayed puberty

Puberty takes place over a number of years and the age at which it starts and ends varies widely. Puberty takes place earlier than normal age range is called precocious puberty whereas puberty takes place later than normal age range is called delayed puberty. Genetic, nutrition, exercise and environmental factors may influence the onset of puberty. Seek advice from doctor if you worry about it.



Girls

	Usually	Signs of Precocious Puberty	Signs of Delayed Puberty
Breasts	At about age 8 to 12, elevation of papilla at the beginning and gradually enlargement of papilla, areola and breast	Breast development before the age of 7	Breast development has not occurred by the age of 13
Appearance of Pubic Hair	At about age 9 to 14, appearance of pubic hair after the beginning of breast development	Pubic hair appear before the age of 9	Absence of pubic hair after age of 14
Menarche	Menarche at about age 10 to 15	Menarche before age of 10	Not yet menarche at age of 15



Boys

	Usually	Signs of Precocious Puberty	Signs of Delayed Puberty
External Genitalia	At about age of 8 to 15, testicular enlargement and increase in penile length	Present of signs of puberty before the age of 8	No signs of puberty after the age of 15
Appearance of Pubic Hair	At about age 10 to 14	Appearance of pubic hair before age of 10	Absence of pubic hair after age of 15

Psychological changes

Apart from physical changes, children also face great psychological changes; they might feel confused or have strong emotion. They might feel overly sensitive or become upset easily. They want to be independent, worship idols and care about peer recognition and acceptance. Sometimes they may be very happy and full of confidence, but sometimes they may feel depressed.



Suggestion to parents:

When children facing puberty, parents should show their concern to children, be considerate, receptive and supportive, listen to them and share experience with them. When they have problems, help them to face and allay their fear and queries, so that they can go through the stage of puberty happily.



Puberty

Parents

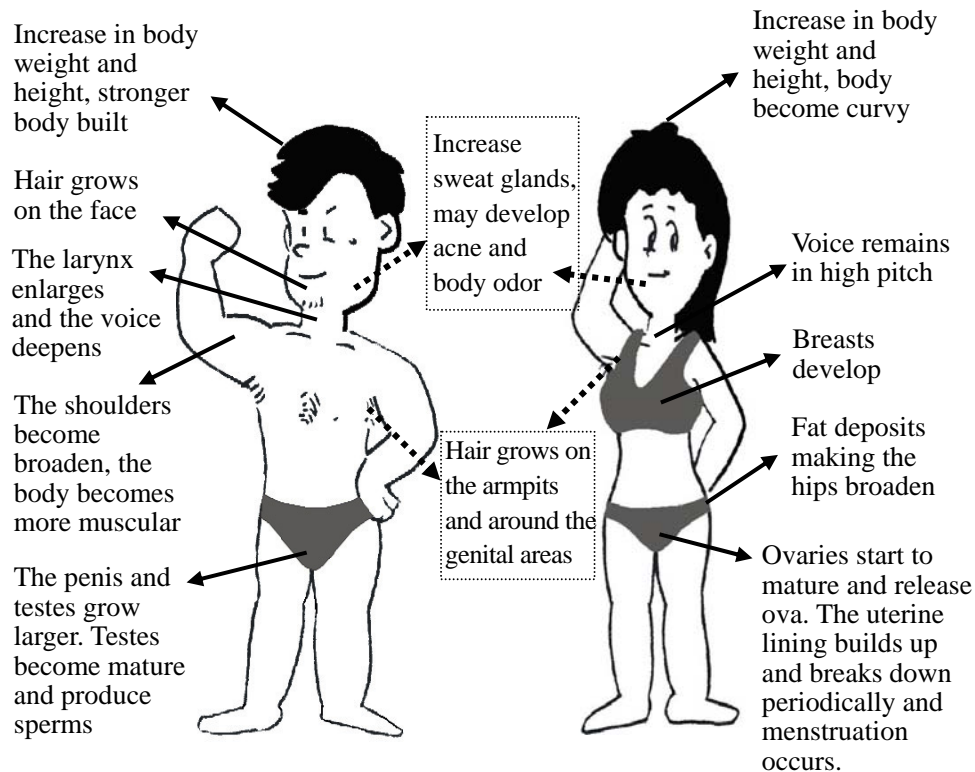


Parents understand that children have to go through the stage of puberty and face great changes physically and psychologically in order to mature into adulthood. How can parents help their children to go through puberty? If you want to know the answer, you should understand the changes children encounter during puberty.

Puberty is a stage from children to adulthood, beginning around the age of 10 and ends around the age of 20. The most apparent changes in puberty are body growth, physiological maturation and the ability of reproduction. Psychological changes are also great. Puberty usually occurs in girls between the age of 8 and 12, while in boys it generally occurs later, between the age of 10 and 14. The onset of puberty varies among individuals, some may start earlier and some may start later. No matter early or late, when it occurs, most children can catch up eventually.

Physiological changes

When puberty starts, hormones in the body increase and stimulate a series of physiological changes. The body grows rapidly and the secondary sex characteristics develop. Marked difference occurs in physical features between boys and girls.



Breast development

The sizes of the breasts differ among girls, and the age of breast development also varies, usually begins at the age of 8 to 12. It is common for most girls to have one of the breasts starts developing before the other. But, if you notice the other breast does not develop long after the first, seek advice from doctor.

Menstruation

Most girls get their first menstruation at the age between 10 and 15. During the onset of puberty, the reproductive system is influenced by hormones, a mature egg starts to be released periodically and at the same time hormones stimulates the uterus to build up its lining with more blood vessels and making the walls of the uterus thickened. If the egg is fertilized by a sperm cell, the fertilized egg implants to the wall of the uterus and develops into a baby.

If the egg is not fertilized, the uterus wall stops thickening and sheds the extra tissue lining. Blood, residual cells and mucus go through the vagina out of the body which lasts for 3 to 7 days.

Irregular period for the first 2 to 3 years are common in girls who just start menstruation due to the immature reproductive system. Each menstrual cycle can be as short as 2 to 3 weeks or sometimes as long as a few months. Parents may teach their daughters to keep a menstrual period record for reference.

Wet dream

When boys enter puberty, their testicles start to produce sperms in large amount. When they sleep, the inhibition of the central nervous system is relaxed and the sperms in the body will be ejected when the penis is stimulated by body turning and twisting, or by pressure from tight underwear or bedclothes, or even sex dreams. This is called wet dream. Wet dreams are normal for teenage boys and are not harmful to health. Do not worry about it too much. The episodes of wet dreams vary from person to person. Some may never experience it while others may have it once a month, up to two or three times a week. If wet dreams happen too often, you may try the following preventive measures:

- Sleep on your side
- Use comfortable bedclothes and wear loose underwear during sleep to prevent pressure on the genitals
- Do not drink alcohol and avoid full stomach before going to bed. Remember to urinate before sleep
- Do not read porn magazines or watch porn movies

