

Growth Stages During Puberty

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Boys

Most boys first experience puberty between the ages of 10 and 16.

Body Size:

- Arms, legs, hands, and feet may grow faster than rest of body.
- May feel clumsier from these changes.

Body Shape:

- Grow taller and shoulders grow broader.
- Muscles get bigger.
- Gain more weight.

Voice:

- Voice gets deeper.
- Voice may start cracking for a period of time.

Hair:

- Hair grows under the arms, legs, and in the pubic area (between legs).
- Chest hair may appear in some during puberty (or years later).
- Some may need to begin shaving.

Skin:

- Skin becomes more oily.
- Body will sweat more.
- Acne or pimples may develop.

Penis:

- Penis and testicles get larger.
- May experience more erections (hardening of the penis).
- Body will begin to produce sperm during puberty.

Girls

Most girls first experience puberty between the ages of 9 and 13. Girls usually begin puberty before boys.

Breasts:

- Breasts grow in size and shape.
- May be necessary to begin wearing a bra.
- Breast growth is often the first area of growth during puberty.

Hair:

- Hair grows under the arms, legs, and in the pubic area (between legs).
- Hair growth begins shortly after breast development.

Body Shape:

- Hips get wider.
- Waist gets smaller.
- Body will build up fat in the stomach, buttocks, and legs.
- Body develops a more curved shape.

Body Size:

- Arms, legs, hands, and feet may grow faster than rest of body.
- May feel clumsier from these changes.

Skin:

- Skin becomes more oily.
- Body will sweat more.
- Acne or pimples may develop.

Menstruation or period:

- Begins for most girls between the ages of 9 and 16.
- A period is a discharge of fluid from the body.
- Occurs monthly.
- Most periods last from 3 to 7 days.
- May feel discomfort before, during, or after a period.

Source: American Academy of Pediatrics: Puberty Information for Boys and Girls.
<http://www.aap.org/family/puberty.htm>

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Both Boys and Girls

Emotional Changes:

- Start to care more about what others think.
- Want to be accepted and liked.
- Often begin to separate from parents and identify more with friends.
- May become self conscious or anxious about these growth changes (too tall, too short, too fat, too thin).

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