

Puberty

brochure

Puberty includes a wide range of changes to the body, and emotions.



Puberty can start at any time between 8 and 16 years old, but usually begins around 12 to 14 years old.



Even though every one develops at their own pace, puberty is the process of becoming an adult.

Whether you start the changes earlier, or later, you will get there!



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Fluids: Pre-Ejaculatory Fluid

When an erection begins, the tube that carries the sperm is cleaned out with a white or clear fluid. This fluid is called pre-ejaculatory fluid, or pre-cum, and although it's not always noticeable when it comes out of the opening at tip of the penis, **it there with every erection.**

Both boys and girls should know that this little drop of fluid can be enough to get someone pregnant or to pass on a sexually transmitted infection. This is why you always need to put on a condom before sex begins!

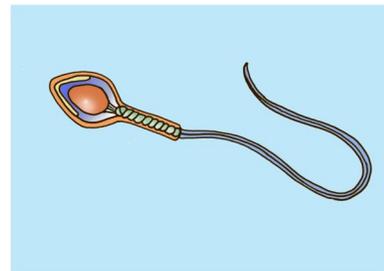


Fluids: Ejaculation/Semen

When it is erect, if a boy's penis is stimulated by touching, rubbing, or stroking, he may have an **orgasm**. For boys, an orgasm is a feeling of pleasure or release accompanied with ejaculation.

An **ejaculation** is a set of contractions in the muscles of the genitals that pushes a white or yellowish fluid called **semen** out of the penis. Most young men ejaculate for the first time between the ages of 10 and 16, usually around 12 or 13 years old. Some boys are surprised by this. An ejaculation usually releases about a teaspoon to a tablespoon of semen.

Semen contains **sperm**. You can't see sperm because they are microscopic (you can only see them with a microscope), but every time a boy ejaculates, he releases hundreds of millions of them! The fluid of semen also has nutrients to feed sperm so they can stay alive inside someone else's body for a few days (meaning a girl can become pregnant several days after sperm enter her vagina).



Wet Dreams

Sometimes a boy will **release semen in his sleep**. This is called a wet dream. Wet dreams can be confusing or embarrassing if you don't know what is happening, but they are completely normal! Sometimes they can happen because of a sexy dream or a boy stroking his penis in his sleep, but most of the time they happen on their own.

This process of releasing sperm during sleep only happens in your deepest cycles of sleep, when the body is most relaxed. An unexpected ejaculation will not happen when you are awake during the day.

During puberty, wet dreams may happen often or not at all for boys, and they will happen less often as you get older. If the cleanup or the wetness on the sheets bothers you, you can wear pajamas or underwear, which are much easier to replace and clean.

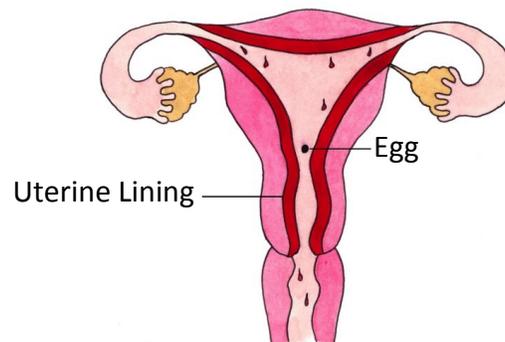


The **labia minora** (smaller lips) are a set of thinner, more sensitive lips on the inside. They can vary in color from light pink to darker brown, and are hairless. All labia minora will look different. Some girls have smaller ones, while other girls may have larger, flower-like lips. Whatever your shape is, they are unique, and are very sensitive to touch.

The **clitoris** is a gland at the top of your vulva where the labia minora (inner lips) meet. This gland is highly sensitive and has about 8000 nerve endings! The only function of the clitoris is for pleasure and it generally feels good when it is touched or rubbed. Sometimes the clitoris can be too sensitive and can feel irritated from touching.

The size of a clitoris or labia may change during puberty, and it is important to remember that they come in all shapes and sizes, there is no “normal” way for them to look.

The Menstrual Cycle



The Basics

The menstrual cycle is a process of releasing an **egg**, and either fertilizing it or discarding it. If the egg is not fertilized and implanted (pregnancy), then you will get your **period**.

In your early adolescence, you can experience a period twice in one month or not see it for a few months.

After a few years, as your hormones get into a rhythm, it will happen more regularly. Every **28 days is average**, but depending on her body, a girl's cycle can be anywhere from 20 to 45 days. Even after puberty, this can sometimes change with things like stress, diet, or even the weather!

It is sometimes helpful to keep a record of the days you get your period so you can see how your cycle develops. You can find calendars and smartphone apps to help track this.

Menstruation

Menstruation is when the inner wall of the uterus (the part where a baby would grow) sheds and falls out of your body. As a result, **girls will bleed for about 3 to 7 days**. Generally, a girl will bleed **the most in the first two days of her menstruation**. While having a period can sometimes feel like an inconvenience, it's all a part of being a woman and will impact your life less and less as you learn to manage it.



Steps to Using Pads



While girls will try a long list of menstrual products in their life, most will start with sanitary pads as they are the easiest to learn and use. Other methods that need to be inserted can be painful to use during the first few periods, but usually get easier as the vaginal opening and vaginal canal change shape.

Here are the basic steps to using pads for the first time.



1. A new sanitary pad is usually sealed in a plastic package. The white tab is to pull open the package.



2. When you unwrap the package, the pad looks like this. Pull the plastic wrapper away from the pad, then pull the sticky strip away from the back of the pad.



3. Throw the wrapper and this strip away in the garbage.



4. The back of the pad is sticky after you remove the strip. Place the sanitary pad on the inside of the underwear and press the pad into the underwear.



5. If the pad has sticky tabs on the side, remove the paper on those pieces and wrap the sides under the sides of the underwear.





Sexuality

Masturbation

Masturbation is a hard subject to talk about. Many girls and boys have done it or do it regularly but very few admit it! Masturbation is a perfectly healthy and normal part of your sexuality and exploring your own body.

Many girls touch or stroke their clitoris or vagina to become aroused, and may achieve an orgasm. Many boys may touch or stroke their penis to get an erection, and may achieve an orgasm. An orgasm generally feels good (like a release) so many people enjoy doing this.

Notes on Masturbation

Most boys start to masturbate when they are very young, but they can only ejaculate (release sperm) after puberty has begun. Some boys worry that masturbation will make them run out of sperm, but the testicles are always making more!

If you masturbate, it is important to do this in privacy. Privacy means where others can't see you. Your bedroom, bathroom, and shower are the most common places.

The Right Age for Sex

There is no right age to have sex. If you believe everything you read or hear, you might think that all teens are having sex. That is not true. A 2010 survey showed that only about 30% of Canadians ages 15-17 had vaginal sex (where a penis goes in a vagina).*

Many people wait until they are older and in a healthy and trusting relationship with someone. Sex can be a big decision and finding someone you are comfortable with can take time.

It is also important to think about possible consequences before having sex. If you have vaginal sex, it is important to remember that a pregnancy can change your life very quickly.

There are also some very damaging and even deadly sexually transmitted infections to be



