

ADOLESCENT HEALTH



LINK BETWEEN CHILDHOOD AND ADULT

Normal and abnormal changes and approach towards a better life

Issues related to adolescent health

- ▶ Hormonal changes
- ▶ Puberty
- ▶ Adolescent problems
- ▶ Self awareness
- ▶ When to consult a doctor

Welcome to the age group called adolescence. As you enter into a world of unknown changes such as biological, morphological, and most important psychological ones.

Authentic information is necessary to traverse this wonderful age group without any trouble. It is a small effort to guide you regarding normal and abnormal changes, points for attention and for the need of a doctor especially gynaecologist for girls. There has to be good support from parents, teachers, and friends for a better understanding of the problems.

All changes are due to the interplay of the sex hormones being released at the onset of the puberty. HYPOTHALAMUS (GNRH – FSH / LH – ESTROGEN AND PROGESTERONE IN GIRLS/ TESTERONE IN BOYS) and simultaneous changes in the external and internal genitalia that are leading to changes in males and females.

SEQUENCE OF CHANGES FOR GIRLS – Breast development – growth peak – axillary and pubic hair development – menstruation – Normal menstruation – it occurs at equal interval of 28 – 35 days, normal flow 3-5 days.

In the beginning the cycle can be delayed due to delay in development of the pituitary ovarian axis so it can be of 2 to 3 months interval, followed by heavy flow (puberty menorrhagia). If care is not taken then it may lead to severe anaemia and girl has to be admitted in order to transfuse blood.

Girls generally have onset of menses at the age of 13 (11 - 14). So if it is delayed then please consult a gynaecologist as it may be a normal case of delayed puberty or some pathological condition such as imperforate hymen, absent vagina or uterine or gonadal agenesis.

A condition called **PCOS** is very common disease (**Polycystic ovarian disease**) that comprises delayed cycles, weight gain, developing of hairs as the male distribution pattern, ACNE. Please do consult doctor for life style modification and dietary medication. Some lab test and some medications will be needed.

Other problems in girls are inflammatory conditions (infection), vulvovaginitis, PID (pelvic inflammatory disease) – In this, they complain of excessive vaginal discharges, vulval pruritus, painful micturition, lower abdominal pain

Pain in the abdomen – It may be of simple cause such as acidity but, if it is of severe intensity then please consult a doctor as it can be a case of **ovarian tumor** (3-5% cases).

Unwanted pregnancy resulting from unprotected sex – very common problem (especially in low socioeconomic groups) and cases of girls of age group 14 to 16 getting pregnant is observed and even in higher age group unmarried girls are approaching doctors for termination of pregnancy. It is not only the case of pregnancy but also sometimes these are cases of STDs/HIV which are increasing the morbidity of life.

For an approach towards better life one should know the normal and abnormal changes and take guidance from doctors and parents for the better management of adolescence

Consult authentic sites for getting the information.

For Girls - maintain good dietary habits. Regularly do exercise, maintain perineal hygiene. Have concern of your menses. If it is delayed or heavy, you should be concerned over the abnormal changes.

Vaccination for carcinoma cervix is available now for the adolescent. Three doses can be given and girls above 14 yrs can take it.

Have healthy relationship with peers, SET GOALS IN LIFE. HAVE BIG DREAMS AND WORK TOWARDS IT. BELIEVE IN YOURSELF.