

Puberty: Teen Girl



How much will my teen grow?

The teenage years are also called adolescence. During this time, teens will see the greatest amount of growth in height and weight. Adolescence is a time for growth spurts and puberty changes. A teenager may grow several inches in several months followed by a period of very slow growth. Then they may have another growth spurt. Changes with puberty may happen slowly. Or several changes may occur at the same time.

It's important to remember that these changes will happen differently for each teen. Some teens may have these signs of maturity sooner or later than others. And being smaller or bigger than other girls is normal. Each child goes through puberty at their own pace.

What changes will happen during puberty?

Sexual and other physical maturation that happens during puberty results from hormonal changes.

Girls experience puberty as a sequence of events. But their puberty changes often begin before boys of the same age. Each girl is different and may progress through these changes differently.

There are certain stages of development that girls go through when developing secondary sex characteristics. Here is a brief overview of the changes that happen:

- In girls, the first puberty change is the development of breast buds. These are small mounds that form under the nipple as the breast and nipple become slightly raised. The areola (the circle of different colored skin around the nipple) gets larger at this time.
- The breasts then continue to grow.
- Over time, the nipple and the areola will become raised again. They will form another mound on the breast. At the end of puberty, the breasts will be rounded and only the nipples will be raised.
- The first growth of pubic hair makes long, soft hair that is only in a small area around the genitals. This hair then becomes darker and coarser as it continues to spread.
- The pubic hair eventually looks like adult hair, but in a smaller area. It may spread to the thighs and sometimes up the stomach.

The following changes may also happen to a girl as she goes through puberty:

- There may be an increase in hair growth. This will happen not only in the pubic area but also under the arms and on the legs. Many women may decide to shave this hair.
- The girl's body shape will also begin to change. There may be an increase not only in height and weight, but the hips may get wider as well. There may also be an increase in fat in the buttocks, legs, and stomach. These are normal changes that may happen during puberty.
- Her body size will increase, with the feet, arms, legs, and hands beginning to grow in advance of the body. This may cause a girl to feel clumsy.
- As the puberty hormones increase, teens may have an increase in oily skin and sweating. This is a normal part of growing. It's important to wash daily, including the face. Acne may develop.
- Teen girls will also begin to menstruate or have menstrual periods. These periods are often irregular at first but eventually become regular, often every month. This begins when the body starts making more hormones to get ready for reproduction. Over time, the body begins to release eggs from the ovaries. The teen girl is then able to get pregnant. If the egg is not fertilized, the lining of the uterus is shed through the vagina.

What does my teenager understand?

The teenage years bring many changes—not only physically but also mentally and socially. During these years, teens increase their ability to think abstractly and eventually to make plans and set long-term goals. Each child may progress at different rates and show a different view of the world. In general, the following are some of the abilities you may see in your teenager:

- Developing the ability to think abstractly
- Concerned with philosophy, politics, and social issues
- Thinking long-term
- Setting goals
- Comparing herself with her peers

Your teen's relationships with others

As your teenager begins to struggle for independence and control, many changes may happen. Here are some of the issues that your teen may experience during these years:

- She wants independence from her parents.
- Peer influence and acceptance is very important.
- Peer relationships become very important.
- She may be in love.
- She may have long-term commitments in relationships.

© 2000-2027 The StayWell Company, LLC. All rights reserved. This information is not intended as a substitute for professional medical care. Always follow your healthcare professional's instructions
This information is not intended as a substitute for professional medical care. Always follow your Healthcare professional's instructions. Copyright Krames LLC.