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URL of this page: <https://medlineplus.gov/puberty.html>

## Puberty

Puberty is the time in life when a boy or girl becomes sexually mature. It is a process that usually happens between ages 10 and 14 for girls and ages 12 and 16 for boys. It causes physical changes, and affects boys and girls differently.

In girls:

- The first sign of puberty is usually breast development.
- Then hair grows in the pubic area and armpits.
- Menstruation [<https://medlineplus.gov/menstruation.html>] (or a period) usually happens last.

In boys:

- Puberty usually begins with the testicles and penis getting bigger.
- Then hair grows in the pubic area and armpits.
- Muscles grow, the voice deepens, and facial hair develops as puberty continues.

Both boys and girls may get acne. They also usually have a growth spurt (a rapid increase in height) that lasts for about 2 or 3 years. This brings them closer to their adult height, which they reach after puberty.

*NIH: National Institute of Child Health and Human Development*

## Start Here

- For Parents: What to Expect When Your Child Goes through Puberty [<https://familydoctor.org/for-parents-what-to-expect-when-your-child-goes-through-puberty/?adfree=true>] (American Academy of Family Physicians)  
Also in Spanish [<https://es.familydoctor.org/pubertad-que-esperar-cuando-su-hijo-atraviesa-la-pubertad/?adfree=true>]
- Physical Development: What's Normal? What's Not? [<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/gradeschool/puberty/pages/Physical-Development-Whats-Normal-Whats-Not.aspx>] (American Academy of Pediatrics)  
Also in Spanish [<https://www.healthychildren.org/spanish/ages-stages/gradeschool/puberty/paginas/stages-of-puberty.aspx>]
- Understanding Puberty (For Parents) [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/understanding-puberty.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
- What Are Normal Puberty, Precocious Puberty, and Delayed Puberty?  
[<https://www.nichd.nih.gov/health/topics/puberty/conditioninfo>]  
 (Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development)  
Also in Spanish [<https://espanol.nichd.nih.gov/salud/temas/puberty/informacion>]

## Symptoms

- What Are the Symptoms of Puberty, Precocious Puberty, and Delayed Puberty?  
[<https://www.nichd.nih.gov/health/topics/puberty/conditioninfo/symptoms>]  
 (Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development)  
Also in Spanish [<https://espanol.nichd.nih.gov/salud/temas/puberty/informacion/sintomas>]

## Diagnosis and Tests

- Blood Test: Testosterone [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/test-testosterone.html>] (Nemours Foundation)  
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/parents/testosterone.html>]
- Estradiol Blood Test [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/blood-test-estradiol.html>] (Nemours Foundation)  
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/parents/blood-test-estradiol.html>]
- Estrogen Levels Test [<https://medlineplus.gov/lab-tests/estrogen-levels-test/>]  (National Library of Medicine)  
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/pruebas-de-laboratorio/prueba-de-estrogeno/>]
- How Do Healthcare Providers Diagnose Precocious Puberty and Delayed Puberty?  
[<https://www.nichd.nih.gov/health/topics/puberty/conditioninfo/diagnosed>]  
 (Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development)  
Also in Spanish [<https://espanol.nichd.nih.gov/salud/temas/puberty/informacion/diagnostica>]

## Treatments and Therapies

- What Are Common Treatments for Problems of Puberty?  
[<https://www.nichd.nih.gov/health/topics/puberty/conditioninfo/treatments>]  
 (Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development)  
Also in Spanish [<https://espanol.nichd.nih.gov/salud/temas/puberty/informacion/tratamientos>]

## Specifics

- Boys and Puberty [<https://familydoctor.org/boys-and-puberty/?adfree=true>] (American Academy of Family Physicians)  
Also in Spanish [<https://es.familydoctor.org/los-chicos-y-la-pubertad/?adfree=true>]
- Concerns Boys Have about Puberty [<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/gradeschool/puberty/pages/Concerns-Boys-Have-About-Puberty.aspx>] (American Academy of Pediatrics)  
Also in Spanish [<https://www.healthychildren.org/spanish/ages-stages/gradeschool/puberty/paginas/concerns-boys-have-about-puberty.aspx>]
- Concerns Girls Have about Puberty [<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/gradeschool/puberty/pages/Concerns-Girls-Have-About-Puberty.aspx>] (American Academy of Pediatrics)  
Also in Spanish [<https://www.healthychildren.org/spanish/ages-stages/gradeschool/puberty/paginas/concerns-girls-have-about-puberty.aspx>]
- Girls and Puberty [<https://familydoctor.org/girls-and-puberty/?adfree=true>] (American Academy of Family Physicians)  
Also in Spanish [<https://es.familydoctor.org/las-chicas-y-la-pubertad/?adfree=true>]
- Precocious Puberty (For Parents) [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/precocious.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
- Talking to Your Child about Puberty [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/talk-about-puberty.html>] (Nemours Foundation)  
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/parents/talk-about-puberty.html>]

## Genetics

- Central precocious puberty: MedlinePlus Genetics [<https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/condition/central-precocious-puberty>]  
 (National Library of Medicine)
- Familial male-limited precocious puberty: MedlinePlus Genetics [<https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/condition/familial-male-limited-precocious-puberty>]  
 (National Library of Medicine)

## Clinical Trials

- ClinicalTrials.gov: Puberty [<https://clinicaltrials.gov/search?cond=%22Puberty%22&aggFilters=status:not%20rec>]  
 (National Institutes of Health)

## Journal Articles

References and abstracts from MEDLINE/PubMed (National Library of Medicine)

- Article: Pubertal Health Group Counseling Based on Problem-Solving, for Body Image Concerns... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40607643>]

- Article: The role of adipose tissue in puberty and reproductive health. [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40600011>]
- Article: Adolescent awareness and experience of the pubertal changes: A qualitative study... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40554483>]
- Puberty -- see more articles [<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/?term=%22Puberty%22%5Bmajr%3Anoexp%5D+AND+humans%5Bmh%5D+AND+english%5Bla%5D+AND+%22last+1+Year%22+%5Bdat%5D+NOT+%28letter%5Bpt%5D+OR+case+reports%5Bpt%5D+OR+editorial%5Bpt%5D+OR+comment%5Bpt%5D%29+AND+free+full+text%5Bsb%5D+>]

## Find an Expert

- Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development [<https://www.nichd.nih.gov/>] 
- Also in Spanish [<https://espanol.nichd.nih.gov/>]
- KidsHealth [<https://kidshealth.org/>] (Nemours Foundation)

## Children

- All about Puberty (For Kids) [<https://kidshealth.org/en/kids/puberty.html>] (Nemours Foundation)  
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/kids/puberty.html>]
- Body Hair [[https://girlshealth.gov/body/puberty/changes\\_hair.html](https://girlshealth.gov/body/puberty/changes_hair.html)]  
(Department of Health and Human Services, Office on Women's Health)
- Boys and Puberty (For Kids) [<https://kidshealth.org/en/kids/boys-puberty.html>] (Nemours Foundation)  
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/kids/boys-puberty.html>]
- Breasts and Bras (For Kids) [<https://kidshealth.org/en/kids/breasts-bras.html>] (Nemours Foundation)  
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/kids/breasts-bras.html>]
- Changes to Your Breasts [[https://girlshealth.gov/body/puberty/changes\\_breasts.html](https://girlshealth.gov/body/puberty/changes_breasts.html)]  
(Department of Health and Human Services, Office on Women's Health)
- Timing and Stages of Puberty [<https://girlshealth.gov/body/puberty/timing.html>]  
(Department of Health and Human Services, Office on Women's Health)
- What's an Adam's Apple? (For Kids) [<https://kidshealth.org/en/kids/adams-apple.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
- When Will I Get My Period? (For Kids) [<https://kidshealth.org/en/kids/when-period.html>] (Nemours Foundation)  
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/kids/when-period.html>]

## Teenagers

- Body Odor (For Young Men) [<https://youngmenshealthsite.org/guides/body-odor/>] (Boston Children's Hospital)
- Body Odor (For Young Women) [<https://youngwomenshealth.org/guides/body-odor/>] (Boston Children's Hospital)  
Also in Spanish [<https://youngwomenshealth.org/guias/olor-corporal/>]
- Can I Stop Myself From Having a Wet Dream? (For Teens) [<https://kidshealth.org/en/teens/stop-dreams.html>]  
(Nemours Foundation)
- Delayed Puberty (For Teens) [<https://kidshealth.org/en/teens/delayed-puberty.html>] (Nemours Foundation)  
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/teens/delayed-puberty.html>]
- Douching [<https://girlshealth.gov/body/grooming/douche.html>]  
(Department of Health and Human Services, Office on Women's Health)
- Everything You Wanted to Know about Puberty (For Teens) [<https://kidshealth.org/en/teens/puberty.html>]  
(Nemours Foundation)  
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/teens/puberty.html>]
- Gynecomastia [<https://kidshealth.org/en/teens/boybrst.html>] (Nemours Foundation)  
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/teens/boybrst.html>]
- Why Is My Voice Changing? (For Teens) [<https://kidshealth.org/en/teens/voice-changing.html>] (Nemours Foundation)  
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/teens/voice-changing.html>]

# Patient Handouts

- Delayed puberty in boys [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/007695.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)  
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/007695.htm>]
- Delayed puberty in girls [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/007694.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)  
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/007694.htm>]
- Precocious puberty [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001168.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)  
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/001168.htm>]
- Puberty in boys [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000650.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)  
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/patientinstructions/000650.htm>]
- Puberty in girls [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000651.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)  
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/patientinstructions/000651.htm>]



## MEDICAL ENCYCLOPEDIA

- Delayed puberty in boys [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/007695.htm>]
- Delayed puberty in girls [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/007694.htm>]
- Precocious puberty [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001168.htm>]
- Puberty in boys [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000650.htm>]
- Puberty in girls [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000651.htm>]

## Related Health Topics

- Child Development [<https://medlineplus.gov/childdevelopment.html>]
- Menstruation [<https://medlineplus.gov/menstruation.html>]
- Teen Development [<https://medlineplus.gov/teendevelopment.html>]

## National Institutes of Health

The primary NIH organization for research on *Puberty* is the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development [<https://www.nichd.nih.gov/Pages/index.aspx>]

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[\[https://medlineplus.gov/criteria.html\]](https://medlineplus.gov/criteria.html).

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