



American Academy of Pediatrics



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Puberty Information for Boys

Girls are not the only ones who go through changes during puberty. Puberty for boys usually starts with a growth spurt at about 10 to 16 years of age. You may notice that you grow out of your clothes or shoes a lot faster than you used to. Don't worry, just as with girls, your hormones will balance out and your body will catch up.

How will my body change?

Following are some other changes you will notice during puberty:

Body size:

Arms, legs, hands, and feet may grow faster than the rest of your body. Until the rest of your body catches up, you may feel a little clumsy.

Body shape:

You will get taller and your shoulders will get broader. You will gain a lot of weight. During this time, many boys experience swelling under their nipples. This may cause them to worry that they are growing breasts. If you experience this, don't worry. It is common among boys your age and is a temporary condition. If you are worried about it, talk to your pediatrician.

During puberty, your muscles will also get bigger. Try not to rush this part of your growth. You may have friends who work out with weights and equipment to build up muscles, and you may want to begin this type of training yourself - often before your body is ready for it. If you are interested in these activities, talk to your pediatrician about a safe time for you to begin weight training.

Voice:

Your voice will get deeper. This may start with voice cracking. As you continue to grow, the cracking will stop and your voice will stay at the lower range.

Hair:

Hair will appear under your arms, on your legs and face, and above your penis. Chest hair may appear during puberty or years after, although not all men have chest hair. Some men shave the hair on their faces. There is no medical reason to shave, it is simply a personal choice. If you

decide to shave, be sure to use shaving cream and a clean razor made for men. It is a good idea to use your own personal razor or electric shaver and not to share one with your family or friends.

Skin:

Skin may get more oily and you may notice you perspire more. This is because your glands are growing too. It is important to wash every day to keep your skin clean and to use a deodorant or antiperspirant to keep odor and wetness under control. Despite your best efforts to keep your face clean, you still may get pimples. This is called acne and is normal during this time when your hormone levels are high. Almost all teenage boys get acne at one time or another. Whether your case is mild or severe, there are things you can do to keep it under control. For more information on controlling acne, talk to your pediatrician.

Penis:

Your penis and testes will get larger. You may have erections more often due to an increase in sex hormones. Erections occur when the penis gets stiff and hard - sometimes for no reason. This is normal. Even though you may feel embarrassed, try to remember that most people will not even notice your erection unless you draw attention to it. Many boys become concerned about their penis size; a boy may compare his own penis size with that of his friends. It is important to remember that the size of a man's penis has nothing to do with his manliness or sexual functioning.

Your body will also begin to produce sperm during puberty. This means that during an erection, you may also experience ejaculation. This occurs when semen (made up of sperm and other fluids) is released through the penis. This could happen while you are sleeping. You might wake up to find your sheets or pajamas are wet. This is called a nocturnal emission or "wet dream." This is normal and will stop as you get older.