

Puberty - Year 5

Girls

What is puberty?

- ▶ Puberty is when a child begins to grow and develop into an adult. The average age for girls to start puberty is 11 and for boys, it's a bit later, at 12 years old. However, everyone's body is different so some children might start puberty earlier or later than these ages. For example, some children start puberty as early as 8 years old and others might not start until around the age of 14. It all depends on when your body is ready. Usually, it takes around 4 years to go through the whole process of puberty.

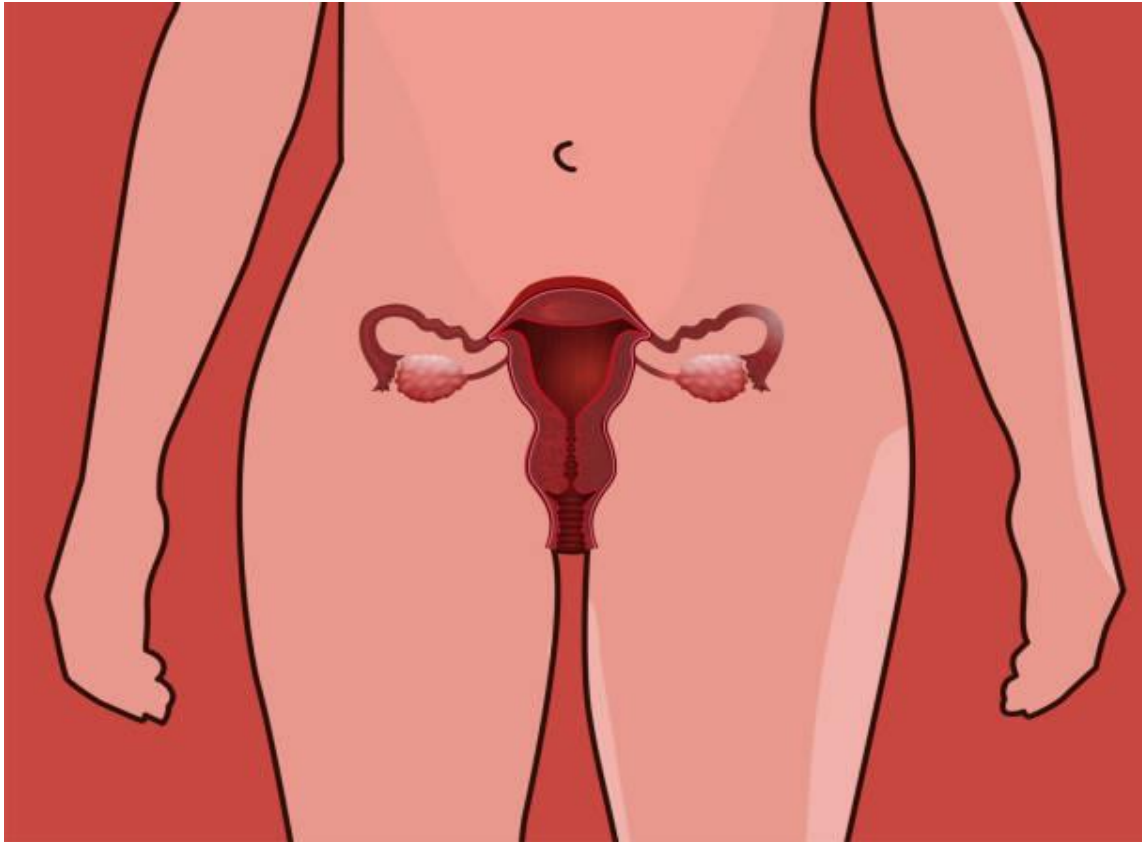
How does puberty make me feel?

- ▶ Puberty is caused by chemicals in the brain called hormones. When you start puberty, this means that your hormones have sent messages to your body to start changing and developing into an adult.
- ▶ Your hormones are also linked to your emotions, which is why you can go through changes in how you feel during puberty. For example, it's possible to start feeling unhappy or angry, without even knowing why.
- ▶ These emotional changes are known as mood swings and they're a normal part of going through puberty.
- ▶ It can feel very confusing for your mood to change without you understanding why and it might make you feel worried. Many people go through this and you may not need to feel as concerned as you do.
- ▶ However, if you notice that you're always feeling upset or down and this is affecting your everyday life, then you should speak to a friend or an adult you trust, such as parents or carers, teachers and your school nurse. If you talk to them about how you're feeling, they can help to support you

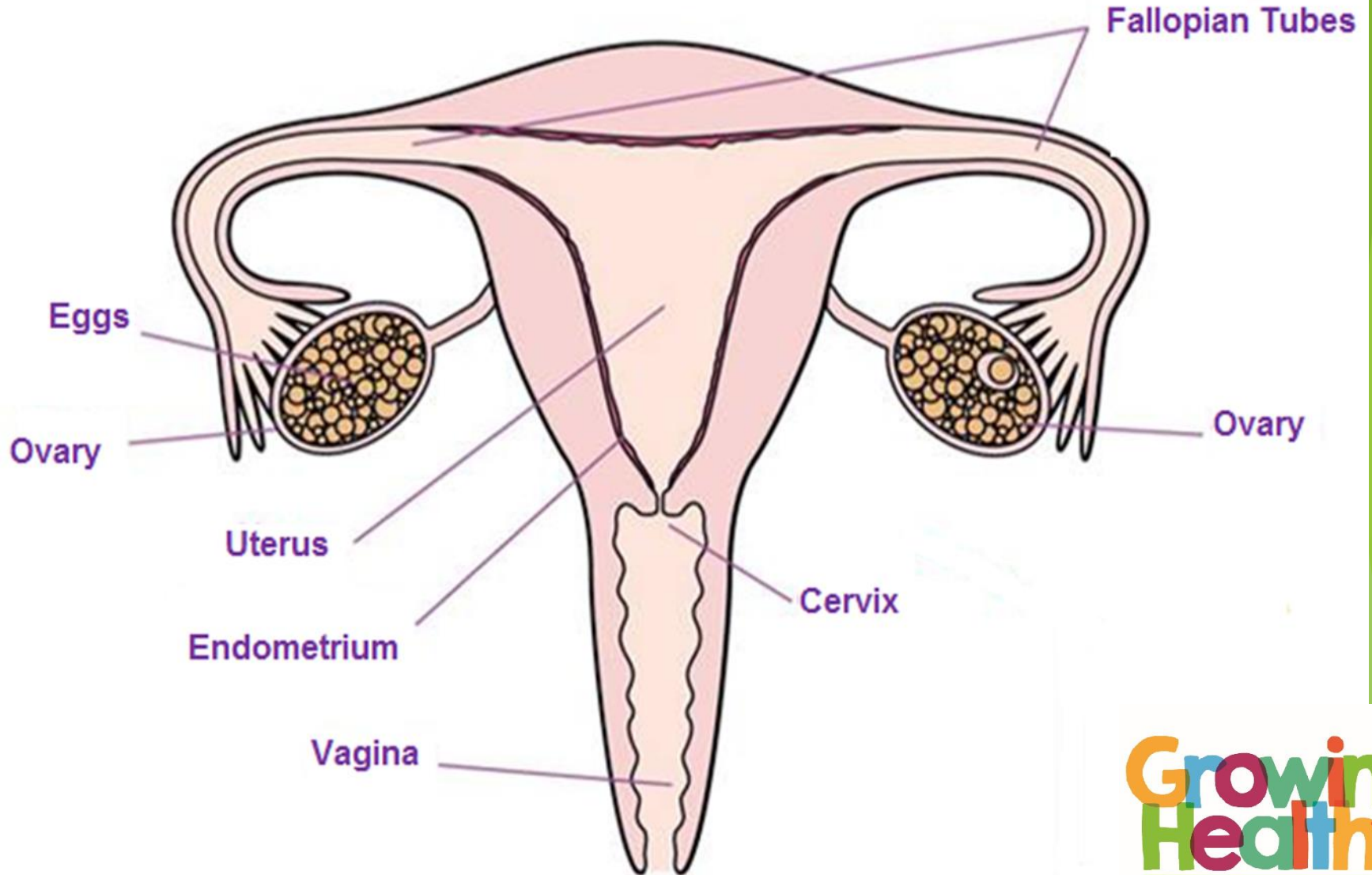
Periods

- Usually start between 10-16 years old
- Usually approximately 1 year after you start to notice vaginal discharge
- Periods happen once a month but a girl's body takes time to get into a routine so for the first year or so, the time between each period may vary.
- Periods are part of your Menstrual Cycle

The female reproductive system



The female reproductive system



Menstruation Cycle Video

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vXrQ_FhZmos

What are periods?

- People with vaginas are born with hundreds of thousands of tiny eggs, called ova.
- One egg is called an ovum.
- These egg cells are only half formed.
- At puberty, hormones tell the ovaries it is time to start releasing ova.
- Usually one egg at a time develops and is released from an ovary.

- At the same time, the uterus starts to grow a thick lining on the inside wall.
- The lining has lots of tiny blood vessels.
- The lining is there to protect and feed an egg that has combined with a sperm (a fertilized egg)

- If an egg does not meet a sperm, the lining breaks up.
- It mixes with some blood and comes out the uterus into the vagina and then out the vaginal opening.
- This is called menstruation or a period.

When will I get my period?

- No one can tell exactly when it will start.
- Many girls get some white or yellow discharge on their underwear.
- It is called mucus and is a sign that your period is coming sometime within the next year.



How long will the bleeding last?

- Each female is different. It can vary from 3 to 8 days.
- During a period only a few tablespoons to about half a cup of blood is lost - not a lot.
- The average amount of blood lost in a period is 80mls



How often will I get a period?

- At first there may not be any pattern to when you will get your next period.
- Most people eventually have a regular cycle - they know approximately when their next period will happen
- The length of a cycle is from the first day of bleeding to the first day of bleeding the next time it happens.
- Each person is different so some may have a period every 23 days, some every 28 days and some every 35 days.



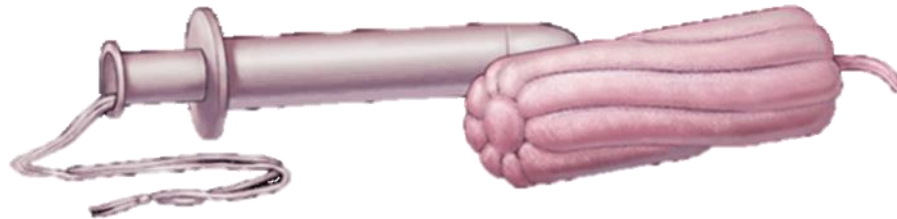
Keep a calendar to help keep track of when you have your period and how long it lasts.

What do I do when I get my period?

- Pads or tampons are used to catch the blood that comes from the vagina
- Sanitary pads are made of material that absorbs the blood
- Most have a sticky strip on one side to hold the pad to the underwear
- Pads come in a variety of sizes and shapes



- A tampon is a small plug of material that fits inside the vagina to absorb the blood.
- Some people like to use tampons, especially if they are doing physical activities.
- There are also other options such as special absorbent period underwear. Speak with a trusted adult about which you think will be best for you.



What if I get my first period when I'm at school?

- This is completely normal and it's happened to lots of girls in the past. The first thing is - don't panic!
- Come and find a trusted adult in school and tell them - we're all here to help you and we know how it feels.
- There are sanitary towels and tampons in the office at all times. Your trusted adult in school will be able to go and get these for you or you could go straight there yourself if you'd prefer.
- The same goes for if you're on residential or on a trip. Your teacher or an adult will be able to help - please don't be worried or embarrassed.

Premenstrual Syndrome

Many girls will feel PMS (premenstrual syndrome)
Symptoms can include:

Tender breasts

Spots

Headaches

Feeling bloated

Difficulty
concentrating

Food cravings

Tiredness

Mood swings

Stomach
cramps

What might help...

Have a warm bath

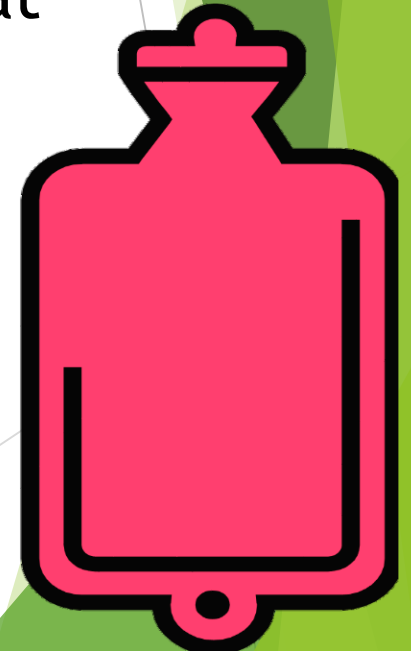
Massage your stomach

Have a nice warm drink

Use a hot water bottle or use a heat pad

Eat a well balanced diet

Exercise



Any questions?



What are the boys learning about today?

- The reason that this lesson is being taught separately is because puberty is different for boys and girls.
- The boys have learnt about what a period is today, but they haven't had as much information about the practicalities because this isn't as relevant to them.
- It is important not to feel embarrassed or ashamed of your body and the changes it goes through in puberty.
- The boys have also been looking at other changes we might notice as we start to go through puberty.

Some other changes you might start to notice

During puberty, you might start to notice some of these things happening to you:

- ▶ Getting spots
- ▶ Start to sweat more
- ▶ You, or your clothes, may start to smell more

Sweating!

- ▶ One of the biggest changes in puberty is that the body's sweat glands develop and become much more active.
- ▶ Although the sweat itself has no smell, when bacteria start to break down in the sweat, it produces a strong, very specific smell. You might hear of people calling this B.O. which stands for body odour.
- ▶ To stop yourself from smelling, it is important to wash regularly to get rid of this sweat before it starts to smell - particularly under your arms. You will probably need to change your clothes more often than before too if they get sweaty.
- ▶ You might also want to start wearing deodorant under your arms which helps with the sweating and the smell. Speak to an adult at home to help you choose one which is right for you.

Spots

- ▶ You might find that you start to get more spots on your skin - particularly on your face, chest, back and shoulders.
- ▶ This is due to hormonal changes in your body and an overproduction of oil in your glands.
- ▶ Spots start when this oil becomes blocked in your pores.
- ▶ Washing your face (and body) daily is important to keep your skin as clean as possible. There are lots of face washing products available for different skin types so speak to someone at home about which product will suit you best, if any.
- ▶ Remember that having spots for the first time can make some people feel self-conscious and it can knock their confidence. Always be kind.
- ▶ Spots are a perfectly normal part of puberty.