

Puberty - Year 5

Boys

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

What are we learning about today?

- ▶ One of the changes which you may notice during puberty is that you sweat more and your skin might become more oily or greasy than before.
- ▶ Taking responsibility for your own personal hygiene is really important as you get older.
- ▶ The menstrual cycle

Some 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.

What are the girls talking about?

- ▶ The reason you're being taught separately today is because puberty is different in many ways for girls and boys. You also might feel more confident to ask questions in 2 separate groups.
- ▶ One of the major changes in puberty for girls is that they start their period. It's important that as boys, you also know about and understand periods, even if they won't happen to you.

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.
- The average age that this happens to girls is around age 12 but it can be as early as 8 or as late as 16.

Next year, in Year Six, we will learn a little more about puberty for both boys and girls.

If you have any questions at all, you can speak to a trusted adult in school or at home. No question is too small or too silly - we've heard them all before.

Remember that all adults have gone through puberty. It is nothing to feel embarrassed or ashamed about and we're here to support you through it.