

GIRLS AND PUBERTY

Name: _____

ACTIVITY 1A
Pre/Post Test

True or False?

1. It usually takes about a year for the changes of puberty to happen.
2. Boys usually start going through puberty at a younger age than girls do.
3. It's a good idea to bathe or shower daily, use deodorant and take better care of your personal hygiene during puberty.
4. Body hair that grows during puberty should be removed.
5. Hormones cause the changes of puberty to occur in both males and females.
6. During puberty, boys and girls usually need less sleep than they used to require.
7. During puberty, girls begin to menstruate.
8. Moody behavior stops once puberty begins.
9. During puberty, boys and girls may become more interested in social relationships, greater independence and making new friends.
10. During puberty, boys' bodies begin to produce sperm.

The Answer Key for this activity appears on the next page.

Name: _____

ACTIVITY 1B

Pre/Post Test

Answer Key

1. It usually takes about a year for the changes of puberty to happen.
FALSE! Most changes of puberty take place over the span of about five years.
2. Boys usually start going through puberty at a younger age than girls do.
FALSE! It's actually the opposite—girls usually start going through puberty at a younger age than boys do.
3. It's a good idea to bathe or shower daily, use deodorant and take better care of your personal hygiene during puberty.
TRUE!
4. Body hair that grows during puberty should be removed.
FALSE! Although it is common in some cultures for people to remove their body hair, it is not necessary to do so.
5. Hormones cause the changes of puberty to occur in both males and females.
TRUE!
6. During puberty, boys and girls usually need less sleep than they used to require.
FALSE! The opposite is true—boys and girls need more sleep during puberty since their bodies are doing so much growing during that time.
7. During puberty, girls begin to menstruate.
TRUE!
8. Moody behavior stops once puberty begins.
FALSE! Both boys and girls may experience more mood swings and intense feelings during puberty, because of the hormonal changes that are occurring.
9. During puberty, boys and girls may become more interested in social relationships, greater independence and making new friends.
TRUE!
10. During puberty, boys' bodies begin to produce sperm.
TRUE!

Name: _____

During puberty, the changes in our bodies make it especially important to take good care of ourselves. That can mean many different things, like making sure to eat well and get enough sleep, but it also means making sure to keep our bodies clean. You may need to change your habits a little bit from how they used to be, but that's ok—it's all part of growing up.

HAIR

The change: Oily skin. This happens because changing hormones can make oil-producing glands in the skin and scalp become much more active.

Dealing with it: Keep your hair clean by washing it regularly—most young people need to wash their hair at least a few times a week (more if you're very active or if your hair is very oily). Use a gentle shampoo that's made for your hair type, and a conditioner if you're prone to tangles. Avoid using too many styling products, which can make things worse.

SKIN

The change: Pimples. Pimples (or "acne") occur when a hair follicle or pore is clogged by dirt or too much oil on the skin.

Dealing with it: Make sure to shower nearly every day, especially if it's hot out or you've been exercising. Wash your face with soap or a gentle cleanser twice a day. Don't wash your face too often or scrub too hard, though—this can dry out or irritate your skin, sometimes making it produce even more oil. Never pop pimples: They can become infected and cause scarring. Pimples aren't just for faces, either: Pimples can pop up on your arms, back, chest and even the buttocks, so make sure to wash all over when you're taking a bath or shower.

BODY ODOR

The change: Stronger-smelling body odor. This happens because sweat glands become more active during puberty. The extra sweat, combined with bacteria that lives on the skin, can make for noticeable and strong body odor.

Dealing with it: Bathe or shower daily and use a deodorant or antiperspirant under your arms. You might need to try several different types of antiperspirants to find one you like to use.

This fact sheet is continued on the next page.

Name: _____

TEETH AND MOUTH

- *The change:* Braces (and other types of dental appliances) are very common among young people.

Dealing with it: Brush your teeth at least twice a day—in the morning and before bed—and floss at least once. This is even more important when you have braces because food can get trapped on the brackets or under the wires.

BODY HAIR

The change: Hair on the face, legs, pubic area and underarms.

Dealing with it: There's no medical reason to remove body hair, but it is common to do so in some cultures. Whether or not to remove the hair is up to you. Shaving and waxing are two common methods for removing body hair. If you choose to shave, ask an adult family member to show you how. Use a sharp razor and soap or shaving cream.

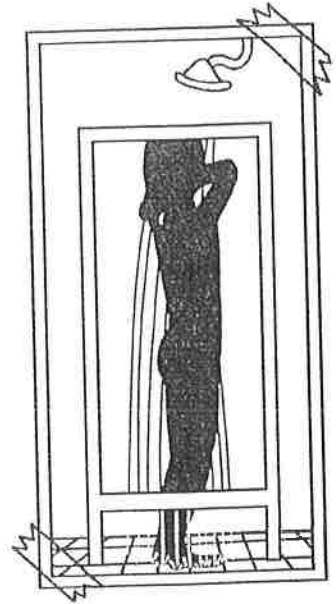
GENITALS

The change: New odors; beginning menstruation for girls.

Dealing with it: Both males and females should wash their genitals with mild soap and water every day. Girls should use sanitary pads or tampons during their period, making sure to change them regularly. Boys and girls should both watch out for infections: If your genitals become itchy, swollen or irritated, go to the doctor right away for treatment. Wearing cotton underwear and keeping your genitals clean and dry can help prevent infections.

Name: _____

- The best way to take care of your skin is to keep it clean. Start by keeping your hands clean, since they can spread germs to the skin on other parts of your body.
- Wash your hands with warm water and mild soap. Lather for at least 30 seconds, remembering to wash your palms, wrists and fingernails. Rinse and dry with a clean towel.
- When you take a bath or shower, don't forget under your arms and around your private areas.
- During puberty, the skin on your face can get oilier. Wash your face once or twice a day with warm water and a mild cleanser.
- Wash your face with a washcloth, but be gentle.
- Washing your skin too often, scrubbing too hard or using soap with harsh chemicals can cause your skin to make even more oil.
- All the products at the drugstore can be confusing. You probably don't need any of them, but if you think you do, ask a parent to help. If you have trouble with pimples, talk with your doctor about which cleansers are best to use.
- Using too much acne medicine can really dry out the skin. Be careful to follow the directions. And remember, using twice as much won't make the product work twice as well.
- If your skin is dry or itchy, use a moisturizing lotion or cream.
- If you use a new skin product or a new deodorant and your skin gets red or feels itchy, stop using it right away. You could be allergic to the product.
- Protect your skin from sunburn by using a sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 30 or 45. Sunscreen also helps to prevent wrinkles when you get older and can lower your chance of getting skin cancer.
- When you apply sunscreen, have a friend or parent help you with the hard-to-reach places like your neck, the top of your ears and feet, or the middle of your back. Remember to apply more sunscreen after you go swimming.



Name: _____

ACTIVITY 1A
Pre/Post Test

True or False?

1. Breast development is one of the first signs of puberty for girls.
2. It is normal for a girl's developing breasts to feel a little sore or tender.
3. Usually, both of a girl's breasts are exactly the same size.
4. Puberty begins more or less at the same age for all girls.
5. The female reproductive system has both internal and external parts.
6. The ovaries are the female sex glands.
7. Ovulation occurs when an ovary releases an egg.
8. If sperm does not fertilize an egg, the girl's menstrual period will begin.
9. Most girls and women get their menstrual periods about once a year.
10. It's not a good idea to exercise during your period.

The Answer Key for this activity appears on the next page.

Name: _____

ACTIVITY 1B

Pre/Post Test

Answer Key

1. Breast development is one of the first signs of puberty for girls.
TRUE!
2. It is normal for a girl's developing breasts to feel a little sore or tender.
TRUE!
3. Usually, both of a girl's breasts are exactly the same size.
FALSE! *A girl's breasts, like a boy's testicles, are rarely exactly the same size. Sometimes the difference is not even noticeable to the individual, but there is nearly always at least some variation.*
4. Puberty begins more or less at the same age for all girls.
FALSE! *Girls might begin to experience the changes of puberty as young as eight years old, or as late as 14 or 15.*
5. The female reproductive system has both internal and external parts.
TRUE!
6. The ovaries are the female sex glands.
TRUE!
7. Ovulation occurs when an ovary releases an egg.
TRUE!
8. If sperm does not fertilize an egg, the girl's menstrual period will begin.
TRUE!
9. Most girls and women get their menstrual periods about once a year.
FALSE! *Most girls and women get their periods about once a month.*
10. It's not a good idea to exercise during your period.
FALSE! *It's a great idea to exercise during your period—the activity can help boost energy and relieve cramps, too.*

Name: _____

ACTIVITY 6A

Periods, Explained

Fill in the blanks in the story below using what you learned about menstruation in the video.

Best friends Madison and Kelsey are hanging out at Madison's house after school. They're both a little confused about what they learned today in health class. Madison suggests they ask her older sister, Annika, to help clear things up.

"Annika? Hey, can you help us with something?" Madison asks. "We learned about, you know, getting your period today. But I'm not sure I understand. What's the deal with the egg?"

"Oh, you mean ovulation," Annika says. "About once a month, your body releases a tiny egg from the _____. It travels through the _____ and into your _____, which is a muscular, pear-shaped organ in your abdomen. The egg stays there until you get your period."

"Okay. But what does that have to do with getting your period?" Kelsey asks.

"Good question," Annika replies. "Each month, your body gets ready for a possible pregnancy. The uterus is lined with a spongy tissue called the _____. The female sex hormone, _____, prompts this lining to thicken. This gives a baby a nice place to grow if you get pregnant. Remember, a pregnancy can occur if a male _____ meets the egg.

"But most of the time, a pregnancy won't happen. In that case, the uterus sheds the lining and the unfertilized egg. It flows out of your body through the _____. That whole process is called getting your period, or _____."

"So the liquid that comes out when you get your period is the lining of the uterus?"

"Yep," Annika says. "Having your period takes about _____ days total."

"But how do you know when you get your period?" Kelsey asks.

"That's a common question. Sometimes you feel a little wetness. Other times, you'll notice a little blood in your underwear when you go to the bathroom. Do you girls know what to do when you get your period?"

"Yes—you use a _____ or a _____. And you make sure to change them every few hours," Madison chimes in.

"Very good. Here, let me give you a couple of spares to carry in your backpack with you. It's always a good idea to be prepared," says Annika.

"Thanks, Annika!" Kelsey and Madison say together.

The Answer Key for this activity appears on the next page.

Answer Key

Best friends Madison and Kelsey are hanging out at Madison's house after school. They're both a little confused about what they learned today in health class. Madison suggests they ask her older sister, Annika, to help clear things up.

"Annika? Hey, can you help us with something?" Madison asks. "We learned about, you know, getting your period today. But I'm not sure I understand. What's the deal with the egg?"

"Oh, you mean ovulation," Annika says. "About once a month, your body releases a tiny egg from the **ovary**. It travels through the **fallopian tube** and into your **uterus**, which is a muscular, pear-shaped organ in your abdomen. The egg hangs out there until you get your period."

"Okay. But what does that have to do with getting your period?" Kelsey asks.

"Good question," Annika replies. "Each month, your body gets ready for a possible pregnancy. The uterus is lined with a spongy tissue called the endometrium. The female sex hormone, **estrogen**, prompts this lining to thicken. This gives a baby a nice place to grow if you get pregnant. Remember, a pregnancy can occur if a male **sperm** meets the egg.

"But most of the time, a pregnancy won't happen. In that case, the uterus sheds the lining and the unfertilized egg. It flows out of your body through the **vagina**. That whole process is called getting your period, or **menstruation**."

"So the liquid that comes out when you get your period is the lining of the uterus?"

"Yep," Annika says. "Having your period takes about **3 to 5** days total."

"But how do you know when you get your period?" Kelsey asks.

"That's a common question. Sometimes you feel a little wetness. Other times, you'll notice a little blood in your underwear when you go to the bathroom. Do you girls know what to do when you get your period?"

"Yes—you use a **sanitary pad** or a **tampon**. And you make sure to change them every few hours," Madison chimes in.

"Very good. Here, let me give you a couple of spares to carry in your backpack with you. It's always a good idea to be prepared," says Annika.

"Thanks, Annika!" Kelsey and Madison say together.

Name: _____

Girls and women need to use either sanitary pads or tampons to absorb the flow of blood and other tissues that leave the vagina during a period. There are many different types of pads, ranging from small, thin ones that can be used on light flow days (called panty liners) to long, thick, super-absorbent pads that can be used on heavy flow days or overnight. Pads are worn in the underwear, outside of the body.

How to Use a Pad:

1. Unwrap the pad if it is closed up in some type of protective sac.
2. Pull off the paper strip that covers the adhesive (sticky) part of the pad.
3. Attach the sticky part of the pad securely to the center of your underwear—not too far in front or in back is fine.
4. If the pad has paper “wings,” wait until you have positioned the main part of the pad before removing the paper strips that cover the wings. Wrap those sticky strips around the sides of your underwear.

What about Tampons?

Tampons work a bit differently than pads. They are worn inside the vagina to absorb the menstrual flow before it leaves the body. They often have a small applicator that helps guide them into the vagina.

Girls are often nervous about using tampons, but there is an instruction guide inside every box. It usually takes a little practice to be comfortable using tampons—sometimes it helps to use a small hand mirror so you can see what the instructions tell you to do.

Pads or Tampons: How to Decide?

It's a personal choice, and varies from person to person. The main difference between pads and tampons is that the pad is worn *outside* the body and a tampon is worn *inside* the body. Tampons can be used during any activity or sport, including swimming. Pads can be used during most activities and sports, but not while swimming. If you need to swim while you have your period, you'll need to use a tampon. In any other case, the choice is up to you.

This fact sheet is continued on the next page.

Name: _____

Pads and tampons need to be changed every four to six hours, and should never be flushed down the toilet. Instead, wrap the used pad or tampon in toilet paper and place it in the trash. Both pads and tampons come in various sizes, so you may need to try a few before you find one that's most comfortable for you.

A Note about Toxic Shock Syndrome

Toxic Shock Syndrome, or TSS, is a very rare and serious disease caused by toxins produced by certain types of bacteria. In the past, super absorbent tampons have been linked to TSS. With today's tampons, the risk of contracting TSS is extremely low, but it is still important to be aware of the symptoms of TSS:

- high fever
- diarrhea
- nausea and vomiting
- widespread red rash on the skin
- feeling faint
- muscle aches
- headache

If you experience these symptoms while wearing a tampon, remove it immediately and seek medical attention.

These steps help reduce your risk of TSS:

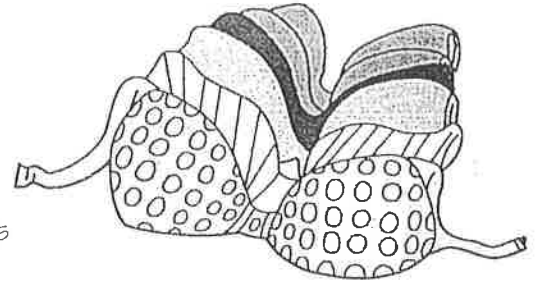
- Use sanitary pads instead of tampons, or alternate tampons with pads.
- Wash your hands thoroughly before inserting a tampon.
- Change tampons frequently.
- Choose the lowest absorbency tampon that will handle your menstrual flow (for example, don't wear a super absorbency tampon if a regular absorbency will do).

Adapted from Procter and Gamble (2008), *Always Changing*.

Name: _____

Breasts:

- One of the first signs of puberty in girls is the development of breasts. This usually starts somewhere between the ages of eight and 13. A girl may notice swelling or growth around her nipples first. Breasts are usually fully developed by age 17-18.
- Growing breasts may feel sensitive or itchy. This feeling usually goes away after a few months.
- Normal breast size ranges from very small to very full. Breast size is determined by genetics and body weight. It is normal for one breast to grow faster than the other, but they usually even out by the end of development.
- When you begin to notice your breast buds through a light shirt, or if your breasts feel uncomfortable while playing sports, it's a good time to start wearing a bra. Developing breast tissue is delicate and should be supported. Your mom or another trusted adult can help you find a bra that fits you well, including a sports bra to wear during exercise.
- Bra sizes contain two parts: a number and a letter (for example, 32A or 36C). The number refers to the part of the bra that runs across your chest and around your back. The letter stands for the size of the two cups that hold your breasts. The best way to find out your bra size is to get measured at a lingerie store or department. The right size bra will be much more comfortable and supportive than the wrong size!



Body:

- During puberty, girls begin to gain weight in their hips, which makes them look curvier. More body fat at this time is perfectly normal, and dieting during puberty is not a healthy idea. If you feel very self-conscious about your weight, talk to your parents or another trusted adult.

This fact sheet is continued on the next page.

Name: _____

Menstruation:

- Girls can get their first period anytime from about age 9-15. Most doctors say you can expect to get your period about two years after your breasts start to develop. If you're worried about not getting your period, talk to your family doctor.
- Women typically get their periods about every 28 days, but this varies from woman to woman. It is normal to skip one or more periods when you first begin menstruating. In fact, it can take the body up to two years to settle into a regular cycle.
- Try marking the first day of each period on a calendar. This way, you can see if a pattern emerges. After a few months, you may be able to predict when your period will arrive so that you can be prepared.
- Some girls experience cramps before or during their periods. If the discomfort bothers you, take an over-the-counter pain reliever like ibuprofen. Exercise, a warm bath or a hot compress can also help. Cramps usually go away after a day or two. If you have more severe cramps, your doctor can help you find ways to manage them.
- Girls also begin to get a white or clear vaginal discharge when puberty begins. This is the body's way of cleaning out the vagina, and it's normal. But if you experience discharge that is smelly or a different color, have it checked by a doctor. This could be a sign of infection.

Physical Changes for Girls

<p>Stage 1</p>	<p>age range: usually 8 – 11</p>	<p>In Stage 1, there are no outside signs of development but a girl's ovaries are enlarging and hormone production is beginning.</p>
<p>Stage 2</p>	<p>age range: usually 8 – 14, average age: 11 – 12</p>	<p>The first sign is typically the beginning of breast growth, including "breast buds." A girl may also increase considerably in height and weight. The first signs of pubic hair start out fine and straight, rather than curly.</p>
<p>Stage 3</p>	<p>age range: usually 9 – 15, average age: 12 – 13</p>	<p>Breast growth continues and pubic hair coarsens and becomes darker. Body is still growing and the vagina is enlarging. Vagina may begin to produce a clear or whitish discharge, which is a normal self-cleansing process. Some girls get their first menstrual periods at this stage.</p>
<p>Stage 4</p>	<p>age range: usually 10 – 16, average age: 13 – 14</p>	<p>Pubic hair growth takes on the triangular shape of adulthood. Underarm hair is likely to appear in this stage, as well as menstruation. Ovulation (release of egg cells) begins in some girls, but is typically not a regular monthly routine until Stage 5.</p>
<p>Stage 5</p>	<p>age range: usually 12 – 19, average age: 15</p>	<p>This is the final stage of development, when a girl is physically an adult. Breast and pubic hair growth are complete and full height is usually attained by now. Menstrual periods are well established and ovulation occurs monthly.</p>

Name: _____

FACT SHEET 1

Managing Strong Emotions



Puberty can really do a number on your emotions. You might go from happy to annoyed to downright furious in a matter of minutes—or maybe even seconds! They're called "mood swings." The same hormones that are responsible for causing the physical changes of puberty can also cause your emotions to swing all around, too.

Mood swings are normal but they are not an excuse for being mean or hurtful, or treating others with disrespect. These tips can help you take control of your emotions:

- 1.** If your emotions are causing you to lose your cool, get out of the situation and give yourself time to calm down. Go to your room or another quiet space, take a few deep breaths and think about the problem before you say or do anything else.
- 2.** Live a healthy lifestyle that includes regular exercise, a healthy diet and plenty of sleep. Daily exercise helps manage stress and releases feel-good chemicals in your body. Healthy foods provide energy and don't set you up for a mood crash, as junk food can do. Teens should get nine or more hours of sleep each night; not getting enough sleep can make you irritable, sad and less able to control your emotions.
- 3.** Write your feelings down. You don't have to show anyone what you wrote, and you can even delete or recycle your thoughts when you're done. Simply getting your emotions down on paper helps you organize your thoughts and put things in perspective.
- 4.** Talk to a trusted adult. Parents, older siblings, family members, coaches, teachers and school counselors are often great listeners who can help you figure out ways to handle your strong emotions.
- 5.** Having trouble starting a conversation with an adult? Sometimes it helps to wait for a moment when you feel calm, rather than a time that you feel anxious, angry or upset. Try bringing up something that you saw on TV or heard at school to get the conversation started: "Matt got a detention at school today for yelling at the teacher. It seems like everybody is so mad these days."
- 6.** Don't be ashamed or embarrassed to ask for help! Remember, every adult you know made it through puberty, too. They can relate to what you're going through, offer advice or just listen. You're not in this alone.

Name: _____

FACT SHEET 2

Tips for Building Self-Esteem

The term *self-esteem* refers to the way you think about yourself. During puberty, it's common for young people to experience ups-and-downs when it comes to self-esteem, but these tips can help you beat self-consciousness and feel better about yourself:

- 1.** Take the time to think about what makes you unique. What special skills or talents do you have? What do you like about yourself? Sometimes it can be helpful to write down these ideas on a small card and save them somewhere. When you're feeling a little down, you can look back at what you wrote to help regain your confidence.
- 2.** Be positive. Negative thoughts about yourself—like “I'm so bad at math” or “Of course nobody wants to be my partner in gym. I'm such a loser”—will only bring you down. When you catch yourself thinking something negative, add at least one positive thought. For example, you might think, “Okay, I didn't land the big role in the school musical this time, but I'm still a really good singer. I'll work at being the best singer in the chorus.”
- 3.** Accept mistakes. Remember, nobody's perfect. You will make mistakes now and then. The important thing is to learn and grow from those mistakes.
- 4.** Give yourself the freedom to explore new interests. Is there a sport you've always wanted to try? An instrument you've wanted to learn to play? Have your teachers always told you what a good writer you are? Join the band, go out for the team, audition for the school play, try your hand at poetry or join the school newspaper. Part of growing up is becoming more independent and free to make your own choices about the activities you explore.
- 5.** Be open to changing friendships. It's normal and common for friendships to evolve during adolescence and your interests are growing and changing. You may feel that you have less in common with your friends than you used to, and that's okay. It's okay to have different friends with different interests—for example, maybe one friend is your soccer buddy and another is a great listener. It is also normal for friendships to cool off as you both meet new people and explore new interests.