

**Mood swings won't last forever.**

## Changing feelings

Hormones can cause mood swings. You might feel happy one minute and then sad or angry the next. These changes can be confusing and it is important that you talk to a person you trust about your feelings.

Sometimes doing something like exercise or having time out in your room can help.

## Relationships

Puberty can be a time of changing relationships between family and friends.

It is also a time when you might experience loving or sexual feelings as well as attraction to other people. In puberty some people form sexual relationships.

These relationships should be healthy, safe and fun.

Safe sexual relationships include consent (both people saying yes), being old enough, using condoms and other contraception.

**Having healthy relationships  
is important.**

**Relationships should  
make you feel good  
most of the time.**

**Puberty is natural and normal.**

**Don't feel shame to talk to  
someone you trust.**

**Get the facts about puberty.**



[www.true.org.au](http://www.true.org.au)

### Disclaimer

True Relationships & Reproductive Health (True) has taken every care to ensure that the information contained in this publication is accurate and up-to-date at the time of being published. As information and knowledge is constantly changing, readers are strongly advised to confirm that the information complies with present research, legislation and policy guidelines. True accepts no responsibility for difficulties that may arise as a result of an individual acting on this information and any recommendations it contains.



**Girls to women**

A guide to puberty and what to expect

**Puberty will start at the time that is right for each person.**

## What is puberty?

Puberty is a time when you begin to change into being an adult. The changes affect the way you look, feel, think and relate to other people.

Some changes might feel great, while others may be a bit confusing or feel uncomfortable.

Puberty usually happens between the ages of 8 and 16. Many girls will notice changes around the age of 10 or 11.

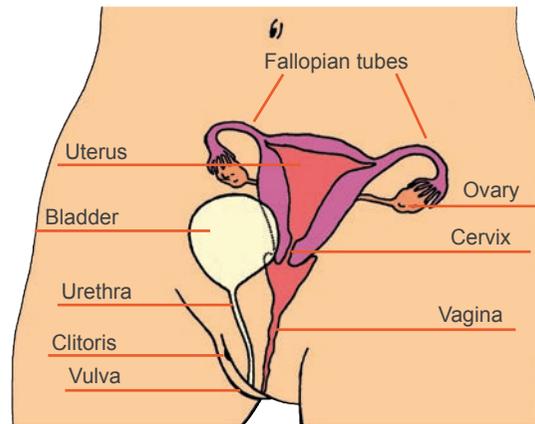
## What happens at puberty?

You will go through physical, emotional and relationship changes.

Body chemicals called hormones make these changes happen. The female hormones are called progesterone. Some changes include:

- hair will start growing under your arms and on and around your vulva
- you might get pimples
- growing taller; you may go through a growth spurt
- you might have some weight gain
- your hips will start to get wider
- you might get mood swings
- you start noticing sexual feelings
- your breasts start growing
- periods (menstruation) begin
- once your periods start, you can get pregnant if you have sexual intercourse

Puberty is natural and normal. Speak with an adult you trust, like parents, aunty or a school nurse if you have questions or want to know anything.



## Keeping clean

During puberty you will perspire or sweat. It is important to wash your body and face each day.

Wash your clothes and use a deodorant.

Your vulva also needs to be kept clean and should be washed gently each day.

Most people get pimples during puberty. If you are worried about them, a chemist or doctor might be able to help.

## Body image

It is normal for girls to put on weight during puberty; it is part of developing into a woman.

It can be unhealthy to diet to try to stop normal weight gain. If you ever have questions about your weight, talk it over with your school nurse or someone you trust.

Magazines, the web and media sometimes seem to tell you what you should look like. They might show that being skinny is important, but that isn't always true.

Making sure you eat healthy foods and get regular exercise helps whatever size you are.

**Every girl is different.**

## Breasts, periods and puberty

### Breasts

All girls develop breasts during puberty. Breasts come in all sizes and shapes. Some girls' breasts will get lumps and feel sore when they are growing.

### Masturbation

Touching or rubbing around your vulva and vagina is called masturbation. Masturbation is a way to find out about your body and how it is changing. It is meant to feel good. It is a private activity and needs to be done in a private area like your bedroom or bathroom.

It is normal to masturbate.

### Periods

A period is when a small amount of blood comes out of the vagina each month. Some girls get their period at 8 years old and other girls get their period at 16. Every girl is different.

You might notice wet white stuff (vaginal discharge) on your undies when you start puberty. This is normal.

A period will usually last 3-7 days each month. When you first start having periods, they may not happen at the same time every month.

When you have your period you will need pads or tampons. Ask someone you trust about how to use a pad or tampon or look at the instructions.

Remember to always wash your hands before and after changing a pad or tampon.