

# PUBERTY AND YOUR BODY

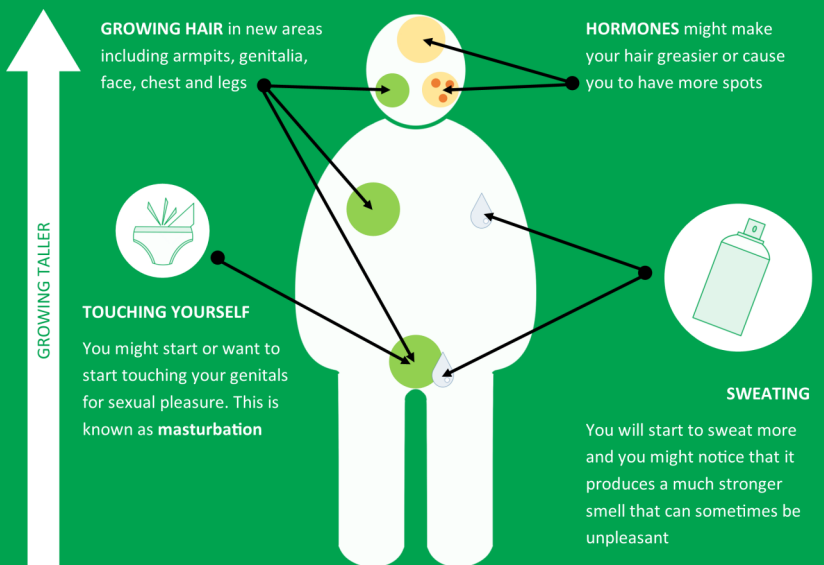


Puberty is the time when your body begins to change as you move from being a child to becoming an adult. Everyone goes through it and while it can be really common to be embarrassed by or worried about some of the changes, knowing what to expect might help make them easier to understand and deal with.

Hormones (chemicals which are produced by the brain) makes your body grow and change in different ways and at different times.

**Usually starting at any time between the ages of 7 and 16, the puberty process can take between two and four years to complete.**

## CHANGES YOU CAN EXPECT TO EXPERIENCE



## HYGIENE ADVICE

If you can, try to change your clothes and wash every day using soap or shower gel. Underarm sprays such as deodorant or antiperspirants can also help manage sweating and the smell it might cause. You will also need to keep your genitals clean using unscented soap and warm water. Avoid using strong smelling products as they can cause some imbalance. If you have a foreskin (skin that covers the head of your penis) it's important to gently wash under this (with just water) otherwise it might become sore or inflamed, itchy, or smelly.



## MASTURBATION

Touching your own body in different ways is natural and can be a good way of you finding out more about what feels nice for you. If you have a penis you might rub it until it becomes hard (an erection) and you might ejaculate (when semen comes out of the penis). If you have a clitoris, touching the area around it might feel good and your vulva becomes wet. This can lead to a strong feeling that is called an orgasm.



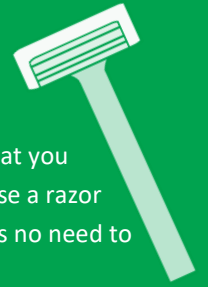
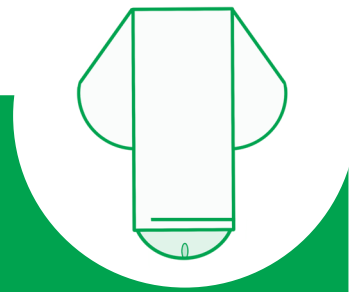
# PUBERTY IF YOU HAVE A PENIS

Changes to your body happen at different times for different people and include:

- Pubic hair growing at the base of your penis. You may also get hairier in other parts of your body including your arms, legs and face.
- Your voice will 'break' and eventually get deeper
- Your muscles will develop and your chest will become broader
- Your penis and testicles will grow larger. You may also experience unexpected erections and wet dreams. Wet dreams are when you ejaculate in your sleep. Some people might worry if they wake up to find a wet patch in their underwear, sleepwear or bed, but wet dreams are natural and nothing to be concerned about.

## ADVICE ON SHAVING

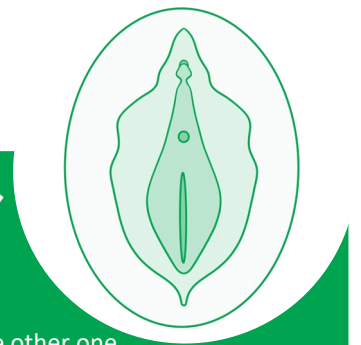
As you start to find fine hair on your upper lip, chin and sometimes on your cheeks or neck, you might decide that you want to shave them off. It's a good idea to ask someone (usually an adult) who already shaves to help you choose a razor and show you how to do it safely. You won't necessarily need to shave every day until you are older, and there's no need to shave at all if you don't want to.



# PUBERTY IF YOU HAVE A VAGINA

Changes to your body happen at different times for different people and include:

- Your nipples and breasts will start to grow. As they do, you might find it more comfortable to wear a bra. You might want to ask an adult you can trust to help you buy your first one and help get the right size. It is natural for one breast to be slightly larger than the other one
- Your body shape will change and you might notice it become more curvy
- Pubic hair will grow around your vulva, and you will also grow hair in other places including under your arms, and on your legs. You may choose to remove your body hair through waxing, shaving or lasering your legs, underarms, and pubic hair. It is your choice entirely what body hair you do or do not want on your body
- You will start having periods at some point between the ages of eight to seventeen. Periods happen every month when the ovaries release an egg and the lining of the womb thickens, If the egg isn't fertilised by sperm, the egg and the womb lining leave your body through the vagina. Periods usually last a few days and you will need to wear a period pad in your underwear, or put a tampon in your vagina to help with this bleeding. It's common to experience cramps in your stomach or pain in your back and some people also feel tense or emotional before a period starts (this is known as PMS)



# PUBERTY IF YOU ARE TRANS

For some of us, the sex of our bodies does not match our gender identity. Some people may identify as female and have a penis, some may have a vulva and identify as male, other people may feel a mix of the two or neither. This can be known as being trans, transgender, gender queer or non-binary and can make puberty an even more complicated time. There are organisations which offer support to young trans people - ask someone you trust to help you find more information or visit [bit.ly/SHSheff](http://bit.ly/SHSheff)

