



**This booklet is made for people
wanting to know more about puberty.**

It can also be used by parents or carers.

**The illustrations in this booklet were made by Savi Ross.
Savi Ross is an African American, Torres Strait Islander
illustrator based in Narm, Melbourne.**

**We acknowledge that this resource was made on the lands of the
Kurna people and we pay our respects to elders past and present.
We would like to thank the Aboriginal health workers and community
members for their support in the production of this resource.**

SHINE_{SA}

 **Aboriginal Health Council
of South Australia Ltd.**

What is puberty?

Puberty is the time when we go from being a **child** to being an **adult**.

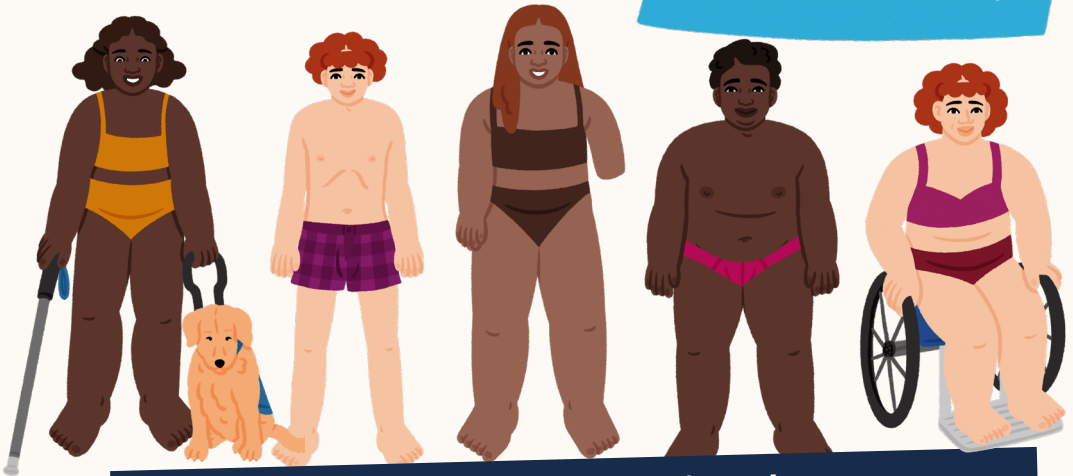
It is caused by **hormones** sending messages to different parts of our bodies.

Puberty can change the way our body looks and feels and it can change our thoughts, feelings and emotions.

Puberty can also change how we feel about our relationships.

Puberty usually starts between the ages of 8 and 16 years. It can last anywhere from 18 months to 5 years.

Some of the changes we experience during puberty can feel confusing and uncomfortable, but puberty is normal.



Everyone's body is different!

This booklet includes information from the Puberty for Boys and Puberty for Girls booklets. Some people may be intersex and their bodies can be different from others. Other people may be transgender or non-binary and this is OK.

Body changes during puberty

Most people will experience **changes to their body** during puberty.

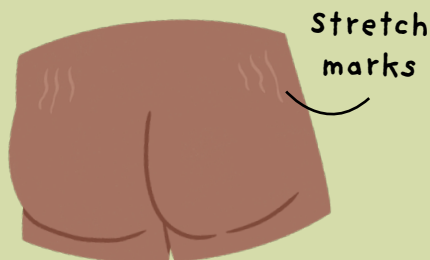
Most of these changes can happen to anyone but some will only happen for people with certain body parts.

We're going to look at some you might experience.

Remember: Some of the changes we experience during puberty can feel confusing and weird but these are normal!

If you are worried, talking can help!

Body shape changes



Your body will grow and change.

Some people get taller, some gain weight.

Some people get wider around their hips, some grow boobs/breasts. You might even notice some stretch marks.

Some people get broader across their chest and shoulders.



Body hair changes

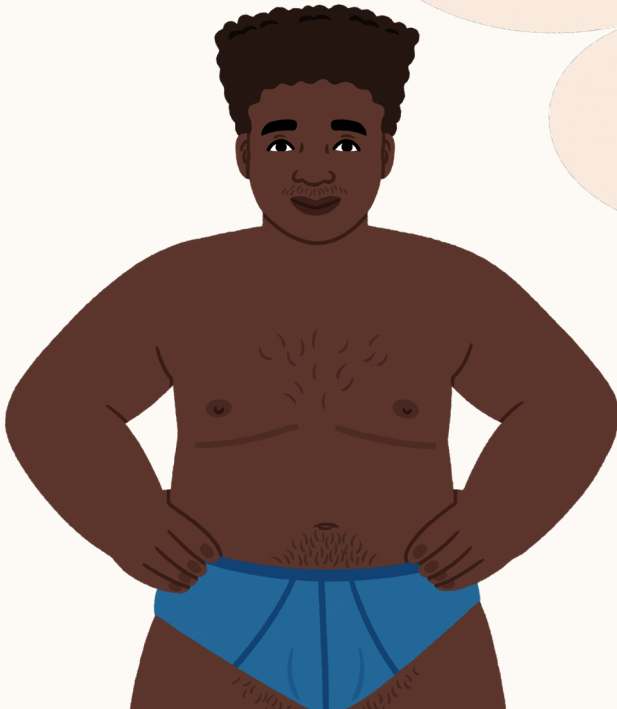
More hair might grow on your body, in your armpits and around your genitals.

Hair might also start to grow on your face including above your lip, chin and cheeks.

Some people may grow hair on their chest or back and hair might get thicker and darker in other areas.

**All this hair is normal.
Some people shave or
remove their body hair
and others choose to
leave it.**

**It's your
choice.**



Skin and sweat changes

It's common to have more body **smells** and **sweat** during puberty.

Your skin can also change, with more oil causing **pimples** and greasy hair.



Washing your clothes and body often will help manage these changes.

Soap and deodorant work well but private parts (genitals) should be washed with water only!



Voice changes

During puberty most people's voice gets deeper. This can be more noticeable for people with a penis.

Some people call this voice breaking.

This can be a slow process where your voice can go between **squeaky** and **deep** until it settles down.

During puberty the voice box gets bigger; it can stick out at the front of the throat. This is called an Adam's apple.



Adam's apple

FACT:

The voice box doesn't get to its new size straight away! The squeaky sounds are the voice box trying to get used to its new size!



What do you call these?



Words your health worker would use:

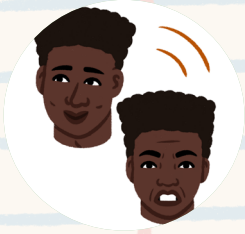
Your words:

Penis and testicles

Budoo

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.....



Feelings or Emotions

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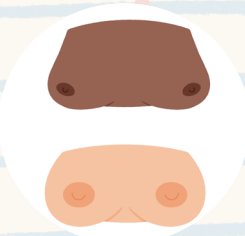
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Period or menstruation

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Breasts

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Vulva

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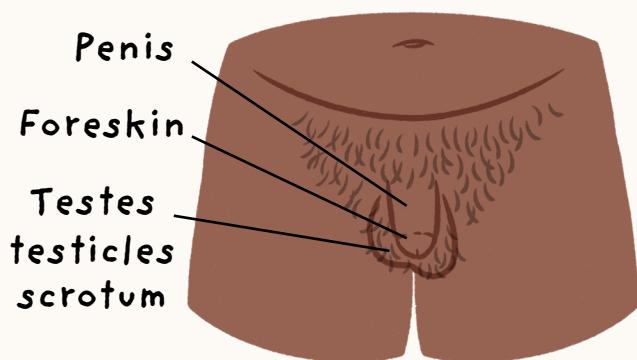
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penis and testes changes

The penis and testes (balls) change and grow during puberty.

The penis usually gets longer before it gets thicker.

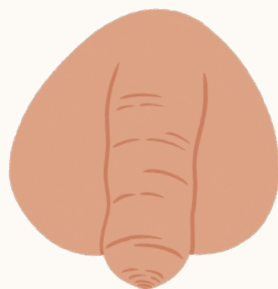
The skin of the scrotum gets darker and more wrinkled.



Sperm are tiny cells in a whitish fluid called **semen**. During puberty, sperm start to be made in the testicles.

Ejaculation is when semen comes out of an erect penis during orgasm (also called cumming).

Urine (wee) also comes out of the penis, but never at the same time as semen.



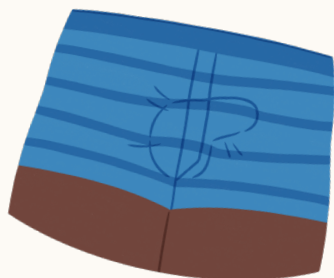
Erections



Erections are when the penis becomes hard/stiff. If you have a penis, when you reach puberty you may experience erections more often.

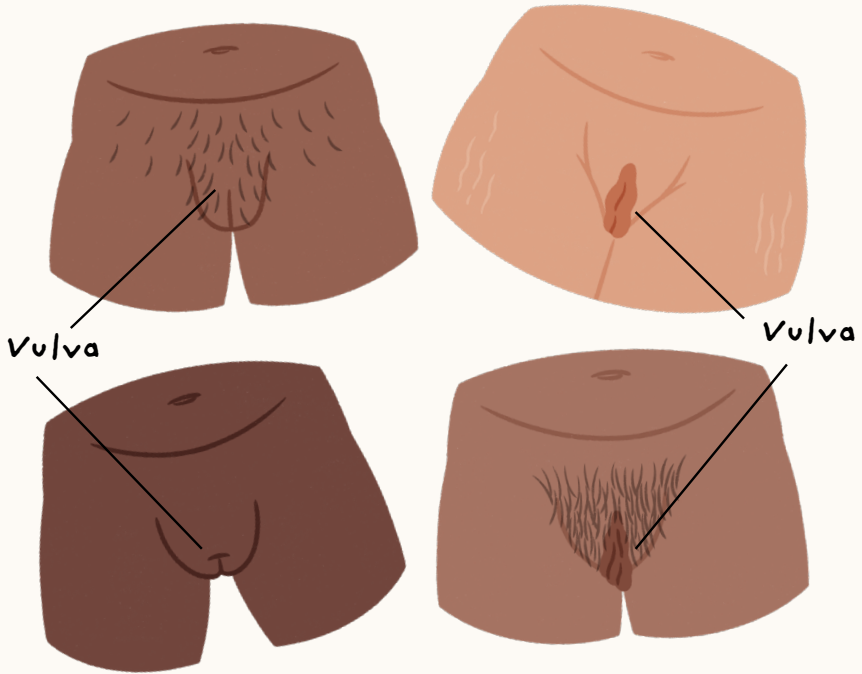
Sometimes erections happen for no clear reason, and they can happen when you don't expect it, like at school, on the bus, or when you're with friends.

Having an erect penis might feel embarrassing. It's good to have ways to deal with it, like thinking of something boring, or wearing loose clothes that hide it better.



Remember, erections are a normal part of puberty.

Vagina and vulva changes



The **vulva** is the **outside parts** of the genitals for someone with a vagina.

Some people say **vagina** when they actually mean **vulva**, but these are different parts of the body.

The vulva includes the pubic hair, the inner and outer vaginal lips (labia), the clitoris, and the openings for the vagina and the urethra (for wee/urine).

During puberty the inner labia may darken and get larger. The vagina starts to produce discharge (fluid) which may look clear or white on your underwear.

The vulva can be different sizes, shapes and colours. This is normal!

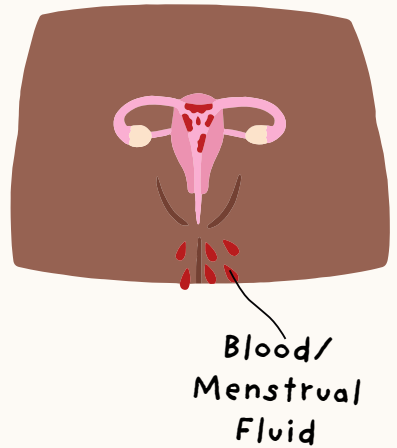


Periods

Periods are part of the **menstrual cycle**, which is a hormonal and physical cycle that is part of reproduction.

If you have a uterus you may start your menstrual cycle (including periods) between the ages of 8 to 16.

Periods usually last about 3-7 days and happen every 21-35 days (usually about **once a month**).



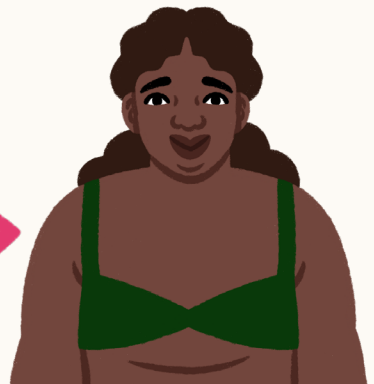
Breasts

During puberty, many people will have some nipple/chest changes. Some will grow boobs/breasts.

Everybody's boobs look different! Also it's normal for one breast to be larger than the other!

Breasts or nipples may feel sore or tender while they're growing. This is normal.

Many people choose to wear a bra to feel more comfortable.



Feelings and emotions during puberty

Hormone changes during puberty can cause your emotions to be all over the place.

You may have feelings like **happiness** and joy one moment, but then **sadness** or **anger** the next. You might have bigger or smaller feelings than you're used to.

This can be really confusing and frustrating for you and the people around you.

Talking with your friends and family about how your mood is changing can help.



It is also important to get enough sleep and to do some things you enjoy, like art, sport, music or playing a game.

Going through puberty you might experience:

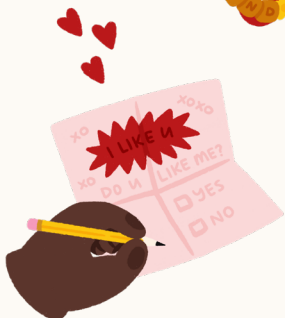
**Friendship
changes**



**Mood
swings**



**Feelings of
attraction**



**Interests
changes**

**Energy
changes**



**Sharing your experiences with
others can help!**



Sexual feelings

During puberty you might start having sexual feelings and thoughts. Sexual feelings may involve sensitive skin, **erections, wetness,** or feeling excited.

Sometimes they might seem to happen for no reason.



Some people don't experience any sexual feelings.

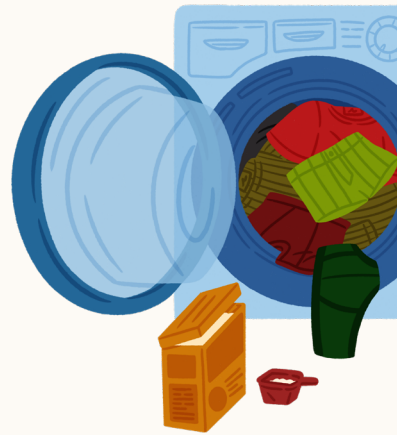
Wet dreams

A wet dream is when a vagina gets wet or a penis ejaculates semen while sleeping.

Some people rarely have wet dreams, while others may have them often.

They are a normal part of growing up.

When a wet dream happens you can easily clean up by washing any clothes or sheets the semen gets on.



Masturbation

Touching or rubbing your own genital area so that it feels good is called masturbation.

Masturbation is a private activity and **should be done by yourself in a private place,** such as in your bedroom or bathroom with the door closed.



Self-care

An important part of becoming an adult includes learning how to look after yourself.

There are different things to think about:

Body hygiene

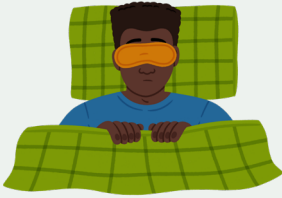
Washing your body and hair

Clean clothes/ underwear

Washing hands regularly

Using things like pads/tampons and deoderant

Taking care of yourself



Sleep Try to get 8-10 hours a day.



Eat You might feel more or less hungry during puberty because of all the changes.

Try to pay attention to your body and give it what it needs.



Move Some days you will have lots of energy and others you'll have none! Moving your body is a good way to have more feelings of focus and calm.



Talk/yarn Talking to people you care about can help you feel better about the changes that are happening.

Where can I get help during puberty?

Think about who you can speak to about changes during puberty

Nan, can you get me some deoderant?

Pls

Yeah.
You want a shaver too?



Nan
Cousin
Health worker
Parent/carer
Kids helpline
1800 55 1800
Youth worker
Elders

Aboriginal Health Clinics/Services can help you if you have questions about puberty.



Where can I learn more?

Kids Helpline

More information on teens stuff like puberty, mood swings, relationships and more.

www.kidshelpline.com.au/teens



Yarn Safe

Learn more about your feelings and relationships.

www.headspace.org.au/yarn-safe



Young Deadly Free for Young Mob

For older teens, Young Deadly Free has information about relationships and more.

www.youngdeadlyfree.org.au/young-people



Puberty for Girls and Puberty for Boys Edition

www.shinesa.org.au/puberty

A Quick Guide to Periods

[www.shinesa.org.au/
product/period-guide/](http://www.shinesa.org.au/product/period-guide/)

If you are transgender or gender diverse

Some transgender and gender diverse people feel comfortable with the changes to their bodies. Others feel uncomfortable with the ways their body is changing. There are lots of resources available.

[www.headspace.org.au/explore-topics/for-young-people/
trans-resources/](http://www.headspace.org.au/explore-topics/for-young-people/trans-resources/)

Your notes









More information for parents/carers

Young Deadly Free for Adults

For adults/parents/carers supporting young people with their sexual health and relationships.

www.youngdeadlyfree.org.au/for-elders-parents-youth-workers



Yarning Quiet Ways

A resource for adults to help kids learn about their bodies and strong, safe and healthy relationships.

www.letsyarn.health.wa.gov.au/for-parents/yarning-quiet-ways



Consent and Young People

This conversation guide has tips to help you yarn about consent.

www.consent.gov.au/first-nations-conversation-guide



