Puberty made easy

Your body is changing all the time. Think how much you've changed since you were a baby! Right now big changes are ahead.

For girlz and boyz
PUBERTY
WHAT IS IT?

- Any time between age 9 and 18 gradual changes will be happening to you and your friends - this is called puberty. It is part of growing up and the changes happen at different times. **We are all different!!!**

- As well as thinking and feeling different, you will find your body also starts to look different.

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

- A gland in your brain (called the pituitary gland) is sending a message to your sexual organs to produce a chemical called a hormone. These hormones will slowly make you grow into an adult.

YOUR MOODS/FEELINGS

Your moods can change from day to day, from happy to sad, this is not unusual. All this is happening because extra hormones are being made in your body and hormones affect the way you feel.
WHAT CHANGES will I NOTICE?

**GIRLZ**
- Your periods begin at any time usually between 9 and 16 years old
- Your breasts will start to grow
- Your hips will broaden
- Your thighs and bottom may become larger

**BOYZ**
- Your voice changes and becomes deeper
- Your nipple and breast area are sensitive for short times
- You become more muscular
- Your penis and testicles grow larger
- Your penis often becomes hard and you will probably have wet dreams

**GIRLZ & BOYZ**
- Your skin is more likely to have spots
- Hair begins to grow on different parts of the body
- Your skin and hair may become greasy
- You will grow taller

These are the most obvious changes but others will happen. Remember size and shape doesn’t matter. Look around you, everyone is different.
Boys have ball-shaped testicles, which produce sperm and make hormones. The testicles lie in a soft bag called the scrotum, which hangs outside the body.

A penis has two uses
- To go to the toilet
- To ejaculate, that is, release semen. Semen is a liquid that contains sperm.
Your Body Girlz

What is a period?

Girls are born with thousands of tiny eggs inside their ovaries. During puberty your body starts to release an egg, roughly once a month. At the same time the lining of the uterus (womb) becomes thick, soft and rich in blood ready to receive the egg. If a sperm meets the egg then it is fertilized, and a baby will start to grow in the lining of the uterus. Usually though, the lining breaks up and comes away. This is called a period (menstruation). It can last from 2 to 7 days or more.

The Menstrual Cycle

Periods come about once every month, but your body needs practice to get this right. So for the first year or more the time between your periods may be different.

Usually not much blood is lost during your period, and there are lots of ways to soak up the blood. Find the one that suits you. Use sanitary pads, sanitary towels or tampons. Make sure you change them regularly during your period.
**QUESTIONS and ANSWERS**

**G** Why do I sometimes get moody, angry or tearful for no obvious reason?

**A** Don’t worry. It’s due to your hormone levels changing and these can affect your emotions.

**G** Sometimes my willie gets hard and this is embarrassing. Should I do something about it?

**A** No, because this is a perfectly natural part of growing up.

**G** Does everyone get spots during puberty?

**A** No, but boys and girls can get spots during puberty. It is important to keep your skin clean and eat a healthy diet, if the spots are really bad your doctor or chemist may be able to give you something to help.

**G** Can periods be painful?

**A** Periods can be painful for some girls - you might have cramps or an ache very low in your stomach or back. Holding a hot water bottle against the part that hurts may make you feel better. If the pain is really bad talk to someone. Don’t suffer in silence.

**G** Sometimes I find a wet patch on my sheets.

**A** During puberty it is common for boys to release (ejaculate) semen during sleep due to an exciting dream. This is called a ‘wet dream’.

**G** I have noticed a yellow/white stain in my pants. What is it?

**A** It is called a vaginal discharge, and is a sign your period may soon begin.
My friends are all taller than me, is there something wrong?

No, during puberty, everyone changes in shape and size. People grow at different speeds and sometimes can have a sudden growth spurt. You can help keep your body healthy by eating a well-balanced diet, which includes a lot of different types of food. Getting enough sleep at night and regular exercise will help.

Why do my breasts sometimes hurt during the month?

This is caused by the hormone levels in your body changing and it is a sign that your period is due.

When will my voice break and how will I know?

Your voice may change from day to day, from squeaky to deep, until finally it stays deeper.

Will my periods start unexpectedly, say while I’m swimming or doing P.E.?

Yes, they can do. They can start when you are doing sports, but they can also start when you are not being active, such as watching TV or having breakfast. If you think you may be due to start, it is best to be prepared and have a towel or tampon handy at all times.

My friend has told me that tampons are not safe. Is this true?

There is something called ‘Toxic Shock Syndrome’, which can make girls very ill. To stop this happening, you need to change your tampon regularly (several times a day). Remember to wash your hands before and after you do this and always check that you have taken the last tampon out before you use a new one.

I am starting to grow hair between my legs, is this normal?

Yes, both boys and girls will grow hair in this area. This is called ‘pubic hair’. Hair will also grow under the arms. Boys will grow hair on their chest and face.
PUBERTY happens to everyone!!!

Think of your favourite TV, pop or sports star? guess what?
They’ve been through puberty just like you.

If you are worried about anything in this booklet, talk to someone - your parents, brother, sister, school nurse, teacher or someone else you feel comfortable with.

Childline
To talk to someone about any worry or problem that you may have. Calls are free-phone 0800 11 11

Websites
www.likeitis.org.uk/puberty.html
www.bbc.co.uk/science/humanbody
www.beinggirl.co.uk
www.doctorann.org