

## Change IS NORMAL

During puberty, your body will change as you grow from a child to a teenager and develop an adult body. These changes are caused by hormones, which are chemicals made in our body.

Somewhere between the ages 7- and 16-years old puberty will begin. While puberty changes will happen to everyone, when puberty happens is different for everyone, and that is okay!



## BODIES CHANGE

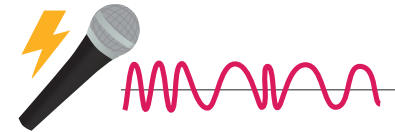
Most puberty changes are the same for boys and girls, but there are a few differences.

### GROWTH

- You grow taller and may experience sudden growth spurts
- You gain weight because you need more fat and muscle to support your body
- In girls, breasts will develop and they may notice their hips, thighs grow too

### VOICE

- Everyone's voice will change and get deeper during puberty
- You may notice that your voice cracks while speaking, but this is normal and will go away



### HAIR

- Your scalp will start to produce more oil, so washing with shampoo can help
- You will start to grow hair everywhere: legs, arms, armpits, pubic area, face, stomach, back, and butt



### SWEATING

- Everyone will start to sweat more during puberty, especially in the armpits
- It important to shower regularly and some youth may choose to use deodorant



### SKIN

- Your hormones will cause the body to produce more oil, especially on the face
- Some people may get acne/pimples so it is important to wash your face every day



### MASTURBATION

- Some people may start to masturbate, which means touching your own genitals in a way that feels good
- Masturbating is normal, safe, and healthy for boys and girls, but must be done in private

## Feelings Change

The hormones that cause your body to change are also going to bring new and different feelings. You may notice that your feelings change very quickly, and this may feel overwhelming. These are called mood swings and they are normal! You also might notice that you have different feelings towards someone that you didn't have before, which are often called crushes.

You may feel really happy or really sad and not know why. It is important to talk to someone you trust about how you are feeling because your mental health is just as important as your physical health.

If you ever need someone to talk to, the Nunavut Kamatsiaqtuk Helpline is available: 867-979-3333 or 1-800-265-3333.

**REMEMBER:** getting lots of sleep, eating healthy, and doing activities you love will help your mind and body while you go through puberty.



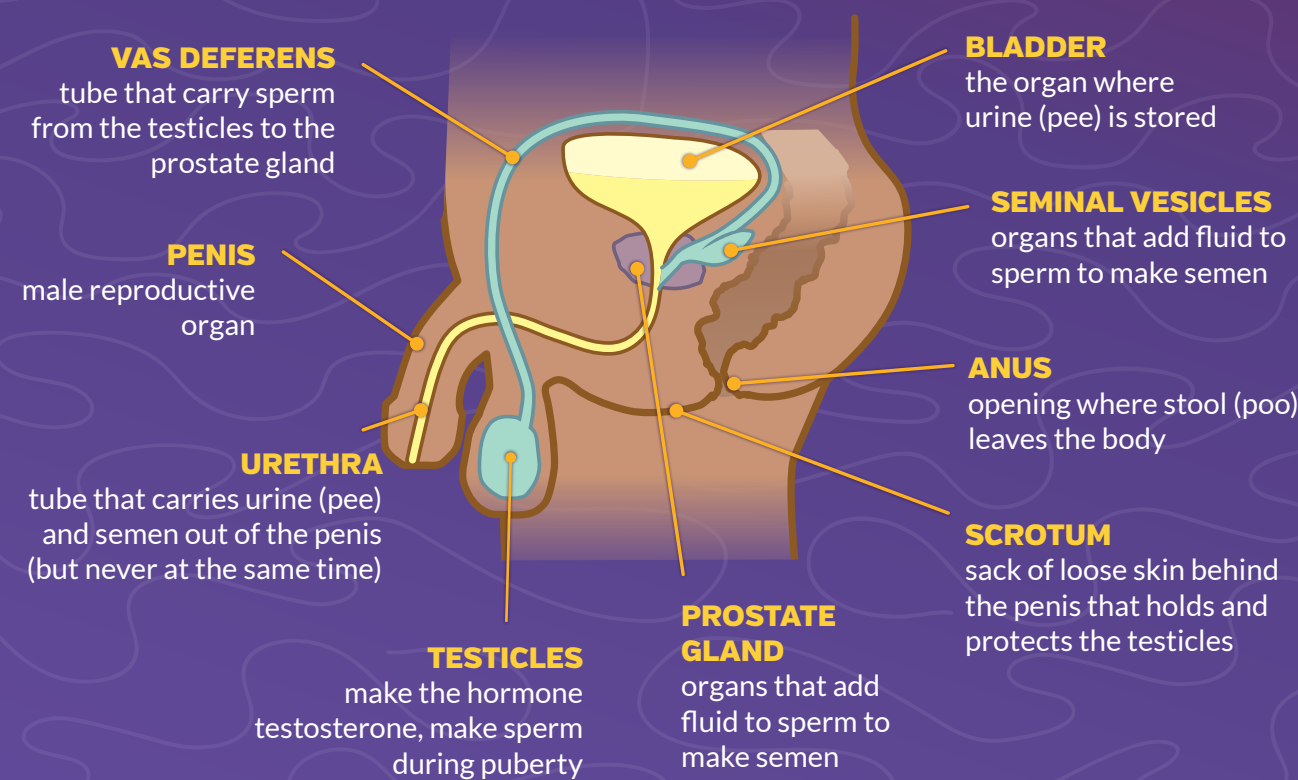
For more information  
on puberty:

[IRESPECTMYSELF.CA](http://IRESPECTMYSELF.CA)  
[SEXANDU.CA](http://SEXANDU.CA)

Or talk to your  
health care provider.



## FOR BOYS

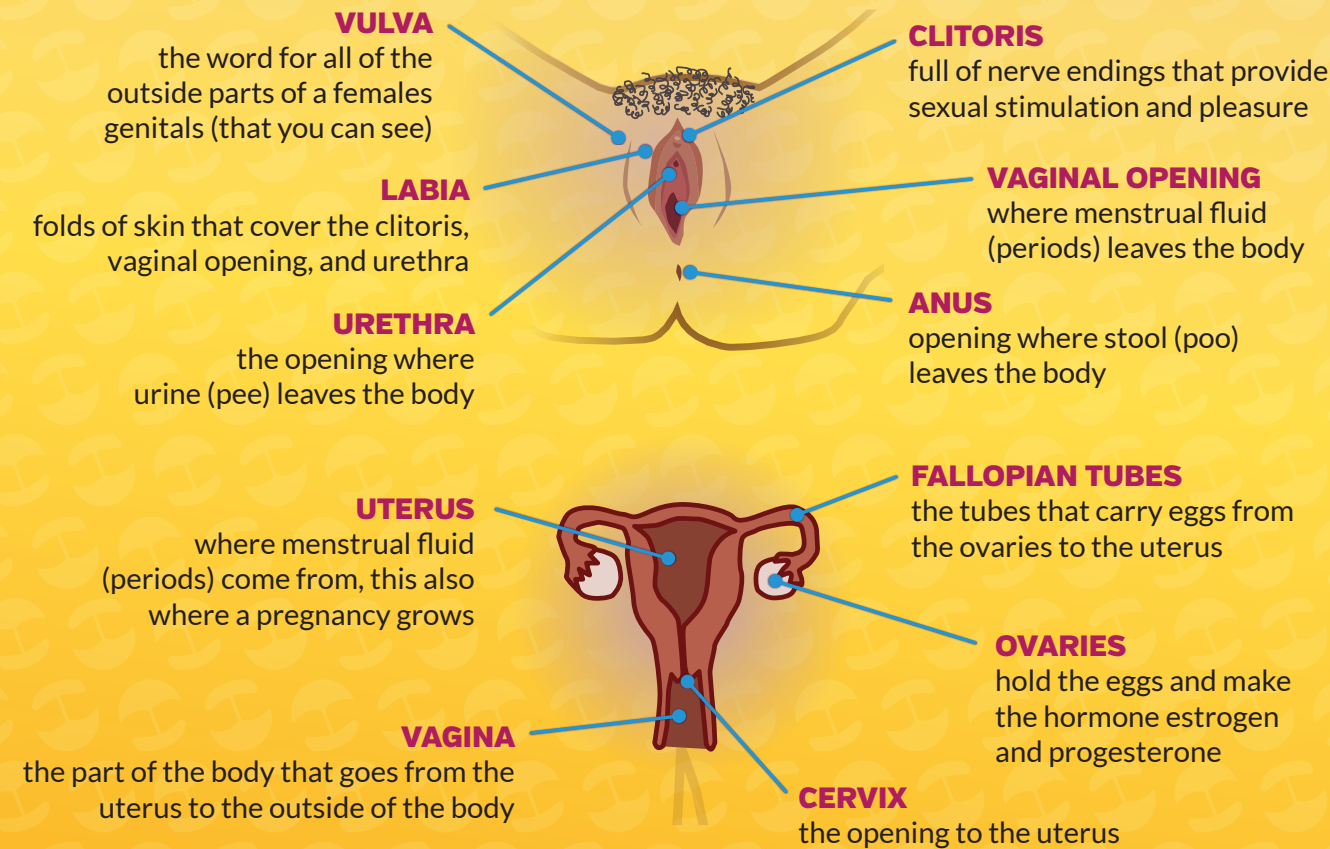


### ERECTIONS & EJACULATION

The penis is usually soft. An erection is when blood fills the tissue of the penis, which makes it harder and stand up away from the body. Erections can happen for many reasons: feeling sexually aroused, clothes rubbing on the penis, while you are sleeping, or sometimes for no reason at all. This is normal!

Ejaculation is when a white fluid (called semen) leaves the opening of the penis. Semen is made of sperm and other fluids from the male body. Ejaculation can happen after masturbating, at night (called a wet dream), or during sexual activities. \*\*It is important to remember that sperm is what causes pregnancy, so protection should be used if you are choosing to engage in sex.

## FOR GIRLS



During puberty, you may notice that your vagina has started to produce a whiteish fluid, this is normal, and it is called vaginal discharge. It just means that your vagina is cleaning itself.

### PERIODS/MENSTRUATION

A period is the lining of the uterus leaving the body. This is also called menstruation. A person's first period usually starts between 8-16 years old, but everybody is different! Periods usually last between 2-10 days and happen every 21-40 days. Starting your period also means that your body can get pregnant.

## Managing Periods

To absorb and catch your menstrual fluid, there are a few different options you can choose:

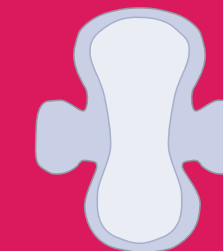


### MENSTRUAL CUPS

are small cups that sit inside the vagina and collect the menstrual fluid as it leaves the uterus. They are reusable and need to be washed with unscented soap and warm water before using again.

### TAMPONS

are small rolls of cotton that are inserted into the vagina where they absorb the menstrual fluid. Some have an applicator to help with insertion, while some do not. They also have a string on the end to help remove them. Tampons must be changed regularly in order to prevent serious health problems.



### PADS

attach to the inside of the underwear with a sticky strip that keeps them in place. Pads absorb the fluid as it leaves the vagina. There are also reusable pads that can be washed and used again.

\*\* For all products, read the instructions on the package!

\*\* Contact your local health centre for information on how to access menstrual products!