

Fourth Grade Girls
Human Growth and Development

Ground Rules

- Respect what other people say; no put-downs
- Be sensitive to other people's feelings
- Respect other people's differences
- Keep discussion and questions away from a personal level (no individual stories)
- Keep all comments made by other students confidential
- There are no dumb questions
- Use scientific terms instead of slang

Puberty

Brainstorm: What changes do you know or have heard will be happening to you during puberty?

A Time of Change

Puberty is the time when your body changes from a child's body to an adult body. Puberty usually begins between the ages of 9 and 16. During puberty, glands in your body begin to produce **hormones** - *chemicals that cause the changes of puberty*. Hormones signal the different parts of your body to grow and develop.

The two main hormones that help female bodies grow and change are **estrogen** and **progesterone**. The main male hormone is **testosterone**.

Pull

Emotional Changes

Your body is not all that changes. Your feelings change too. Hormones can cause you to be more emotional and have ups and downs in your feelings. Quick mood changes can be hard to handle. You may cry over small matters.

Sooner or later, most young people worry about their bodies and their feelings. Girls and boys who go through changes before anyone else in the class might feel self-conscious. Those who change later, may envy their more "grown-up" friends. They may worry about when they may catch up.

It's no fun to feel different from your friends. But in a few years, the changes even out. Try to remember every body is different. Each person has a personal time clock that determines when he or she will start puberty. Some people will mature earlier and some later.

It helps to share concerns with parents and friends.

Social Changes

As you grow older, you find that friends become more important. You want to be liked. You want to fit in. But sometimes, you may feel left out and lonely. Almost everyone does. Find friends who like you for yourself and be open to making new friends. First you will feel comfortable with friends of the same gender. Later, boys and girls become more interested in each other.

You will feel increased feelings of independence as you grow and change. This is a time of change for your parents too. They must learn to live with you as a more grown-up person. It can be hard for all of you.

Physical Changes-Both

Boys & Girls

- Grow very quickly "growth spurt"
- Sweat more which may cause body odor
- Get oilier skin and may have some pimples
- Voice changes
- Have aching muscles and joints "growing pains"
- Girls usually begin puberty 1-2 years before boys do

Boys

- Shoulders get broader
- Increase body weight (muscle mass)
- Hair grows under arms and on arms, legs, chest, and face

Girls

- Hips get wider
- Increase body weight (bodyfat)
- Waist gets smaller
- Hair grows under arms

Physical Changes-Girls

- Increase in growth rate (9-16 years)
- Hair growth - under arms, pubic area
- Breast develop
- Vaginal discharge (normal)
- Menstruation ("having periods") - starts any time from ages 9 - 16

Female Reproductive System terms

Uterus - pear-shaped muscular organ where the fertilized egg grows and develops until birth.

Cervix - Opening of the uterus that extends into the vagina.

Egg - Also called an ovum; the female reproductive cell.

Fallopian Tubes - small tube through which the egg travels from the ovaries to the uterus.

Ovaries - the two almond-shaped glands that produce the egg (ova) and send out hormones.

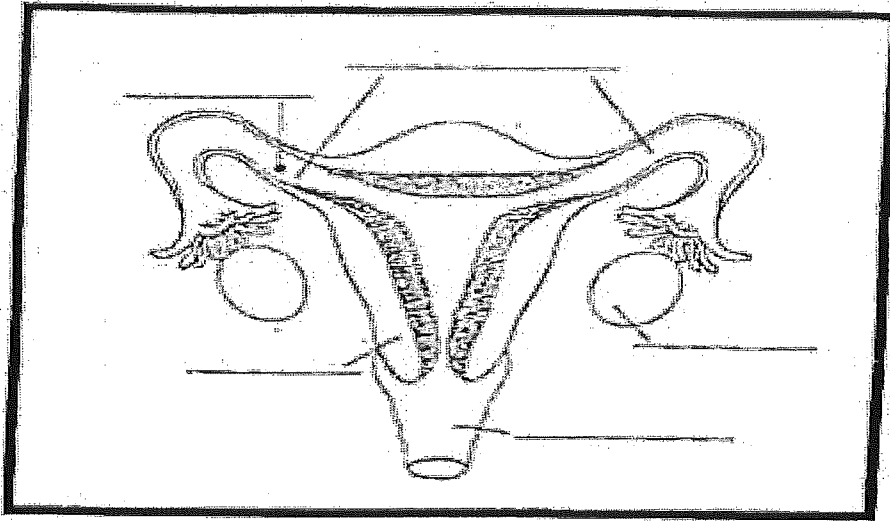
Urethra -the tube that carries urine from the bladder out of the body.

Vagina - a muscular passageway through which menstrual flow leaves the body and a baby is born

Body Facts

About the female reproductive system

Use the words below to label this diagram. Then, in the space provided, briefly describe the role each body part plays in the reproduction process.



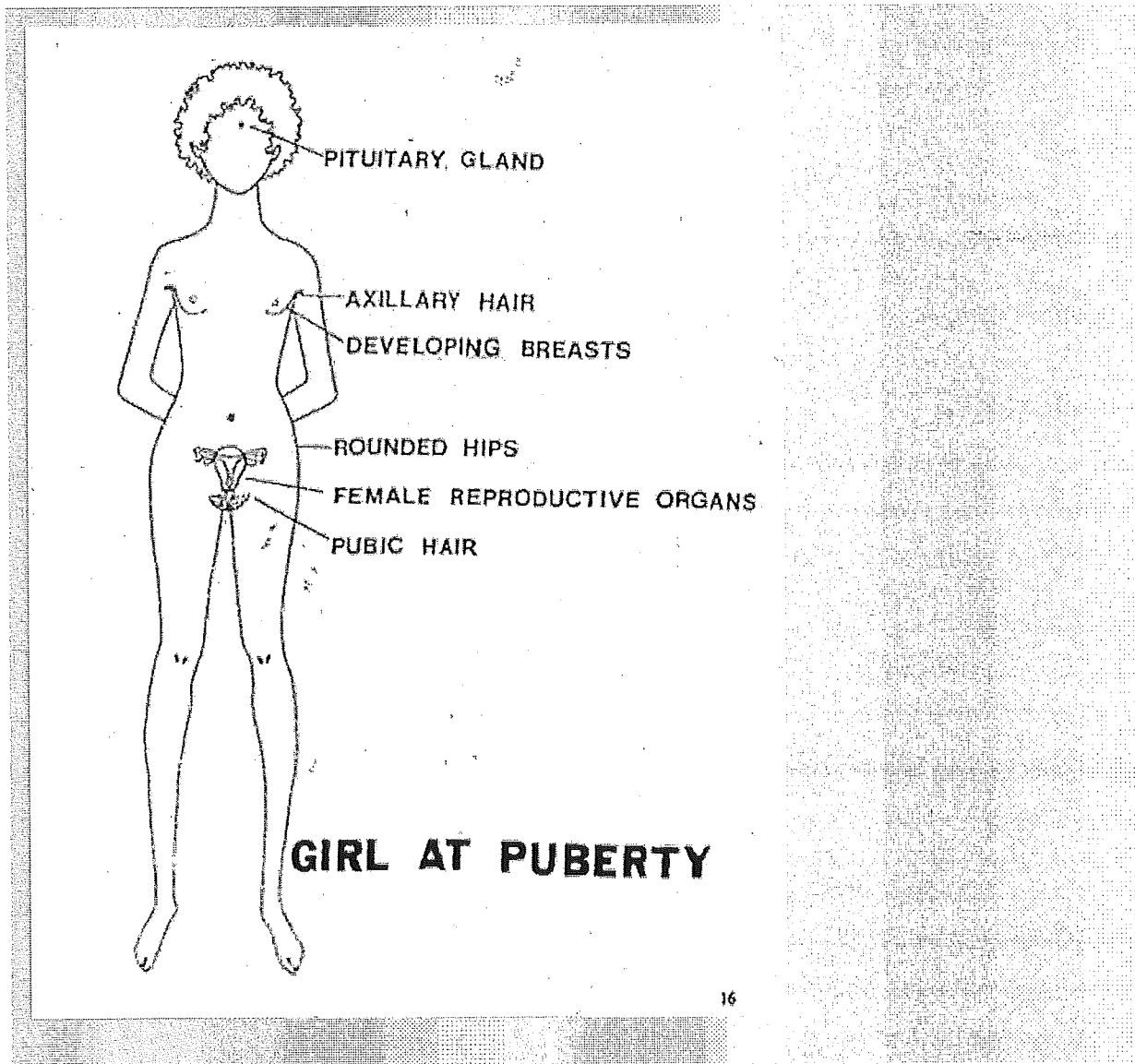
Egg: _____

Fallopian tube: _____

Ovary: _____

Uterus: _____

Vagina: _____



Menstrual Cycle

- An egg is released from one of the ovaries and travels down the fallopian tube into the uterus.
- During most of the menstrual cycle the uterus is building up a lining of healthy tissue and blood.
- When the egg passes through the uterus the built-up lining of blood and tissue is not needed, so it passes out through the vagina each month during the menstrual period.
- A period usually lasts from 5-7 days, but some will be shorter and some will be longer.

Menstrual Cycle

- At first periods may be irregular
- The flow starts slowly and continues through the next few days and nights
- At the end of your period the flow slows and then stops
- After the bleeding has stopped the cycle begins again
- A whole menstrual cycle usually lasts 28 days from one period to the next, but it may take a few years to get into a regular pattern

First Menstrual Cycle "Period"

- There is not set age that you get your first period, everyone is different!
- When your period starts you may see a spot of blood on your underwear or on toilet paper when you wipe yourself
- Some girls may notice a feeling of discomfort or cramping in the lower abdomen.
- The blood that comes out during a girl's period may seem like a lot of blood, but usually it's not. For most girls, less than a half-cup is shed during the course of an entire period.
- There are a number of things that can affect the menstrual cycle including exercise and nutrition. Exercising regularly and eating a variety of healthy foods can help girls maintain regular menstrual cycles.

Menstrual Hygiene

Sanitary Napkins "pad"

- These are worn outside your body attached to your underwear
- They are worn to absorb the blood and tissue that leaves your body through the vagina
- You should use a pad a day or so before and after your period until it becomes regular
- You should wear a pad overnight
- Pads must be changed every 3-4 hours for best comfort, absorption, and odor control
- You must always throw pads away in a wastebasket by first wrapping it in toilet paper. **NO NOT FLUSH!**

Menstrual Hygiene

Tampons

- Tampons are worn inside your body by inserting them into the vagina
- A tampon absorbs the blood and tissue as it exits the vagina
- You use the string attached to the tampon to take it out and change it
- Tampons can be flushed, but not the wrappers or applicators
- **Using tampons are optional!** You need to be comfortable with own body
- They are sometimes used when swimming or during sports

Menstrual Hygiene

- It is important that you discuss all product choices
- with a parent or trusted adult
- Our school has pads available, if needed, in the health
- room or you can ask a teacher
- It is very important to keep your body clean, especially
- during your period

Dealing with these changes

- Some of you may not want these changes to happen and others may want them to hurry up and get here! How you are feeling is normal!
- Asking your parents or another trusted adult how they felt about the changes of puberty before they started going through them might help you
- No matter how you feel about it today, every human goes through the changes of puberty so you don't have to feel embarrassed or worried
- Taking time to talk about puberty and understanding the changes that are happening is one way we hope to help you to feel good about being you...at every stage along the way to becoming an adult

