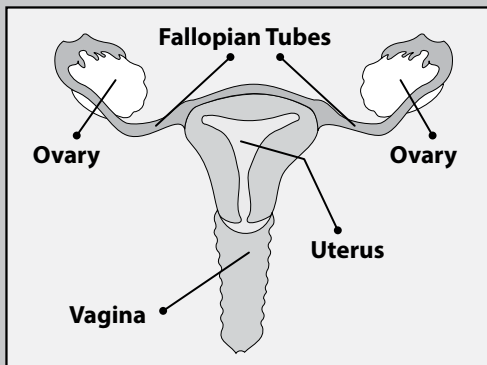


## Changes in your body

You have special body parts that make it possible for you to become a mother. At puberty, these body parts begin to work.

You have two ovaries, each filled with eggs since you were born. Each month, usually one egg is released from one of your ovaries. The egg travels through your fallopian tube that connects your ovary to your uterus. It takes several days for an egg to travel through this tube on its way to your uterus.



As the egg travels through the fallopian tube, the uterus prepares to receive the egg. A soft, blood-rich lining forms on its inside walls. If you have intercourse (sex), the egg may be joined by a sperm. This is called a fertilized egg. If it is fertilized, it may attach to the wall of the uterus. The fertilized egg may then grow into a fetus. In other words, you become pregnant.

If the egg is not fertilized with a sperm, you are not pregnant and the lining of the uterus is not needed. The egg and the lining then break down and pass out of your body through the vagina. This is called "menstruation." Menstruation (or a "period") happens about every 28 days.

## Definitions

**Eggs** – female sex cells stored in the ovaries

**Fallopian tubes** – two small tubes that join the ovaries and the uterus

**Menstruation** – when the lining of the uterus breaks down and passes out through the vagina each month

**Ovaries** – two special body parts that make and store eggs

**Pregnant** – a word to describe a female who has a developing fetus in her body

**Puberty** – body changes in boys and girls that make them able to become fathers and mothers

**Sexual intercourse** – when a man puts his penis inside a woman's vagina

**Sperm** – male sex cells that are stored in the testicles

**Uterus** – a special body part in which a fetus grows during pregnancy

**Vagina** – the passage leading from the uterus to the outside of the body

If you still have **questions** after reading this brochure, **ask someone** you feel **comfortable** with who knows about health and appearance. Maybe the person who gave you this brochure can **help** you.

**Pass this brochure** to someone else when you are finished with it. Chances are, **your best friend could use** this information as well.



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Division of Children's Health

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what your

**best friend**

**won't tell you**



GIRLS

Do you ever wonder what other people think about you?



**Sure**, you're a **good person** on the inside. That's great, but the outside is **important**, too. Many girls aren't sure of the best way to **take care** of their bodies.

We've put together some tips that **everybody should know** to look their best.

## Hair

- Most people should wash their hair every three to four days. If it's really oily, wash it more often.
- Any shampoo is OK as long as it makes your hair and scalp feel clean.
- Comb or brush your hair every day, and don't borrow brushes or combs. Sometimes people get head lice from sharing combs and brushes.

## Face

- Everybody's face is different. Some have dry skin, some have oily skin. Some people get acne (pimples) and some don't.
- The center of your face is probably oilier than the outside edges.
- Use warm water and any mild soap you want, as long as it doesn't make your skin red, itchy or flaky.

## Clothes

- Wear clean bras, underwear and socks every day.
- Cotton underwear is best because cotton absorbs moisture and lessens the chance of a vaginal infection.
- Try not to wear the same pair of shoes every day. Let them air out for a day before you wear them again.

## Sleep

- Get at least eight hours of sleep daily.

## Hands

- Wash your hands before you eat or make food.
- Wash your hands after you use the bathroom.
- Keep your fingernails clean and trimmed.

## Feet

- Wash between your toes when you take a bath or shower. Dry carefully.
- Keep toenails clean. Trim them straight across.

## Genitals

- Your vagina cleans itself. A little clear fluid usually comes out of the vagina every now and then. That's normal. You do not have to clean inside the vagina (douche) unless your doctor or nurse says to do so.
- Make sure your entire body is cleaned during your daily bath or shower.
- Take a bath or shower every day especially during your period.
- Change pads or tampons frequently (at least every four hours) during your period.

## Bathroom

- Wipe carefully after you urinate or have a bowel movement.
- Wipe from front to back.
- Flush the toilet each time you use it.
- After you go to the bathroom, always wash your hands.

## Body

- Take a bath or shower every day. Plain soap is fine. Use any kind you want as long as it doesn't make your skin red, dry or itchy. Avoid strongly scented bath oils and bubble bath.

## Deodorants or Antiperspirants

- Deodorant will not take the place of a bath or shower. If your deodorant causes a rash or makes your skin itch, switch brands.
- Apply deodorant after your bath or shower.

## Teeth

You know how important your smile is. Protect it! All of the following helps to keep your breath fresh.

- Brush your teeth after each meal, at least twice a day. Brush your tongue, too. (That's right—your tongue. Your tongue has plaque-forming bacteria on it. Brushing it removes the bacteria that cause bad breath and plaque.)
- Toothpaste with fluoride is best. Use a soft toothbrush.
- Clean between your teeth once a day with dental floss. That is the special string made to clean film from between your teeth. You can find it in the store where you buy your toothpaste.