



# Physical Changes ...Girls Part I

Usually develop about the age of 10 to 14 years old  
(but as early as 8 or as late as 15)



Lots of things can effect this - heredity, diet and exercise. Many times, dancers and competitive athletes, like swimmers and gymnasts, start later.



**Growth spurt** - While the girls only grow 5 to 6 inches taller, a few inches shorter than the boys, they may be taller than the boys, especially in sixth grade. Oh, by the way, girls will gain on average 25 pounds during their growth spurt.



**Hair** - One of the first signs that you are beginning puberty is the appearance of hair. Hair will develop in-between your legs (it's called pubic hair.) First the hair is soft and straight, becoming thicker and curly later on. About two years after pubic hair begins to grow, the hair under your arms and on your legs will begin to grow. This is a time typically in our culture that girls begin to shave their legs and underarms. You will start perspiring more under your arms because your sweat glands are more active. It is important to keep yourself clean and use deodorant.



**Shape** - Your body will also begin to build up fat in the stomach, buttocks, and legs. This is normal and gives your body the curvier shape of a woman. This is caused by the pelvic bone in the lower part of your body which widens and tips inwards slightly, making your waist smaller and your hips more rounded. You may have a difficult time finding blue jeans to fit properly as you develop, but be patient, eventually the Junior size clothes will fit you.



**Breast development** - Another first sign of puberty is your breasts will begin to develop. First you will notice the tissue just under the nipple will rise slightly (this is called budding). It will continue to enlarge until it becomes more rounded. Depending on your heritage, this may develop slowly or quickly, but usually takes up to four years. It is important as you develop to wear a comfortable fitting bra. Sometimes your breasts may be a little sore or tender.

When breasts first begin to develop, it is not unusual for one breast to be larger than the other. However, as they develop, they will most likely even out before they reach their final size and shape.