

Preparing
for a
Lifetime
It's Everyone's Responsibility

GRANDPARENT

TOOLKIT





Physical Development

Puberty typically occurs around ages 8-13 for girls and 10-15 for boys.

As youth start to grow into their adult bodies, there is a greater need for meals that have a variety of nutritional foods, daily physical activity, and good sleep habits to support healthy development.

Another big piece of physical development is that their bodies will develop the ability to get pregnant or cause a pregnancy.

Supporting Nutritional Needs

It is recommended for youth to eat at least three meals a day with healthy snacks.

Support healthy eating by:

- introducing them to a variety of foods
- helping them make nutritious choices on the go
- teaching them how to make their own meals and snacks

Nutrition presentations are available on the grandparent toolkit website at [Oklahoma.gov/health/grandparenttoolkit](https://oklahoma.gov/health/grandparenttoolkit)

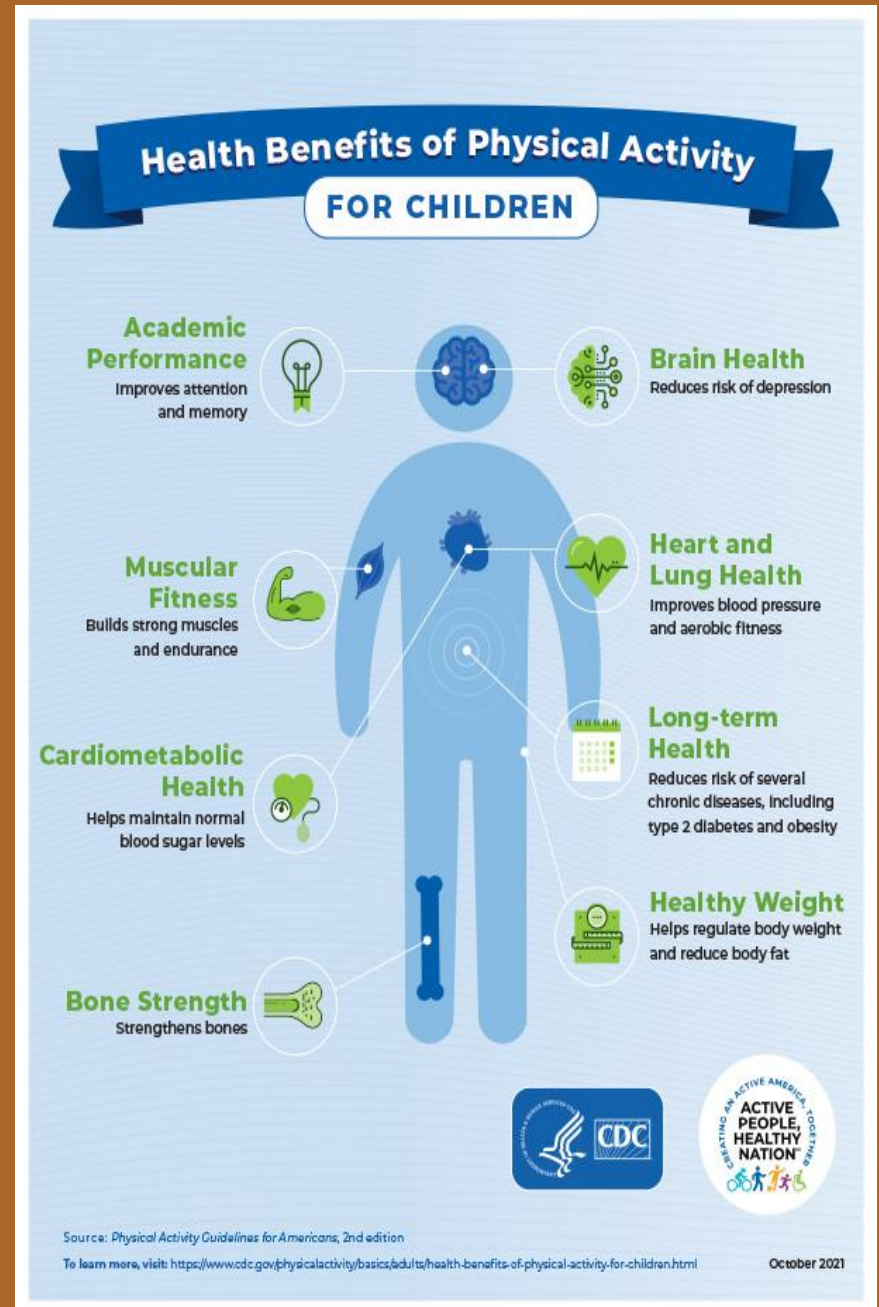


Supporting Physical Activity Needs

Children and adolescents ages 6-17 need at least 60 minutes of moderate-to-high intensity physical activity each day to reduce their risk for childhood obesity and type 2 diabetes.

Activities should involve movements that increase heart rate and help strengthen muscles and bones to promote healthy development.

Physical activity is not only good for the body, but also brain health and mental health.



Aerobic Activities for a Strong Heart

Moderate Intensity

- Brisk walking or hiking
- Bicycling, skateboarding, or riding a scooter
- Swimming, water aerobics, or kayaking
- Catching and throwing games, such as baseball, softball, or frisbee
- House and yard work such as sweeping or pushing a lawn mower
- Video games that involve constant movement

High Intensity

- Jogging or running
- Bicycling
- Jumping rope
- Sports such as soccer, basketball, swimming, tennis
- Martial arts
- Dancing

Activities for Strong Muscles & Bones

Muscles

- Games such as tug of war
- Resistance exercises using body weight, weight machines, hand-held weights, or resistance bands
- Rope or tree climbing
- Some forms of yoga

Bones

- Hopping, skipping, jumping
- Running
- Sports that involve jumping or rapid change in direction
- Other weight-bearing activities

Supporting Good Sleep Hygiene

Good sleep habits are important for:

- physical development
- brain development
- behavior and decision-making
- emotional health
- mental health
- academic performance

Children ages 6-12 need 9-12 hours of sleep each night.

Youth ages 13-18 need 8-10 hours of sleep each night.

10 TIPS TO SLEEP BETTER



SLEEP SCHEDULE

Go to bed and wake up at the **same time** everyday (even on the weekend). **Avoid long naps** during the day.



AVOID BIG MEALS

Don't eat large/spicy meals **before sleep**. A small snack that contains '**Tryptophan**' may help, such as banana, nuts, oats or milk.



TURN DEVICES OFF

You don't want any noises distracting you or waking you up. If you use your phone as an alarm, make sure it's in '**do not disturb**' mode.



RELAXING ROUTINE

Make sure to do something relaxing **before bed** such as a bath/shower, read, meditate, art, puzzles or relaxation techniques.



AVOID CAFFEINE

Avoid consuming caffeine or stimulant food **in the evening**. This includes soft drinks, tea, energy drinks, coffee, chocolate...



AVOID SCREENS

The production of '**melatonin**' (the hormone that helps initiate sleep), can be delayed by light from interactive electrical gadgets.



DAYLIGHT & EXERCISE

Exposing yourself to daylight every day helps to reset your '**circadian biological clock**' (sleep-wake cycle). In addition, exercising during the day will promote **good night's sleep**.



NOT FEELING SLEEPY?

If you are not asleep after half an hour, go to a different room and do something **quiet and relaxing** until you feel sleepy.



'COMFY' BEDROOM

Make sure your bedroom is **dark, quiet and cool** and that your mattress and pillow are comfortable enough.



WELLBEING

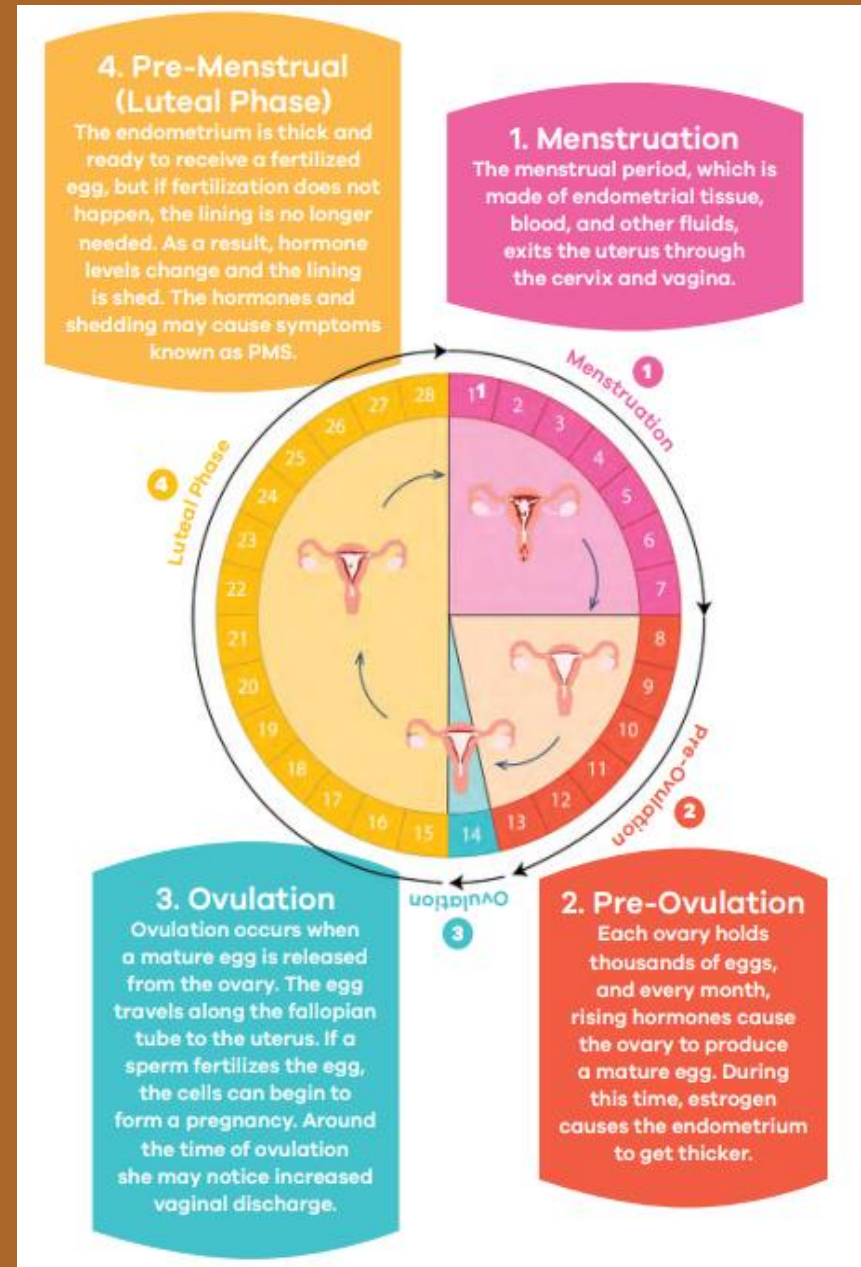
If sleep issues are consistent and having a significant impact in your life, consider seeking support from a GP or a mental health professional.

The Menstrual Cycle

A girl may get her first period any time between ages 8-16.

The body will experience a monthly sequence of events that prepares the body for a possible pregnancy – this is known as the menstrual cycle.

If menarche has not occurred by age 16 or periods remain irregular it is important to talk to a healthcare provider.



Common Menstrual Products

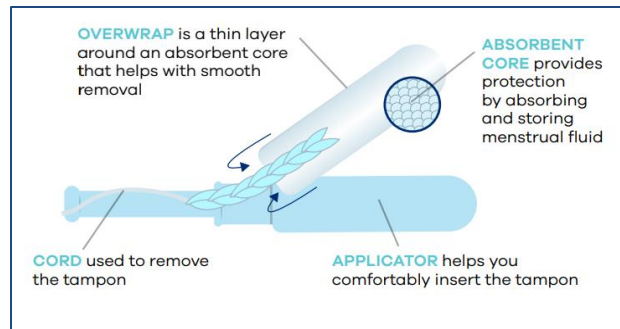
Pads



Menstrual Cups



Tampons



Menstrual Underwear



Common Challenges Youth May Face

**Body Image &
Self-esteem**

**Eating
Disorders**

Body Image & Self-Esteem

Puberty can have a big impact on a young person's body image and self-esteem.

Youth may become self-conscious or worry about fitting in if they do not look like others their age.

These feelings and thoughts can be positive or negative and can change over time and are often influenced by their friends, peers, family members their age, and celebrities/influencers

How they think about and view themselves can have a direct impact on their level of confidence, relationships, outlook on life, and the value they place on themselves as a person.



Signs of Poor Body Image

- Constantly talking about “imperfections” or using negative language to describe themselves
- Obsession with weight or certain parts of body
- Always comparing themselves to others
- Avoiding activities or wearing certain clothes because of how they feel about their body
- Desire for surgery or other cosmetic procedures



Eating Disorders Linked to Body Image

ANOREXIA NERVOSA

- Dangerously underweight
- A relentless pursuit of thinness
- Has distorted perception of body image and an intense fear of gaining weight

BULIMIA NERVOSA

- May be of normal weight or slightly overweight
- Recurrent episodes of bingeing and compensatory behaviours in order to prevent weight gain
- Worried about weight and usually feels lack of control over such episodes

BINGE EATING/ PURGING TYPE

Regularly engages in binge-eating and/ or purges food later through self-induced vomiting, laxatives or other medication

RESTRICTING TYPE

Tries to lose weight by dieting, fasting, or exercising excessively

PURGING TYPE

Purges through self-induced vomiting, laxatives or other medication

NON-PURGING TYPE

Tries to lose weight through fasting or excessive exercising

Impacts of Eating Disorders

Heart

- Irregular heartbeat, low blood pressure, increased risk for heart failure

Gastrointestinal System

- Blood sugar fluctuation, bacterial infections, ruptured stomach, throat ulcers, pancreatitis

Endocrine System

- Delayed/irregular menstruation, increased risk for broken bones/fractures and bone loss, insulin resistance

Brain

- Difficulty sleeping, numbing and tingling in hands and feet, seizures and muscle cramps

Other impacts

- Dry skin, hair loss, dehydration, kidney failure, anemia, tooth enamel loss

Behavioral Signs of an Eating Disorder

- Changes in what, when/how often, and how much they eat
- Being restrictive or controlled about their eating
- Unusual weight changes
- Expressing unhappiness with their body or their weight
- Exercising much more than usual or too much altogether
- Spending a lot of time in the bathroom



Fostering Positive Body Image

- Address unrealistic body/beauty standards
- Limit negative language about your body and other people's bodies
- Promote the acceptance of all body shapes and sizes
- Give praise/compliments not related to appearance
- Teach and encourage self-affirmations



Additional Physical Development Factors

Genes

Chronic
Illnesses

Substance
Use

Supporting Healthy Physical Development

- Let youth know the changes they are experiencing are typical and their bodies are developing at a rate that is *right for them*
- Teach them body-positivity and model it for them
- Acknowledge their feelings and experiences
- Set appropriate sleep schedules and habits
- Encourage, model, and support physical activity and balanced, nutritious eating
- Discuss family expectations around dating and sexual behaviors
- Talk to them honestly about the impacts of alcohol and drugs



Resources

myplate.gov

health.gov/moveyourway

cdc.gov/physicalactivity/basics/children



Grandparents Raising Grandkids

Oklahoma.gov/health/grandparenttoolkit

Grandparent@health.ok.gov

Acknowledgement

Some of this content was derived and adapted from the Office of Population Affairs' *Adolescent Development Explained Guide*.