

Puberty Kit

The puberty kit is a tool that can be used to teach about puberty and personal hygiene.

Puberty kits may be available to borrow from school nurses or your school board. If not, you can print off these photos, or assemble your own kit. Most of the items are available in dollar stores, and it costs about \$20 to create a kit. Use of any particular brand is not endorsed.

There are lots of ways to use the puberty kit in a sexual health lesson. One idea is to ask each student in the class pick one item from the kit. Go around the room and ask students to share what how they think the item relates to puberty. Use the discussion points below to add to their ideas.

Lesson plans and additional activities are available at: [TeachingSexualHealth.ca](https://teachingsexualhealth.ca)

Contents and Description

Acne Cream

- Some lotions and creams have ingredients/medication in them to help prevent and clear up minor acne like pimples and blackheads.
- Be sure to follow the directions exactly.
- Some people experience serious acne and can get help from a doctor who can prescribe stronger medication or cream.

Active Living

- Physical and recreational activities such as sports, walking and having fun with friends outside can improve energy as well as physical and mental well-being, which is especially important as your body changes throughout puberty.
- Physical activity can help to lessen menstrual cramps and discomfort.

Antiperspirant and/or Deodorant

- Can be used in addition to washing your underarms daily.
- Antiperspirant stops sweat from forming and deodorant is an absorbent odor remover.
- Check the ingredient list for allergies or other concerns.

Athletic Support Cup

- Can be worn as support or protection for genitals during contact sports (e.g., hockey, football).

Bra

- People can wear a bra for comfort, modesty and support as their breasts develop.

Brush & Comb

- A comb or brush can be used to untangle and style hair.

Healthy Eating

- Eating healthy food improves energy, as well as physical and mental well-being.
- A healthy diet is high in vegetables, fruit, and whole grains and low in high-fat, high-sugar foods and drinks.
- Healthy eating may reduce menstrual symptoms such as bloating and cramping.

Hot Compress

- Warmth may help with menstrual cramps.
- Can use a heating pad, hot water bottle, or warm bath.
- This is a good option if pain medication isn't available.

Ibuprofen

- Over the counter medications such as ibuprofen may help with menstrual cramps and discomfort.
- Do not take any medication without asking your grown up first.
- Be sure not to take more than the recommended amount and follow the directions exactly.

Laundry Soap

- Wear clean socks and underwear every day and wash clothes often.
- If a person has had a wet dream and semen is ejaculated on bedding and/or pajamas, wash the bedding and/or pajamas.
- Cold water is more effective than hot when washing any item with blood on it.

Menstrual/Period Supplies (pads, panty liners, period underwear, tampons, menstrual cups)

- Used to manage menstrual flow.
- You can keep extra menstruation supplies handy in a locker or bag.
- Pads and sometimes tampons are usually available at school offices.
- Menstrual supplies can be bought at drug, grocery, convenience and health stores or online.
- Choose products that are unscented.
- Always put disposable menstrual supplies in the garbage, not the toilet.

Pads and Panty Liners

- Applied to underwear to absorb menstrual flow as it leaves the vagina.
- Pads come in a variety of shapes and sizes.
- Pads can be disposable or reusable.
- Panty liners are similar to pads and absorb light menstrual flow or vaginal discharge.
- Disposable pads attach to the inside of underwear by sticky strips. If they have wings, the wings wrap around the leg openings of the underwear.
- Reusable pads have snaps to keep them in place.
- Change pads often. If disposable, wrap in toilet paper and put in the garbage. If reusable resealable plastic bag (such as a Ziploc® bag) if away from home.
- Reusable pads are washed in the laundry just like any other clothing. Cold water is more effective than hot when washing any item with blood on it.

Period underwear

- Underwear that contain an absorbent layer of material in the gusset (crotch). Some may also have removable, reusable inserts to absorb even more menstrual flow.
- Some people will use period panties to replace pads, tampons or cups. Others will use them as backup, in case a tampon or cup leaks.
- Underwear are washed in the laundry just like any other clothing. Cold water is more effective than hot when washing any item with blood on it.

Tampons

- Absorbent products put inside the vagina to absorb menstrual flow before it leaves the vagina. They may or may not come with a plastic or cardboard applicator.
- Use the lowest absorbency needed; if the tampon is still somewhat dry after 3 or 4 hours, use a lighter absorbency.
- Tampons need to be changed often: usually at least every 4 hours during the day and no longer than 6-8 hours at night. Follow the instructions for each particular product.
- To dispose of used tampons, wrap them in toilet paper and put them into the garbage.
- Follow the instructions carefully to learn how to use safely. Incorrect use can result in Toxic Shock Syndrome, a rare but serious infection. Check in with a trusted adult for support.

Menstrual cups

- Silicone or plastic cups that are inserted into the vagina to collect menstrual flow.
- Follow the product instructions for how to insert.
- Can be safely left in for up to 12 hours, but may need to be changed depending on menstrual flow.
- Disposable cups are removed, wrapped in toilet paper and put in the garbage.
- Reusable cups are removed, rinsed as directed, and reinserted.

Razor

- Some people remove the hair on their face and parts of their body; others do not.
- Never share razors, as the used blades can spread bacteria, fungus or viruses that could cause an infection.
- There are other ways to remove unwanted hair, such as creams or trimmers.
- Pubic hair (on genitals) is normal and healthy. Some people may choose to remove pubic hair, if you have questions about this talk to a trusted adult.

Shampoo

- Used to wash hair to clean away oil and dirt.
- People often find that their hair is oilier when they start puberty. They may wash it more frequently than they did before puberty.
- Some people wash their hair every day or two; some less often.
- Over-washing can increase oil production and irritate the scalp.

Shaving Cream/Gel

- Shaving with moisture feels better as it reduces friction. It also lowers the risk of razor burn or skin irritation.
- Some people use soap and water instead of shaving foam/gel. Hair conditioner is also a good alternative.

Soap/Shower Gel

- A mild or unscented soap in bar or liquid form is used for showering or bathing.
- It's good practice to wash the face, neck/ears, feet, neck/ears, armpits and genital-anal area daily.
- Scented, deodorant soaps can cause dry skin.
- To clean an uncircumcised penis, gently pull back the foreskin and wash with warm water or a mild, unscented soap.

Socks

- Wash feet and wear clean socks every day.
- Occasionally wash the insoles of shoes.

Toothbrush, Toothpaste, and Dental Floss

- Brush teeth at least twice a day and use a toothpaste with fluoride.
- Also brush the tongue and inside of the cheeks.
- Flossing is important for gum health.
- Visit the dentist once or twice a year for checkups.
- Do not share toothbrushes.

Underwear

- Choose cotton or natural fiber underwear as they allow the skin to “breathe” and keep moisture away from the body.
- It’s important to change your underwear every day.
- Synthetic underwear (e.g., nylon, polyester, rayon) and very tight underwear may increase the risk of yeast infections.
- Underwear should be comfortably loose. This allows the scrotum to move close to or away from the body to adjust the temperature of the testicles.

Wash Cloth

- A clean washcloth can be used twice daily to wash the face with warm water and face soap.
- Regular showers and washing your face daily is more important during puberty, when the body is more likely to produce increased sweat and oil.

Students may have questions about:

- Douches – douching (squirting water or other liquid) into the vagina is unnecessary and **not recommended** as it may lead to infection. The vagina cleans itself naturally with vaginal discharge.
- Feminine deodorant spray – using perfume or deodorant in the genital area is unnecessary and **not recommended** as it may lead to infection. Washing the vulva, labia and vaginal areas with water or a mild unscented soap daily is all that is needed.
- Yeast infections - a yeast infection is an infection in the vagina. Anytime there is itching, pain or unusual discharge from the vagina it is important to talk to a parent or trusted adult. There are treatments available.



This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Non Commercial-No Derivative 4.0 International license. To view a copy of this license, see <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>. You are free to copy and distribute the work including in other media and formats for non-commercial purposes, as long as you attribute the work to Alberta Health Services, do not adapt the work, and abide by the other license terms. The license does not apply to AHS trademarks, logos or content for which Alberta Health Services is not the copyright owner.

This material is intended for general information only and is provided on an "as is", "where is" basis. Although reasonable efforts were made to confirm the accuracy of the information, Alberta Health Services does not make any representation or warranty, express, implied or statutory, as to the accuracy, reliability, completeness, applicability or fitness for a particular purpose of such information. This material is not a substitute for the advice of a qualified health professional. Alberta Health Services expressly disclaims all liability for the use of these materials, and for any claims, actions, demands or suits arising from such use.



Acne Cream



Active Living



Antiperspirant or Deodorant



Athletic Support Cup



Bra



Brush and Comb



Healthy Eating



Hot Compress



Ibuprofen



Laundry Soap



Period Supplies



Pads and Panty Liners



Period Underwear



Tampons



Menstrual Cups



Razor



Shampoo



Shaving Cream or Gel



Soap or Shower Gel



Socks



Toothbrush, Toothpaste and Floss



Underwear



Wash Cloth