



**ANZSPED**

AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND  
SOCIETY FOR PAEDIATRIC  
ENDOCRINOLOGY AND DIABETES

Want to know more about

# Delayed Puberty



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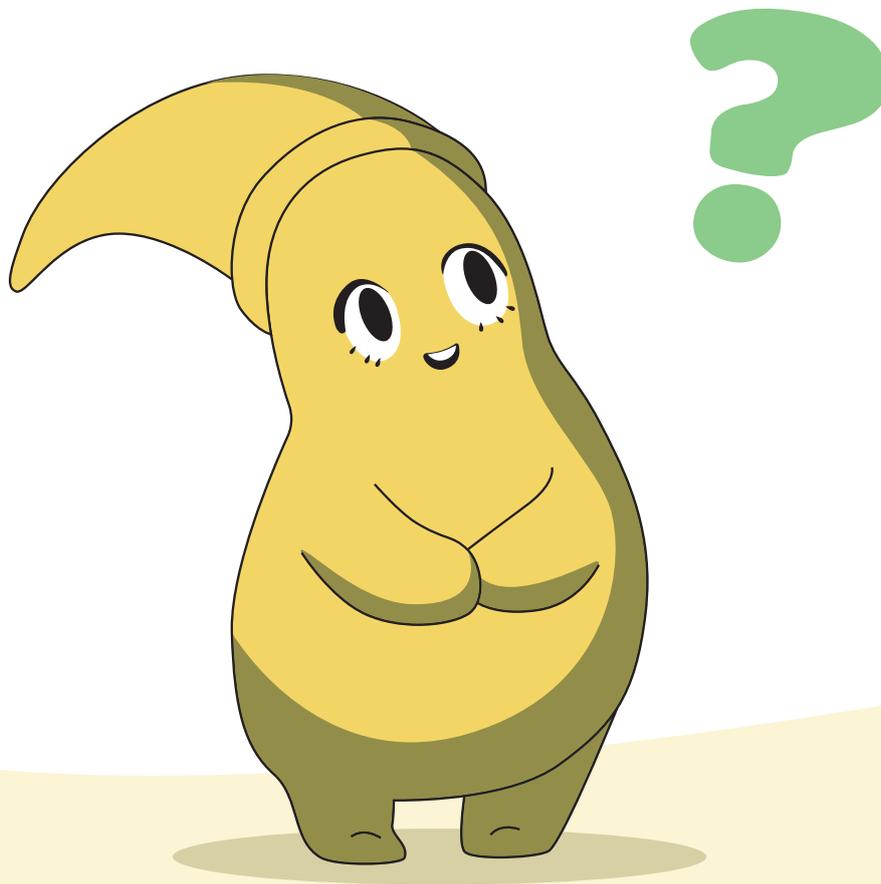
## What is puberty?

**Puberty** is the time during which our bodies change as we become adults. The age at which puberty starts varies but usually occurs between 8-13 years in girls and 10-14 years in boys.

Some of the changes to our bodies include development of pubic hair, body odour, a growth spurt and acne. The first sign of puberty in girls is usually breast development. The first sign of puberty in boys is usually increased size of the testes.

## What is delayed puberty?

**Delayed puberty is when puberty occurs later than expected.** It is when there are no signs of puberty in a girl by 13 years of age or no signs of puberty in a boy by 14 years of age.



## What causes delayed puberty?

The most common cause of delayed puberty is 'constitutional delay' (or being a late bloomer), which can run in families.

Other less common causes of delayed puberty include chronic illness, malnourishment or eating disorders, pituitary or thyroid problems, or genetic conditions (such as Turner Syndrome or Klinefelter Syndrome).

## What are the effects of delayed puberty?

There are often no long term problems from delayed puberty but it is common for adolescents to feel frustrated that physical changes, like increase in height, are occurring later than their peers.



# How is delayed puberty diagnosed?



Your doctor will ask questions about the physical signs of puberty and general health and illness.



They will also ask about the family history of puberty.



The doctor will then measure the child and review their growth over time.



They will complete a physical examination, including chest (in girls) and genital examination.



They may do investigations e.g. an x-ray of the hand and blood tests.

## What treatment is required?

**If your daughter is not yet 13 years of age or your son is not yet 14 years of age, treatment is usually not required but they will still be monitored.**

For children with constitutional delay, a short course of low dose hormones may be given to 'kick start' puberty. This is given for 3 to 6 months and then stopped. Your child will then be monitored for normal progression of puberty. If your child is found to have a condition that prevents them from progressing through puberty, they may require longer courses of hormone treatment.

It is important to speak with your child about how our bodies develop. This helps them understand why they are seeing a doctor and why they sometimes have examinations and blood tests. This also gives children a chance to ask their own questions about their body.

### **Disclaimer**

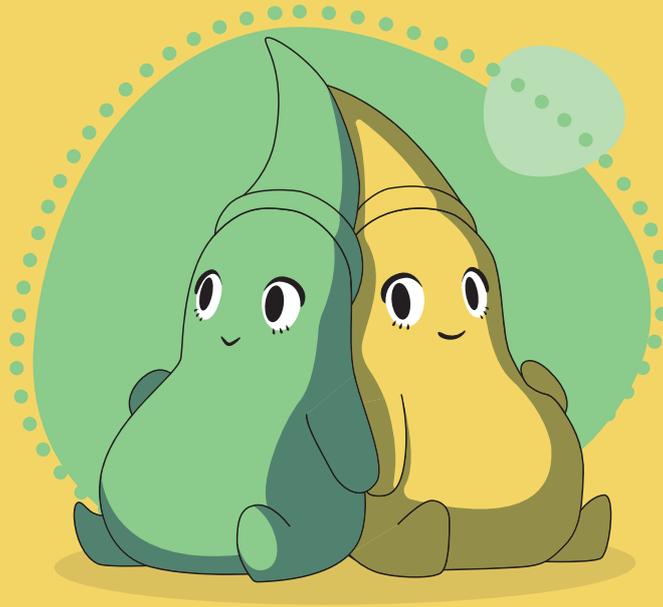
This leaflet has been written by members of ANZSPED. It is designed to give you some general information about your child's condition and treatment. If you have any questions about your child's condition and treatment, it is best to speak to your child's doctor or specialist nurse.





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## **Remember**

**Children develop at different rates and there are often no long term problems from delayed puberty.**



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