

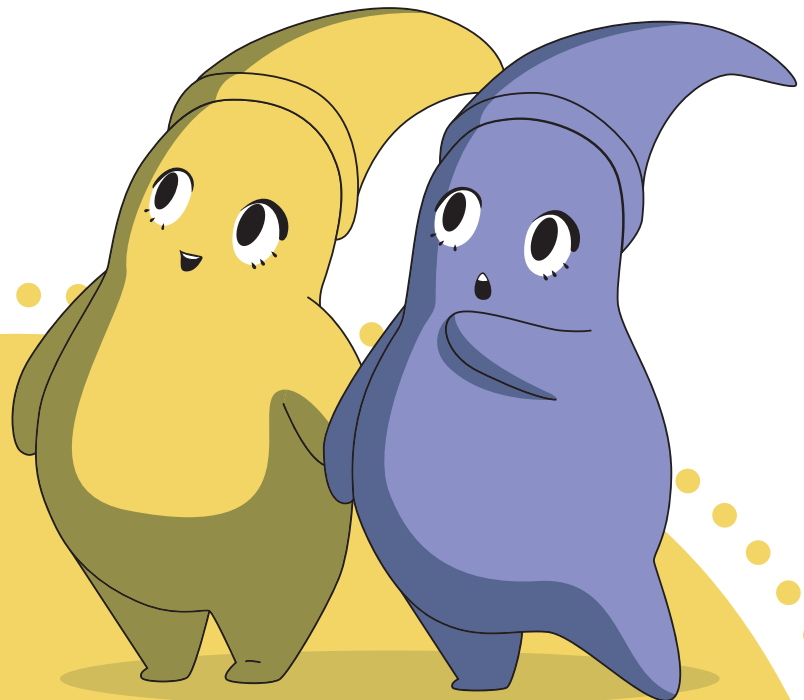


ANZSPED

AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND
SOCIETY FOR PAEDIATRIC
ENDOCRINOLOGY AND DIABETES

Want to know more about

Precocious (Early) 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.

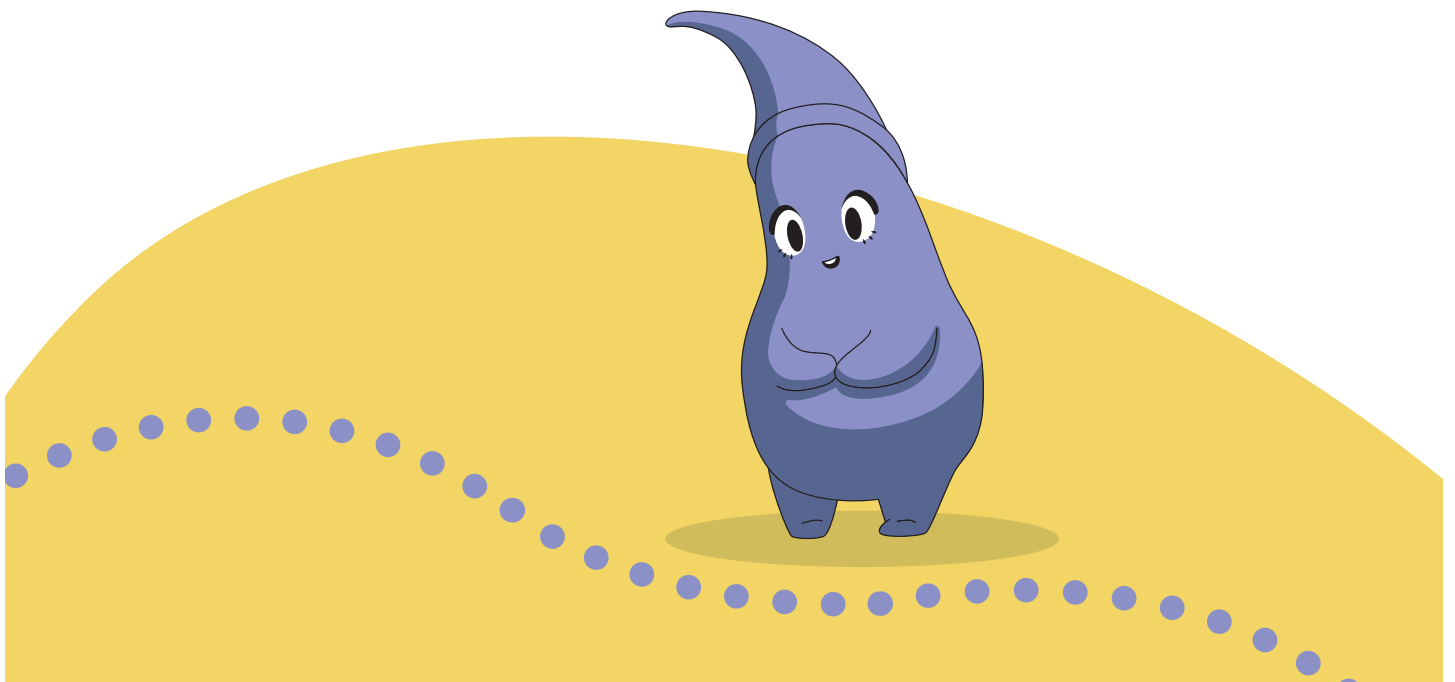
What is precocious puberty?

Precocious puberty is when puberty occurs earlier than expected i.e. signs of puberty in a girl before the age of 8 years of age or signs of puberty in a boy before the age of 9 years of age.

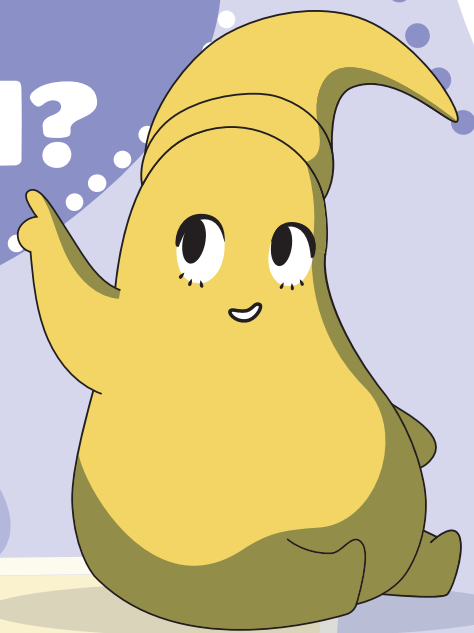
What causes precocious puberty?

Precocious puberty can be caused by various conditions.

In girls a cause is often not found. Precocious puberty is less common in boys and requires further investigation.



How is precocious puberty diagnosed?



Your doctor will ask questions about when pubertal changes were first noticed and the age when the parents and siblings went through puberty. They will also ask about any exposure to hormone medications. The doctor will then measure your child and review their growth rate over time, complete a physical examination, including chest (in girls) and a genital examination and may do investigations e.g. an x-ray of the hand and blood tests.

What are the potential long term problems of precocious puberty?

Due to the early production of hormones and early growth spurt, children may end up shorter than might be expected. At a young age some children may not cope well with the way their bodies are changing.

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.



What treatment is required?

Sometimes treatment is not required, particularly if precocious puberty occurs close to the expected age or if your child's final height will likely not be affected. If there is an underlying cause it will be treated. There are medications that can temporarily block puberty from progressing if it is considered appropriate for your child. This medication is given by an injection approximately every 3 or 6 months. Your child will have ongoing reviews to monitor their growth and progress, and this may include repeat x-rays and blood tests.

Disclaimer

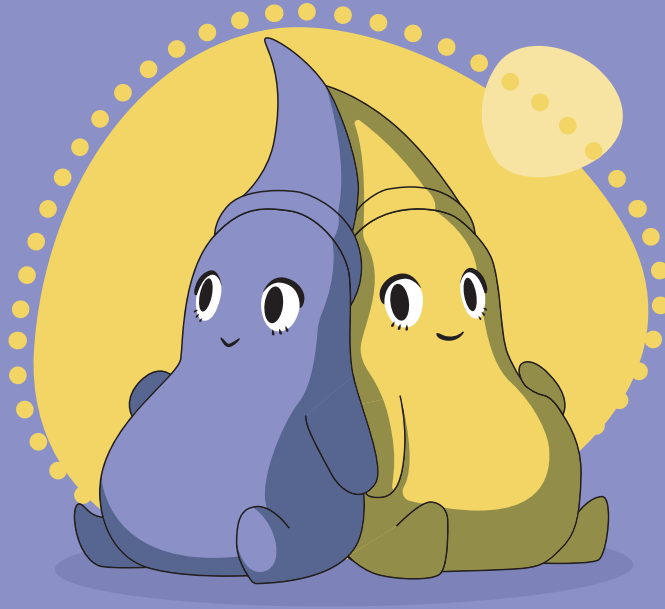
This leaflet has been written by members of ANZSPED. It is designed to give you some general information about your child's condition and treatment. If you have any questions about your child's condition and treatment, it is best to speak to your child's doctor or specialist nurse.





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