

Curriculum-Linked Activity:

Puberty Kit

Grade:

4 and up - content should be adapted by facilitator/teacher to meet the needs and developmental stage of the group

Curriculum Links

This activity meets the Ontario Health and Physical Education Curriculum expectations for Human Development and Sexual Health of the Healthy Living Strand (Grade 4 – D1.5, D2.4, Grade 5 – D1.3, D2.5, Grade 6 D2.5)

Purpose/Outcome

The puberty kit is a tool to assist in teaching about puberty and personal hygiene

Time commitment: 60 minutes

Materials Provided

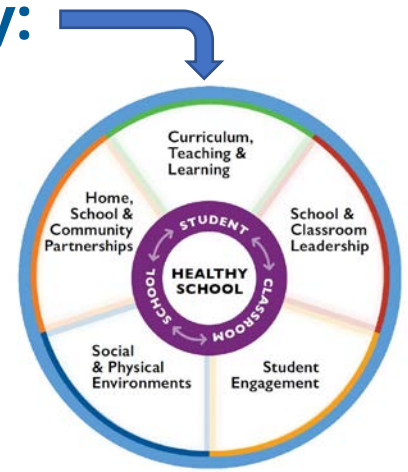
- Pre-made kits are available to borrow from Public Health

Space and Materials Required

- You can borrow pre-made kits from HPEPH by requesting through our [Educator Lending Resource Kits webform](#) or use the list below to assemble your own kit using products, or use pictures. Most of the items are available in dollar stores, and you can probably create your own kit for about \$20. Any products shown in pre-made kits are examples of similar products available. Use of any particular brand is not endorsed.

Instructions

There are numerous ways to use the puberty kit in a sexual health lesson. One idea is to ask each student in the class to pick one item from the kit. Go around the room and ask students to share what they think the item has to do with puberty. Use the discussion points below to add to their ideas. **NOTE:** Not all of the items are appropriate for all grades in various school boards.



Ontario Ministry of Health
Healthy Schools Effectiveness Framework

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

Antiperspirant and/or Deodorant

- Can be used in addition to daily washing of the underarms
- Antiperspirant stops sweat from forming and deodorant is an absorbent odor remover
- Check 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 – youth size

- People can wear a bra for comfort, modesty and support as their breasts develop
- Some males develop breast tissue for a year or more, but this will usually go away

Brush & Comb

- A comb or brush can be used to untangle, manage and style hair
- Some people may choose to spend more time styling their hair, as concerns about appearance may become more important to them

Hat

- Hats are good protection from the sun's heat and damaging rays
- Hats or caps can become dirty. Wash or change hats regularly to keep germs, dirt, old sweat and oil from being rubbed onto the face or hair

Healthy Eating

- During puberty you may feel hungrier. Your body is growing and needs energy from food
- It is natural to gain weight during puberty. Your body knows how much to eat to be the size it should be. Take care of your body by feeding it
- People that are menstruating may “crave” certain foods and/or eat more before or during their period
- Try to eat a variety of food, including food you like, food that makes you feel full and satisfied, and food that helps your body and mind feel good

Hot Compress

- Exercise and warmth may help with menstrual cramps
- Good alternative to pain medications

Ibuprofen

- Exercise, a warm bath, hot compress or over the counter medications such as ibuprofen may help with menstrual cramps and discomfort
- Do not take any medication without asking a parent or guardian first
- If you take pain medications, be sure not to take more than the recommended amount

Socks

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

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

Menstruation Supplies (pads, panty liners, period panties, 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
- Menstruation supplies can be bought at drug, grocery, convenience and health stores or online
- Choose products that are unscented
- Always put used menstrual supplies in the garbage, not the toilet
 - **Pads** are 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
 - 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, put them in a zippered wet bag or 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
- **Panty liners** are similar to pads and absorb light menstrual flow or vaginal discharge
- **Period panties** are 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
 - Panties 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** are 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 that 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** are silicone or plastic cups that are inserted into the vagina and collect menstrual flow. Follow the 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 (in bag)

- 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 a virus that could cause an infection
- 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
- Some people wash their hair every day or two; some less often
- Over-washing can increase oil production and irritate the scalp
- 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

Soap/Shower Gel

- A mild or unscented soap in bar or liquid form is used for showering or bathing and for washing the face twice daily
- If a person doesn't shower or bath daily, it is important to remember to wash the feet, neck/ears, armpits and genital-anal area daily
- Scented, deodorant soaps can cause dry skin

Toothbrush, Toothpaste, and Dental Floss

- Brush and floss teeth at least twice a day
- Also brush the tongue and inside of the cheeks
- Visit the dentist once or twice a year for checkups
- Do not share toothbrushes

Note for Educator: Children 17 years and under from families living with a low income in Hastings Prince Edward may qualify for free dental care. Visit hpePublicHealth.ca/kidsdental/ for more information.

T-Shirt (Cotton)

- Natural fabrics such as cotton allow the skin to breathe. Clothes made from these fabrics may be more comfortable to wear
- It is important to wash clothes often

Underwear (Cotton)

- Choose cotton or natural fiber underwear as they allow the skin to “breathe” and keep moisture away from the body
- It is important to wear clean 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, to promote the growth of healthy sperm

Wash Cloth

- A clean washcloth or sponge can be used twice daily to wash the face with warm water and mild soap
- Generally, no other skin care products are necessary unless advised by a doctor or parents

Water Bottle

- Drinking water is important especially during physical activity and hot weather
- Plain water is the easiest, least expensive and doesn't cause tooth decay
- It is important to NOT share water bottles or other objects like forks, chap/lip stick and straws, even with close friends or family members, as they can spread germs that can cause sickness or infection
- Drinks that are high in caffeine, sugar or artificially sweetened such as pop, energy drinks, coffee, sports drinks and juice should not replace water in a healthy diet

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 and a mild soap daily is all that is needed
- Yeast infections - a yeast infection is an infection of 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

Other Supporting Resources

- Lesson plans and additional activities are available at:
 - www.teachingsexualhealth.ca
 - <https://phecanada.ca/programs/always-changing>

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