

Precocious Puberty

Series N. 4



Patient's Guide

Easy Readability Leaflet

Precocious Puberty - Series 4 (Revised August 2006)

This leaflet was produced by Fernando Vera MSc and Prof Gary Butler at the Institute of Health Sciences, University of Reading, Reading, UK (August, 2006). Some portions of the text were extracted or modified from the Precocious Puberty Leaflet (June, 2004)\$ and the Growth and Growth Disorders Booklet Series (Third edition, 2000)* and may be used in conjunction with these as they provide a choice of leaflets providing the same information, but for people of different ages and reading abilities. The numbering sequence in all series is the same for easy cross reference. The original leaflet series can be also obtained from the links given at the end.

All illustrations were created and produced by Fernando Vera MSc.

This leaflet is part of the Hormone Disorders Leaflet Series. The following are also available:

- Series N 3.** Puberty and the Growth Hormone Deficient Child.
- Series N 4.** Precocious Puberty
- Series N 5.** Emergency Information for Children with Cortisol and GH Deficiencies and those Experiencing Recurrent Hypoglycaemia.

- Series N 6.** Congenital Adrenal Hyperplasia
- Series N 7.** Growth Hormone Deficiency in Young Adults.
- Series N 10.** Constitutional delay of growth and puberty
- Series N 11.** Multiple Pituitary Hormone Deficiency
- Series N 12.** Diabetes Insipidus
- Series N 13.** Craniopharyngioma
- Series N 14.** Intrauterine Growth Retardation or Small Gestational Age
- Series N 15.a.** Hyperthyroidism
- Series N 15.b.** Hypothyroidism
- Series N. 16.** Type 2 Diabetes and Obesity

The production of these leaflets were funded by Serono Ltd, Bedfont Cross, Stanwell Road, Feltham, Middlesex TW14 8NX, UK. Additional help was provided by the Child Growth Foundation (www.childgrowthfoundation.org).

*Written by Dr Richard Stanhope (Gt. Ormond Street/Middlesex Hospital, London) and Mrs Vreli Fry (Child Growth Foundation).

\$Written by Laura Pye (Leeds University, UK)

Hello!

Today we'll tell you about growing up too fast. We'll tell you what it means, why it happens and how doctors treat it.

What is precocious puberty?

It means that you are growing up too soon. You are starting to develop a grown up's body before you are ready.



Why did it happen to me?

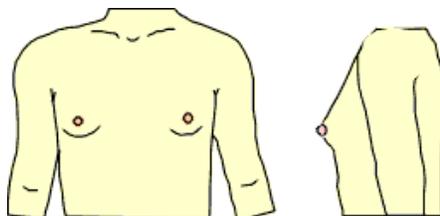
Sometimes your brain tells your body to grow up before you are ready to. Doctors don't know why your brain does this. But they do know how to make you stop growing until you are ready.

Growing up too fast is not your fault. It does not happen because of something you have eaten or because you were naughty.

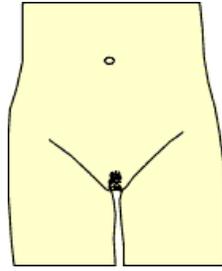
What might happen to your body?

If you are a girl:

- Your breasts start getting bigger



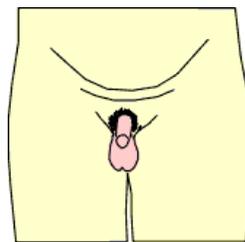
- You might see hair growing under your arms and in between your legs.



These are all normal things that happen to you when you grow up into a woman. But for you they are happening earlier than they should do.

If you are a boy:

- You might see your penis getting bigger. Also you could see hair growing there and under your arms



- You might start growing some hair on your face and getting spots.

These are all normal things that happen to you when you grow up into a man. But for you they are happening earlier than they should do.

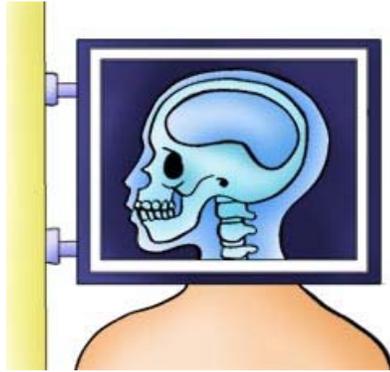
What will the doctor do?

The doctor will talk to you and the person who looks after you. The doctor may have to do some of the following tests:

- Blood tests: This is done using a small needle to take a bit of blood from your arm. The doctor will put some special cream on your arm so it won't hurt so much.
- Picture of your hand: The doctors call this an x-ray. It is done using a special machine and doesn't hurt a bit!



- Picture of your head: The doctors call this an MRI scan.



- Tummy scan: This takes a picture of inside your tummy and doesn't hurt a bit!

What will happen after these tests?

If the doctor thinks you're growing up too fast they can give you some medicine. The medicine is given by a small needle once a month into your arm or leg. The needle is very quick and will feel like a small scratch. The medicine tells your body to "Stop growing, it's not time yet!"



When it is the right time for you to become a grown up, the doctor will stop giving you the medicine.

What happens if you don't take your medicine?

If you don't take the medicine you will carry on growing. At first you will be much taller than friends your age. Then you stop growing as fast. Soon, other children your age will start to grow as fast as you did. They will keep growing and could grow up taller than you.

Congratulations!

Now you know about precocious puberty, why it happens and how doctors treat it. If you have not understood some things in this leaflet, don't feel shy to ask your doctor or other friendly people in hospital. They will happily explain these or any other doubts you may have.



What are other sources of useful of information?

The goal of this leaflet was to provide a basic overview of precocious puberty. Further information can be found in the following sources:

- **European Society for Paediatric Endocrinology**
ESPE Secretariat, BioScientifica
Euro House 22 Apex Court Woodlands, Bristol BS32 4JT - UK
Telephone No: + 44 (0) 01454 642208
Internet: <http://www.eurospe.org/>
- **British Society for Paediatric Endocrinology and Diabetes**
BSPED Secretariat, BioScientifica
Euro House 22 Apex Court Woodlands, Bristol BS32 4JT - UK
Telephone No: + 44 (0) 01454 642208
Internet: <http://www.bsped.org.uk/>
- **Child Growth Foundation**
2 Mayfield Avenue, Chiswick London W4 1PW UK.
Telephone +44 (0) 20 8995 0257
Internet: <http://www.childgrowthfoundation.org/>

You can also consult your doctor or nurse for additional information in your local area.