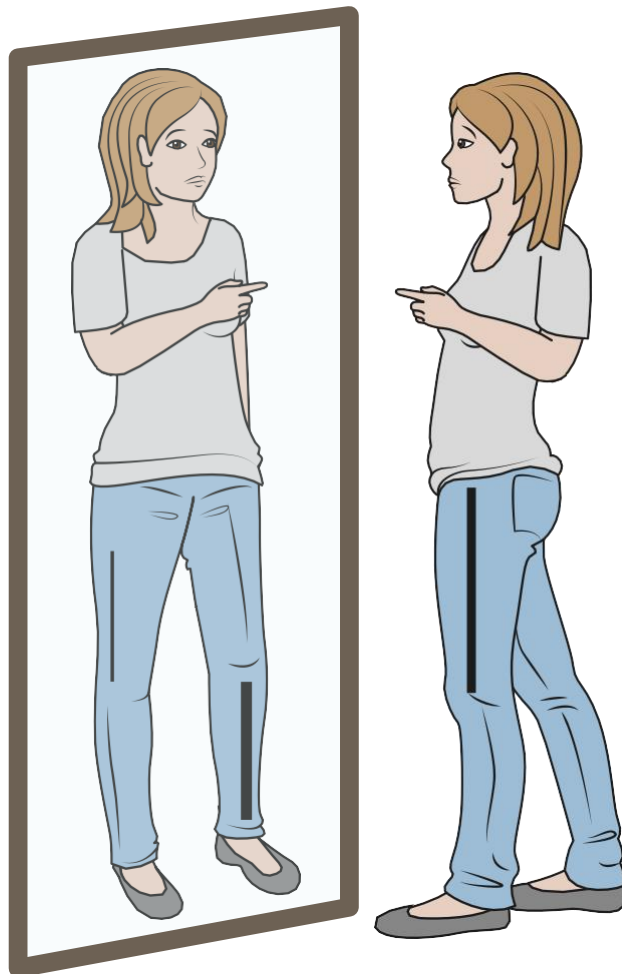


Puberty



I am a girl.



WARNING:

Contains images of nudity of a sexual nature.

This fact-sheet is not suitable for very young children.

Puberty doesn't start at the same age for all children. That's why SantéBD recommends using this fact-sheet with a parent or guardian, a teacher or a healthcare professional.

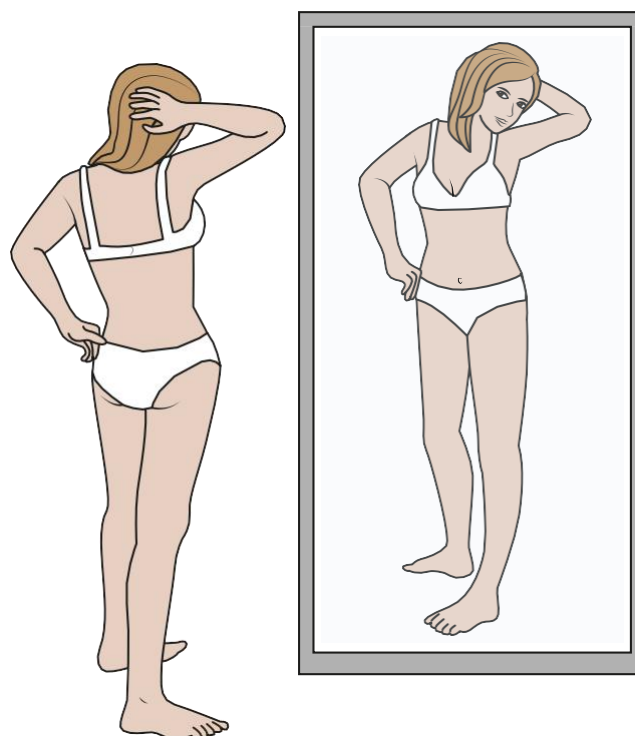
Thanks to the SantéBD app, you can choose not to view images that you might find upsetting.



**During adolescence, the thoughts
in my head start to change...**

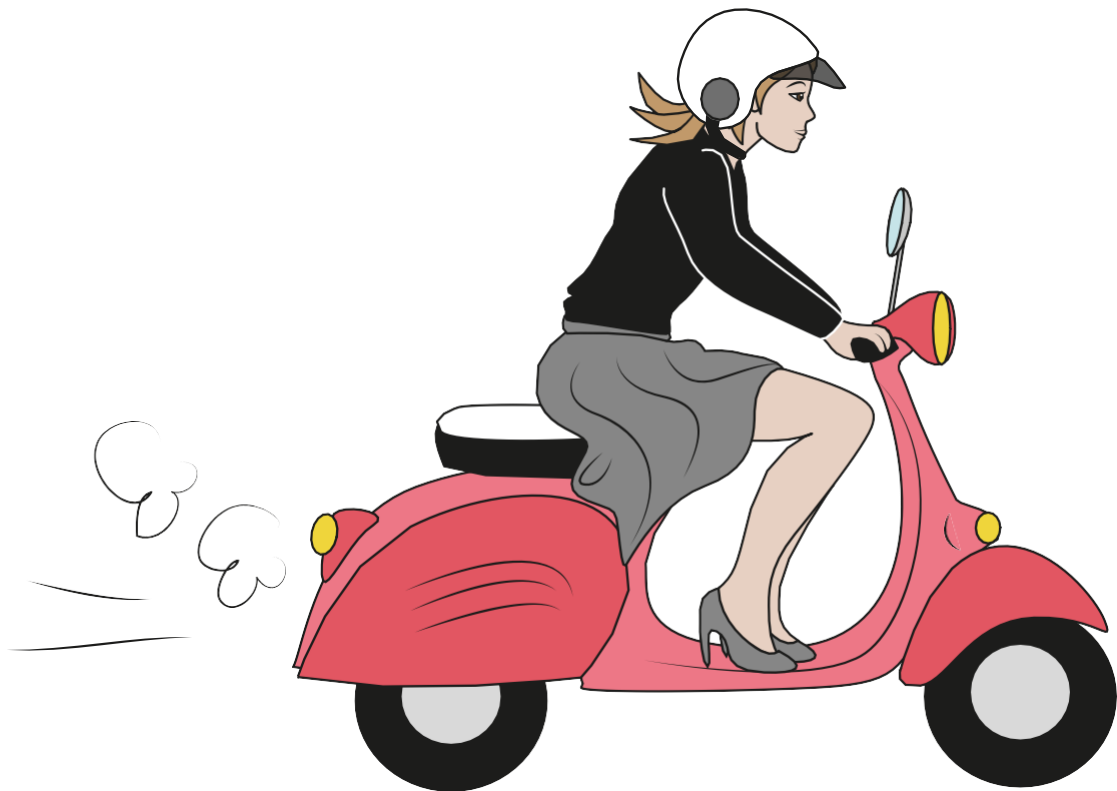
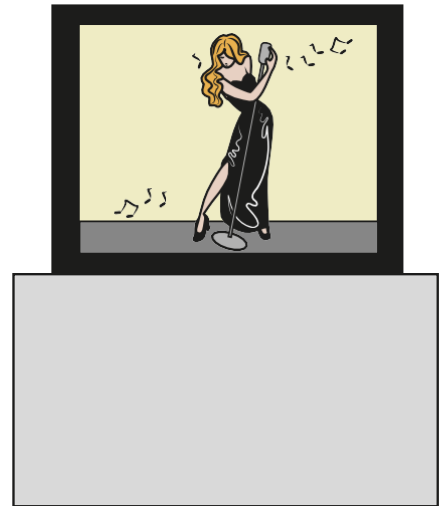
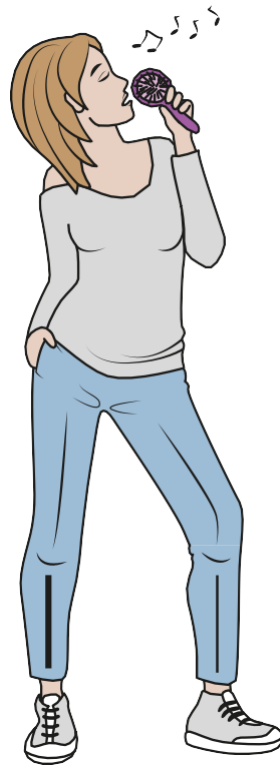


...And so does my body.



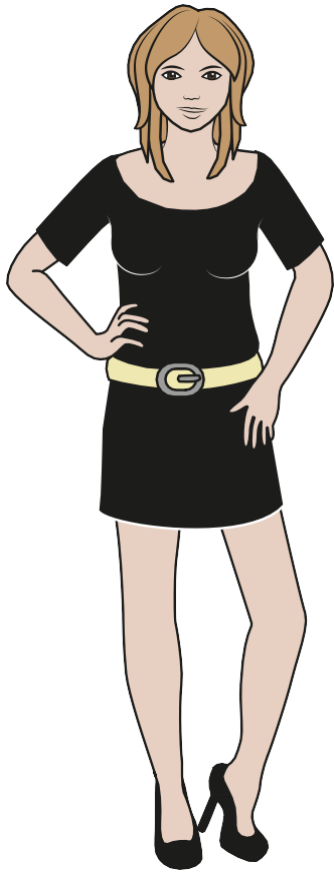
Inside my head, my behaviour changes.

I feel myself becoming a woman.



I might want to change the way I look.

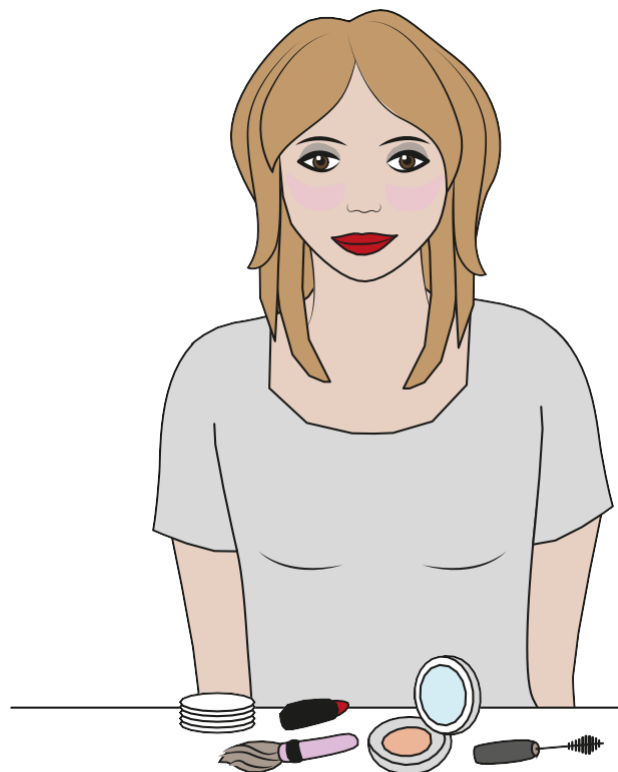
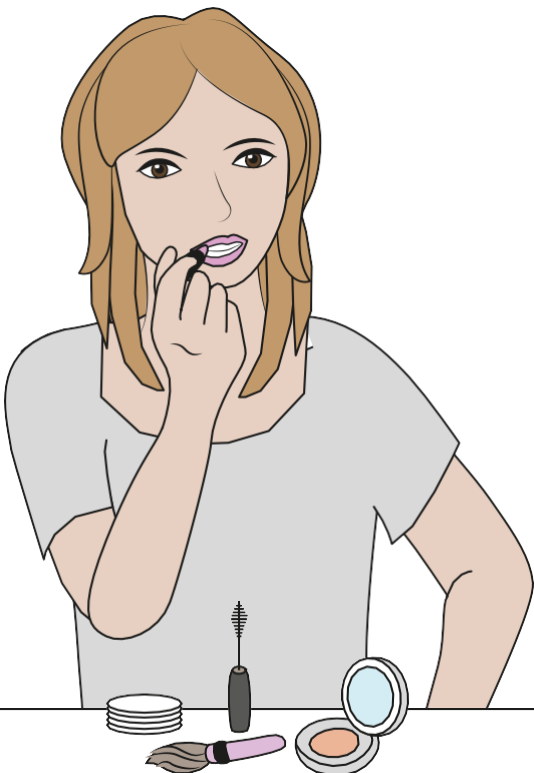
● **I might want to dress differently.**



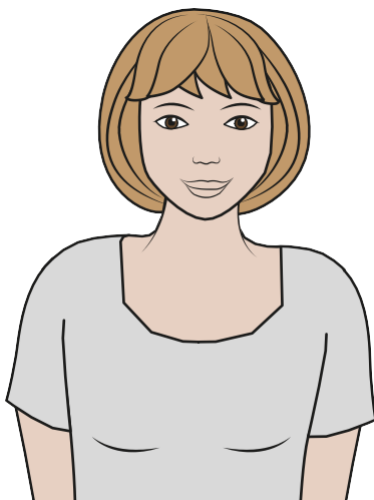
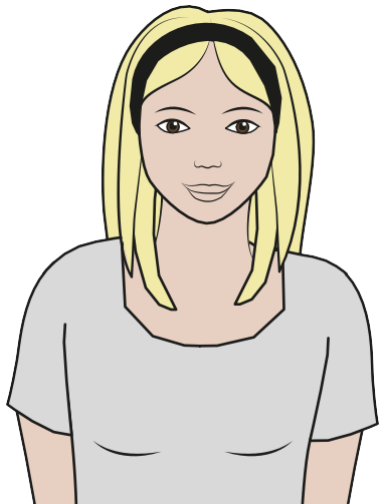
● **I might want to wear makeup:**

a little,

or a lot.

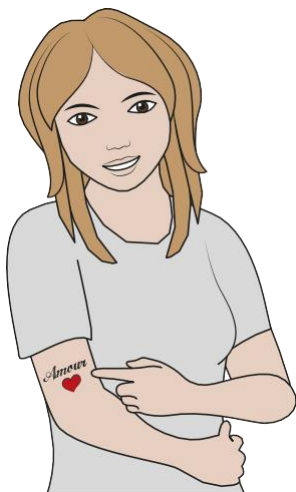


- I might want to change my hairstyle.



- I might want to get:
(with my parent's consent until I am 18-years old)

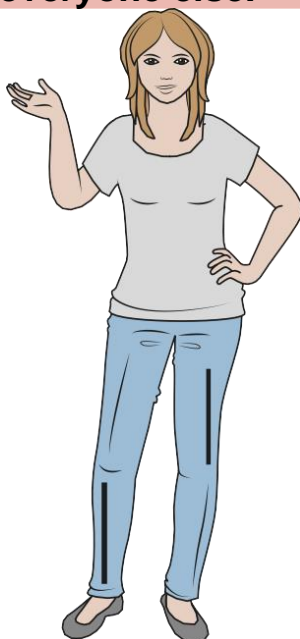
a tattoo



or a piercing.

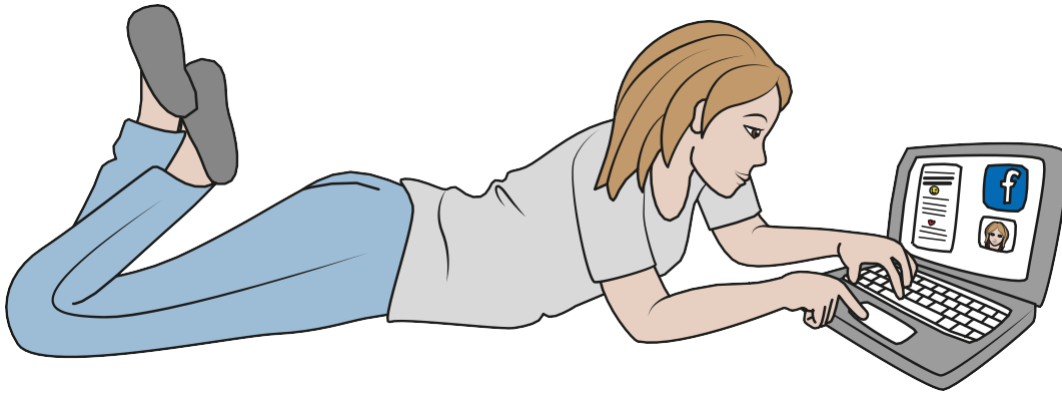


I might also want to be just like everyone else.

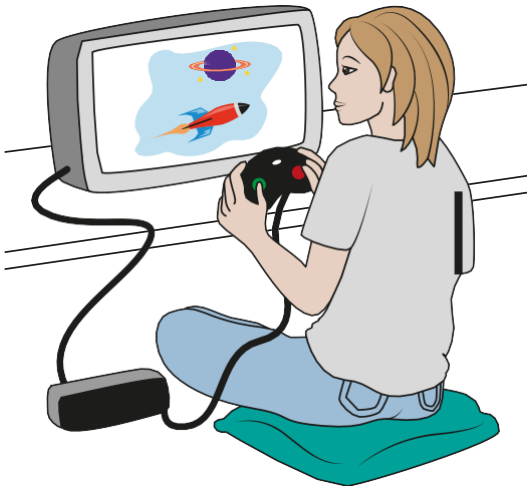


I might want to do my own thing.

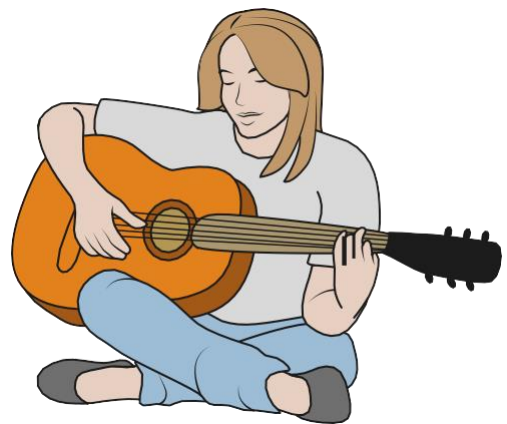
- Spending time on social networks.



- Gaming.



- Playing music.



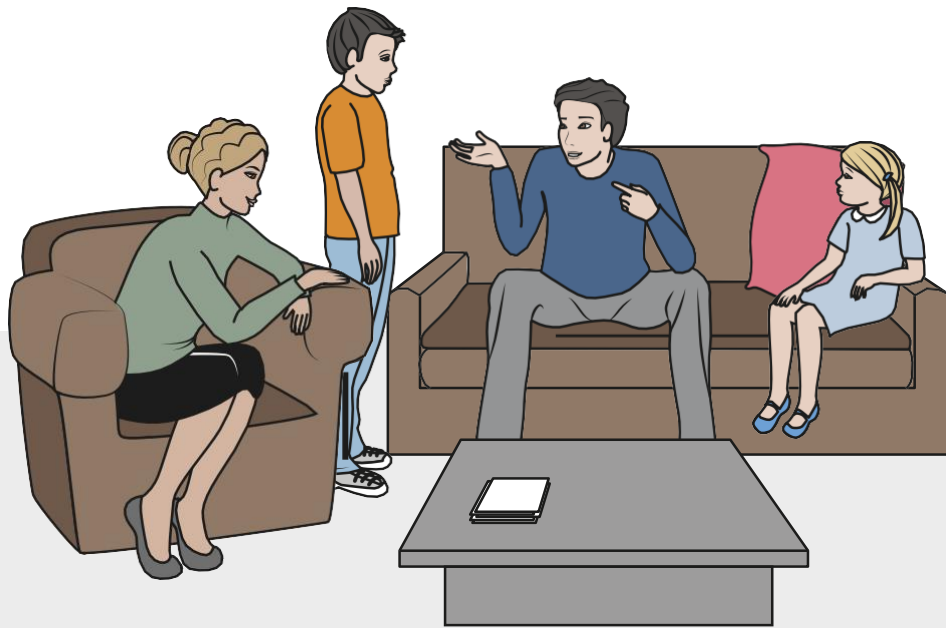
- Playing sport.



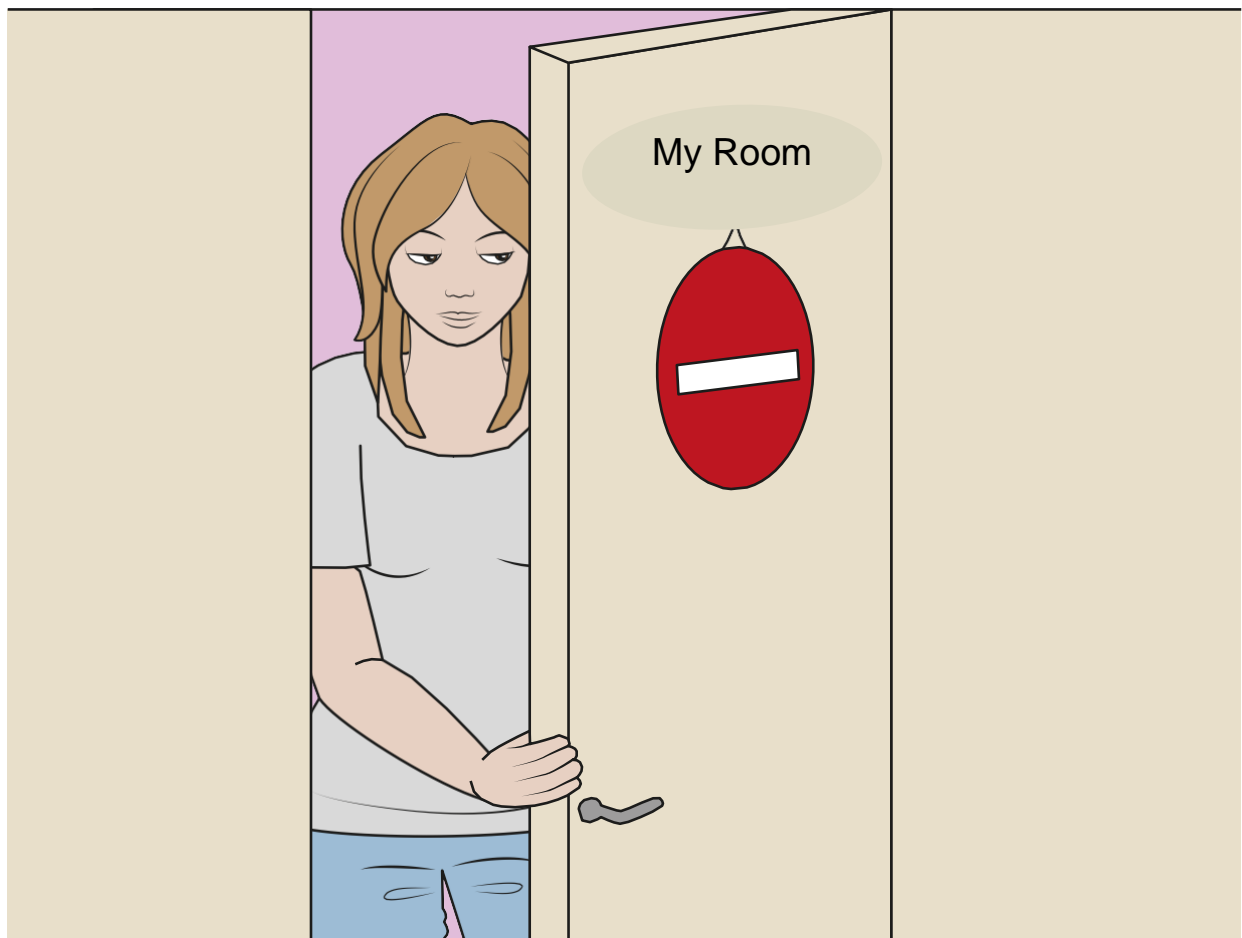
- Going out and dancing.



I might just want to be alone.



● **I might want to stay in my room by myself.**



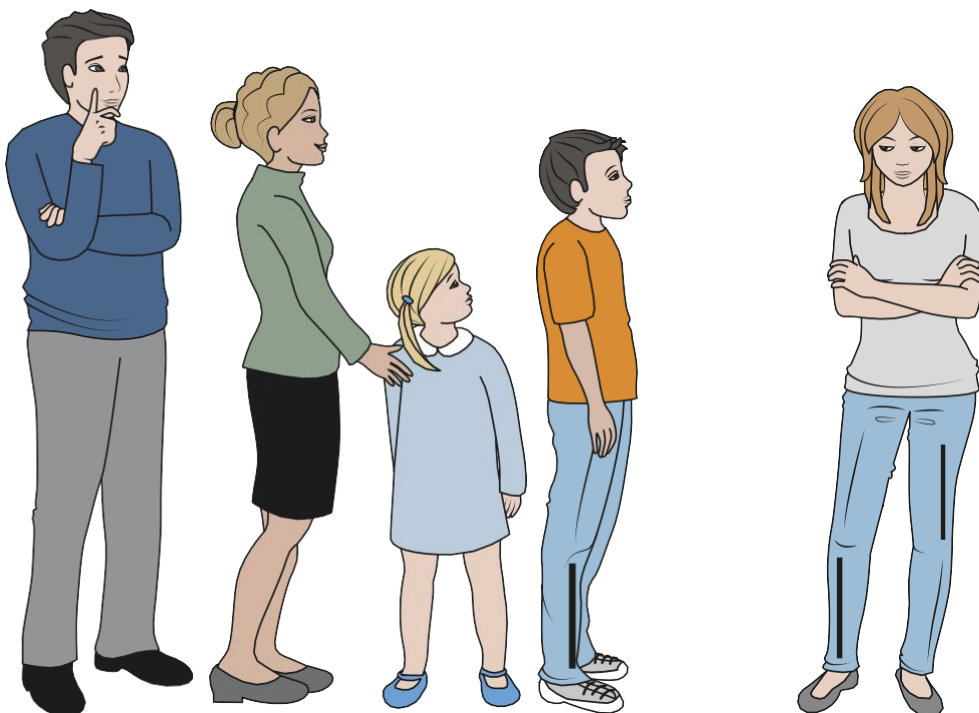
**The thoughts inside my head are
changing**
I don't know what I want
I have a lot of questions to answer.

My body has changed.

- **I don't look the same as before.**

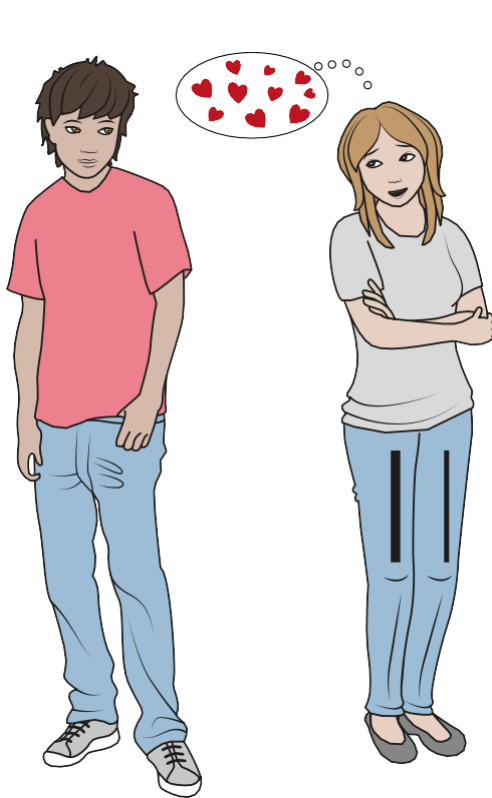


- **It feels like people don't look at me the same as they used to.**

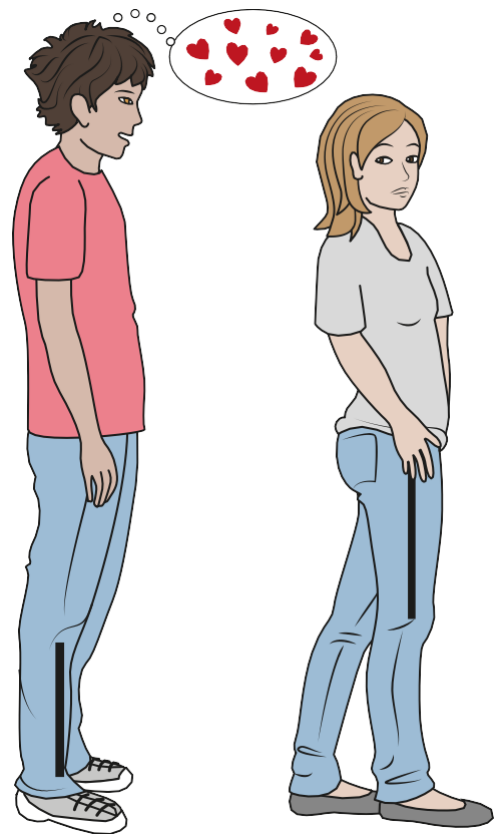


I might experience:

- Strong feelings for somebody.

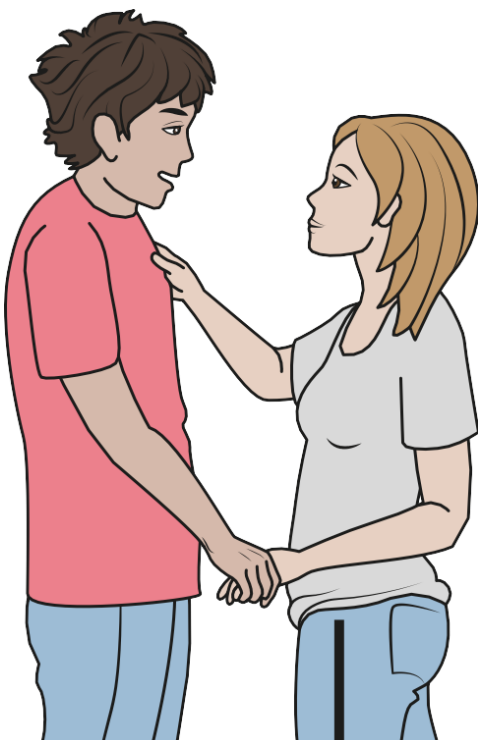


- Or somebody might have strong feelings for me.

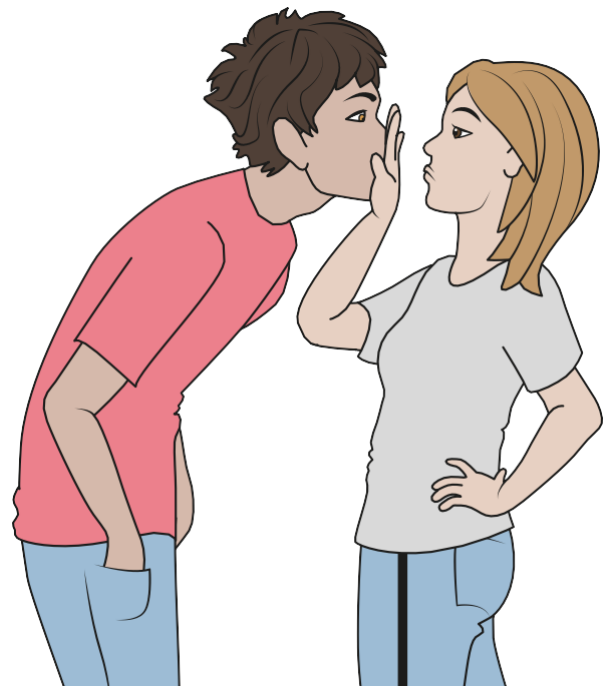


People have to respect what I choose.

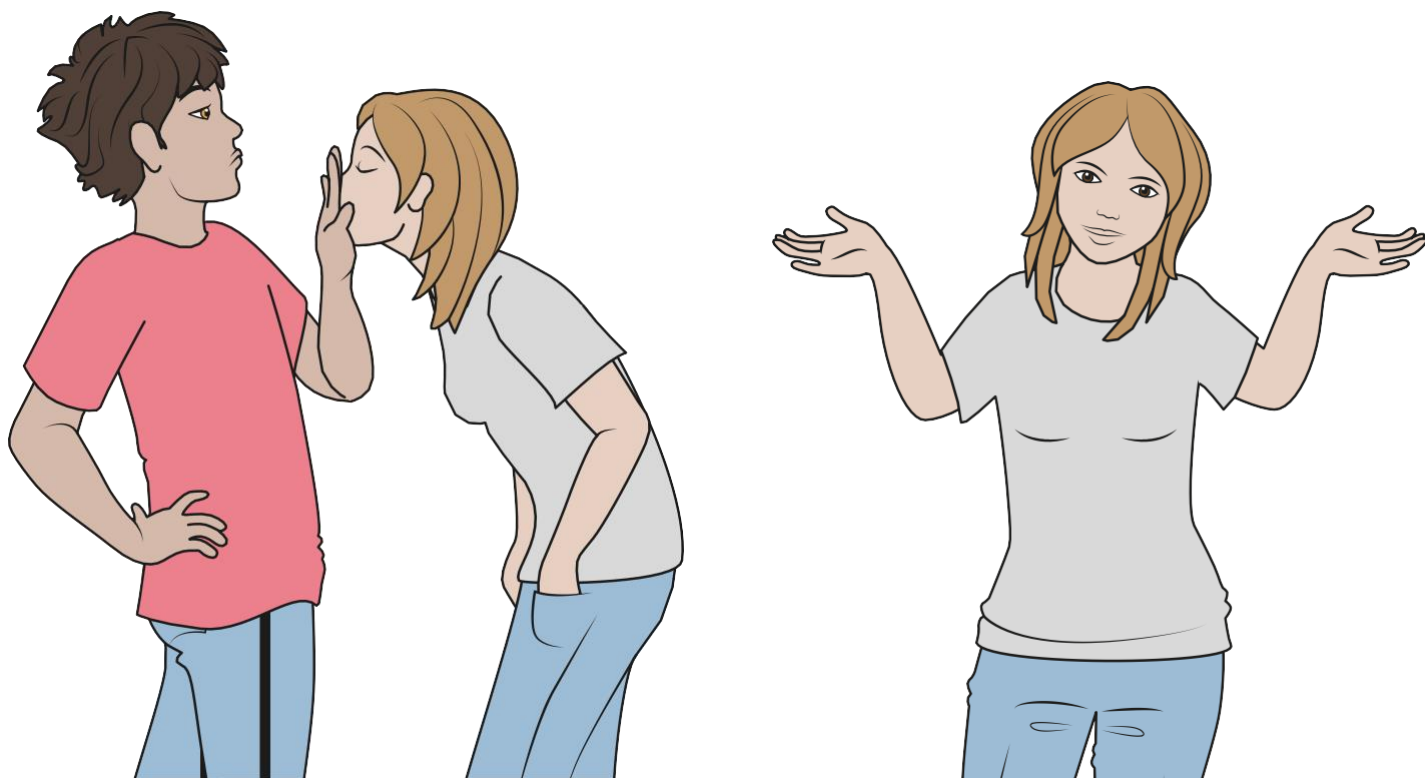
- I can say “Yes” if it feels right.



- I must say “No” if I don’t feel the same way.



I must also accept refusal from others.



I might also want to smoke, or drink alcohol.

- I may be tempted to try to fit in.
- But it's OK to say "No".
- It's bad for my health.



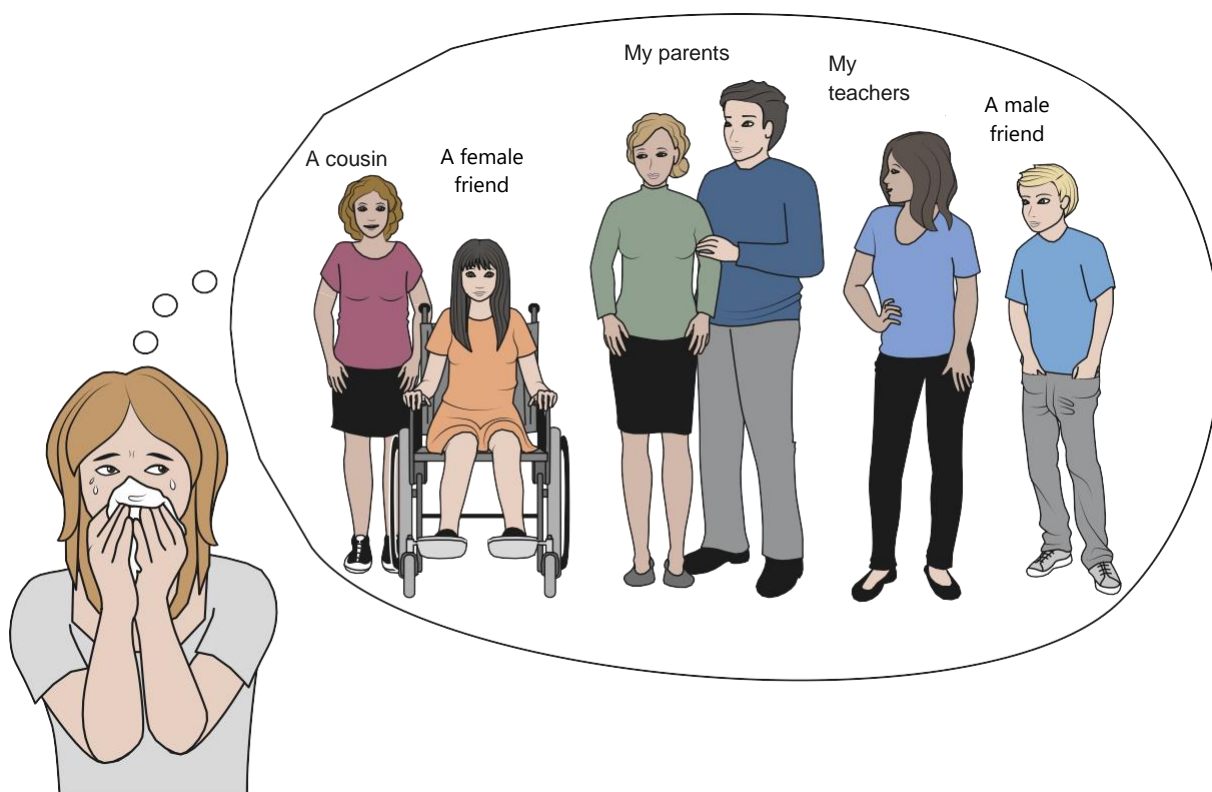
I may come into contact with other young people who smoke cannabis.

- I should stay away: it's very bad for my health.
- In most countries it's totally against the law.



I can ask for help if I am unsure what to do.

- My family and friends can help me.



- There are also specialist helplines to give me advice.

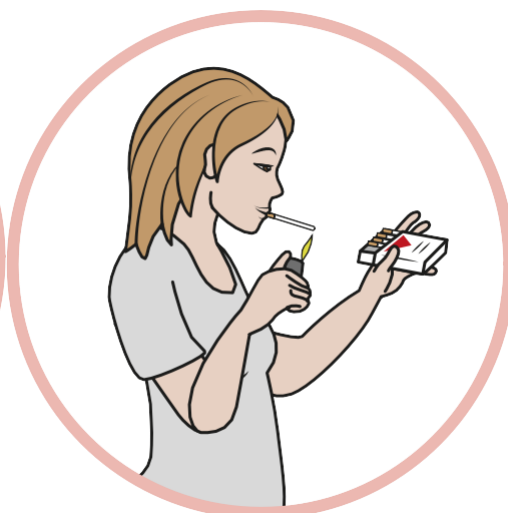


I can talk to them about any problems I have, for example:

I act strange when I drink alcohol.



I smoke too much.



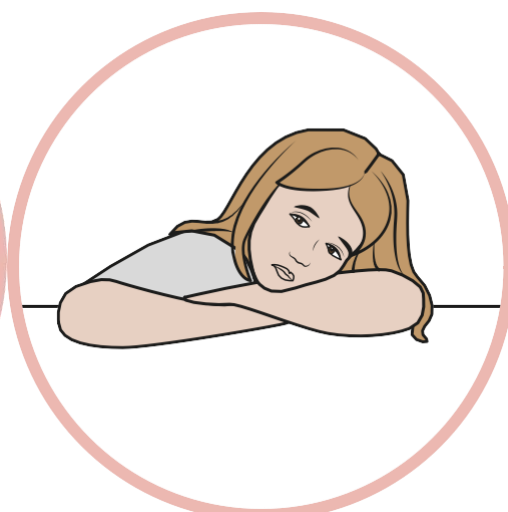
I'm regularly using drugs.



I'm getting bullied online.



I feel really sad all the time.

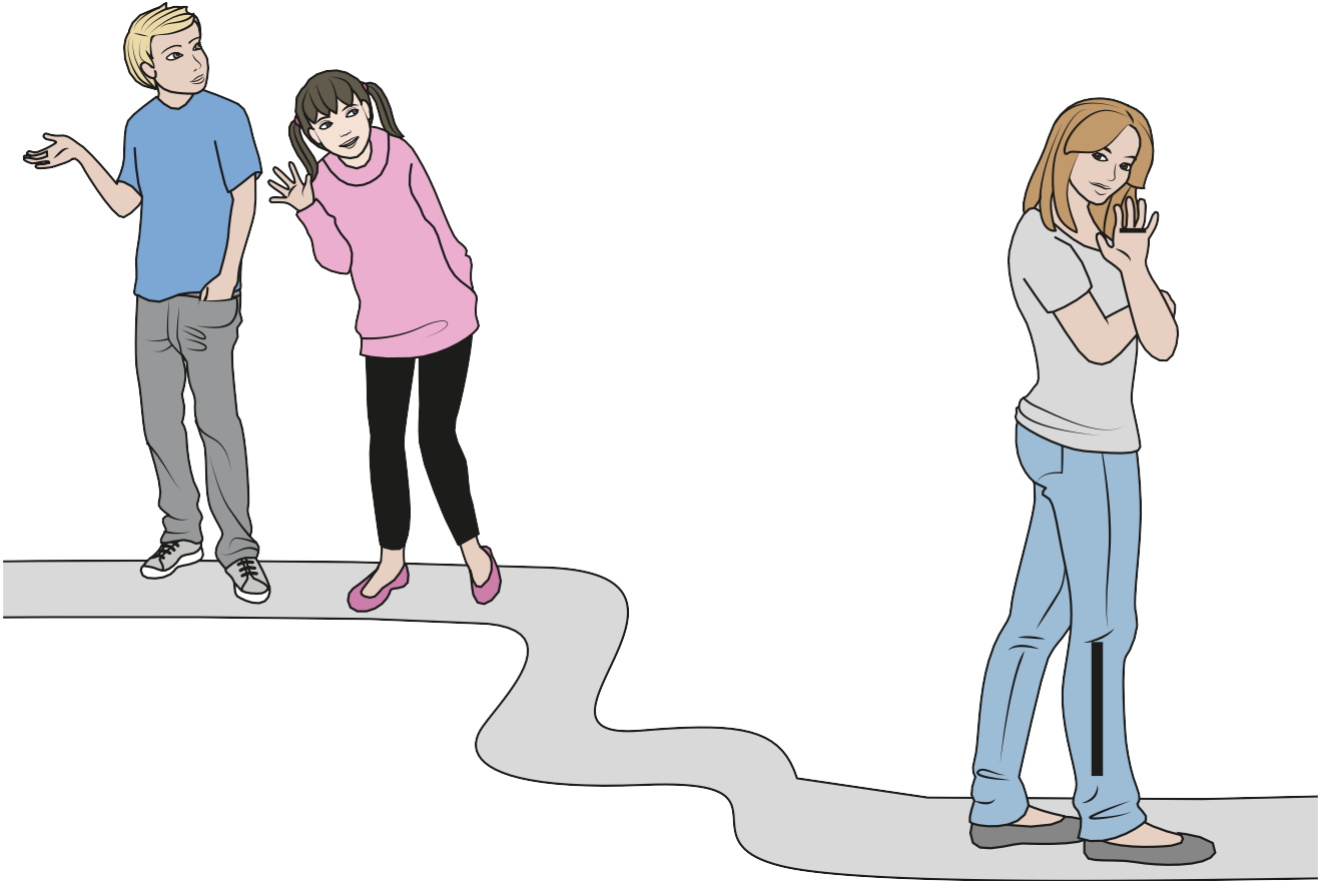


People are bullying me.

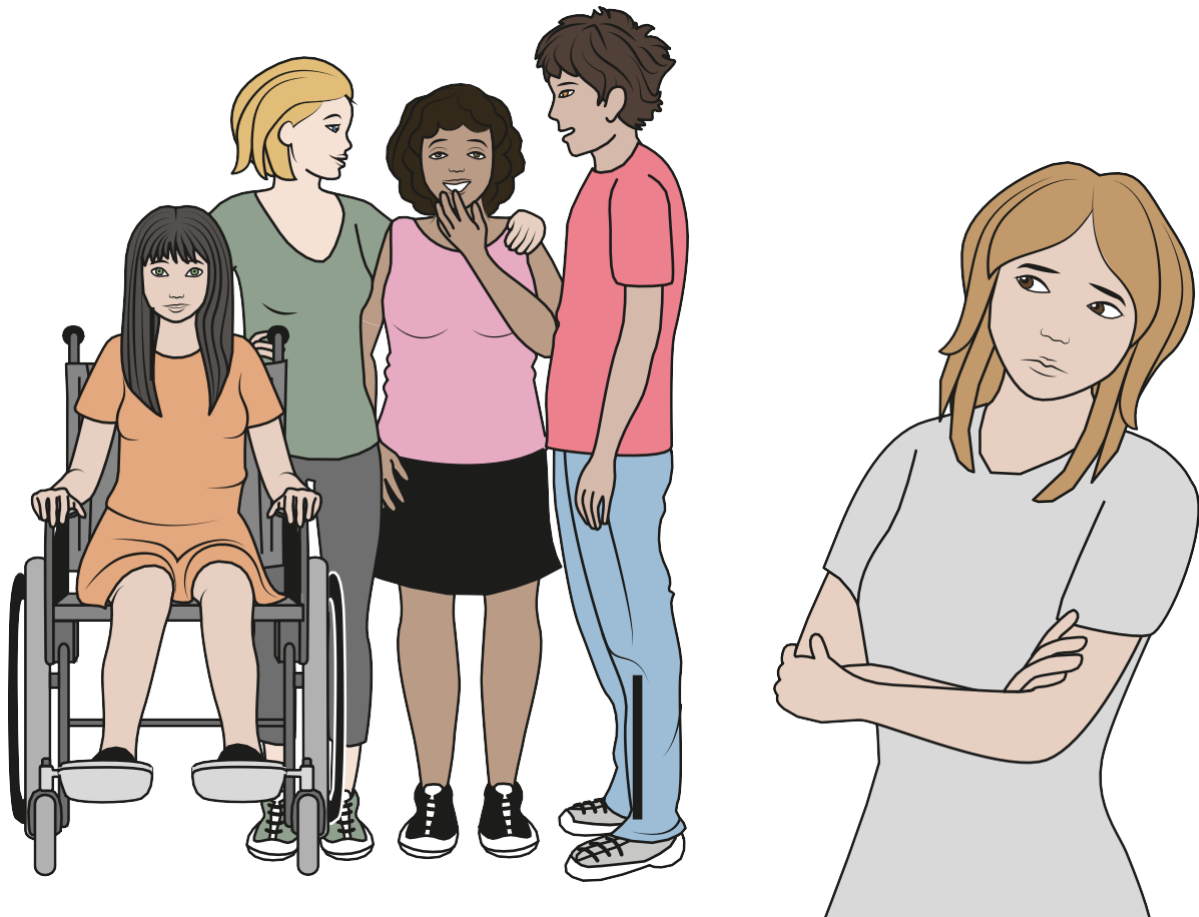


I want to make new male and female friends.

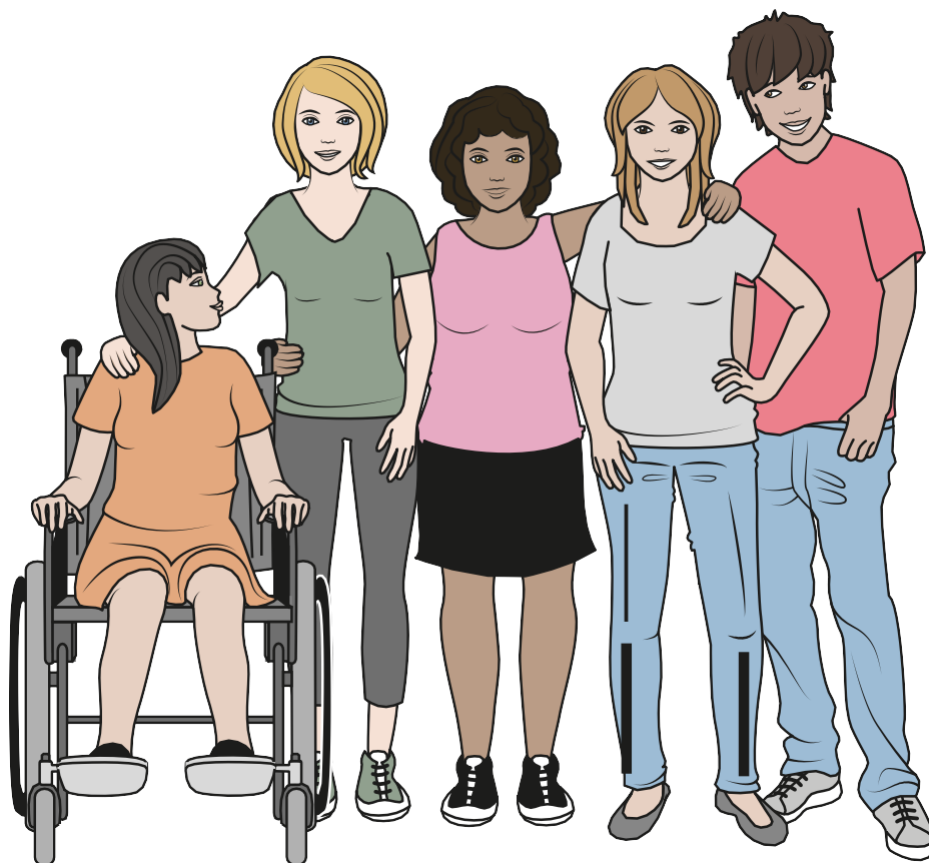
- **I might not want to see my old friends anymore.**



- **But how do I make new friends?**

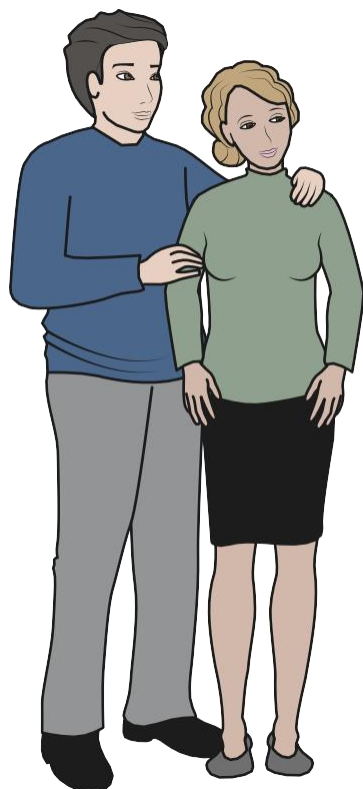


- I want to be part of a group.
- I want them to like me.
- I want to fit in.

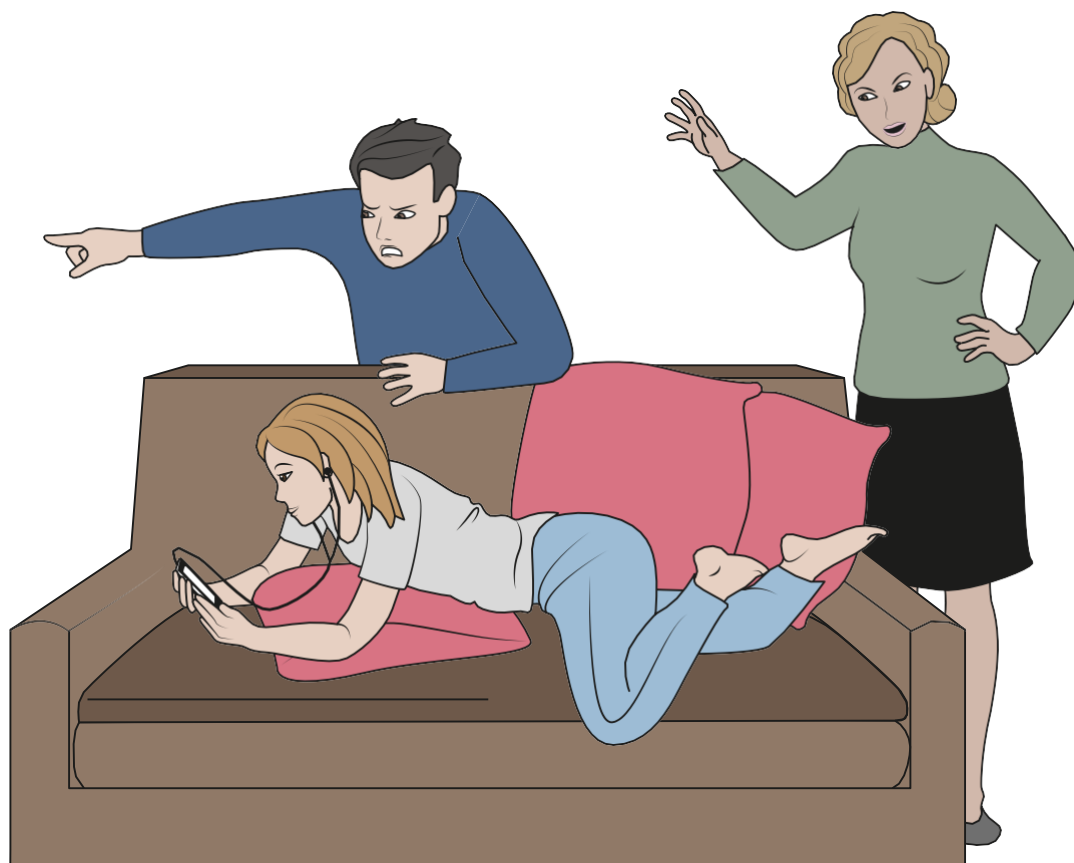


I change the way I behave with my parents.

- I love my parents, but sometimes they're just so annoying!



- They feel the same way about me!



- I no longer agree with my parents.
- We argue a lot.



● It feels like they don't love me anymore...

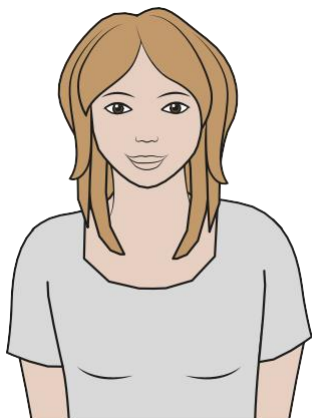


● ...but they love me just as much as ever!



● **My mood changes suddenly!**

I'm fine.



I'm sad.



I feel like laughing.



I'm mad.



I'm embarrassed.



I feel like crying.



I'm happy.

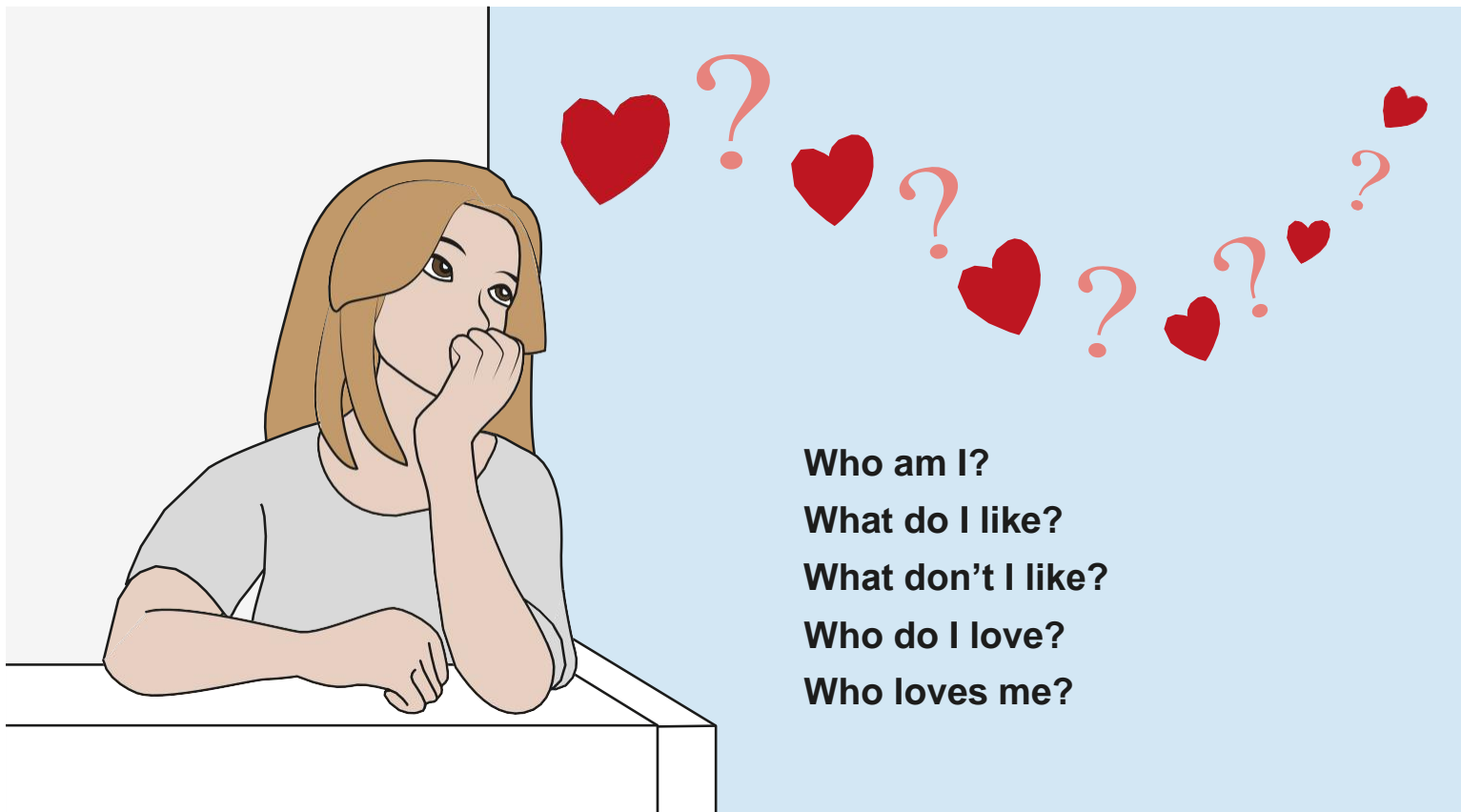


● Sometimes I might get violent and lose control.

I need help to calm down.



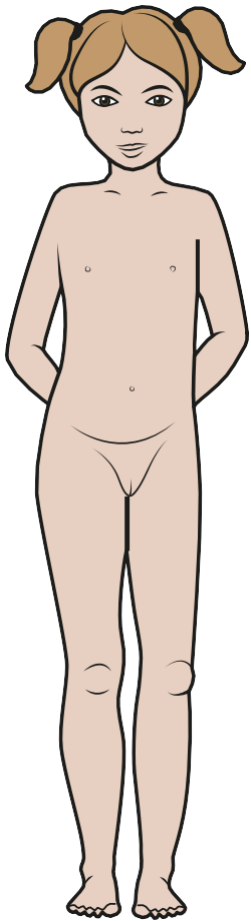
I'm starting to ask some major questions about my life.



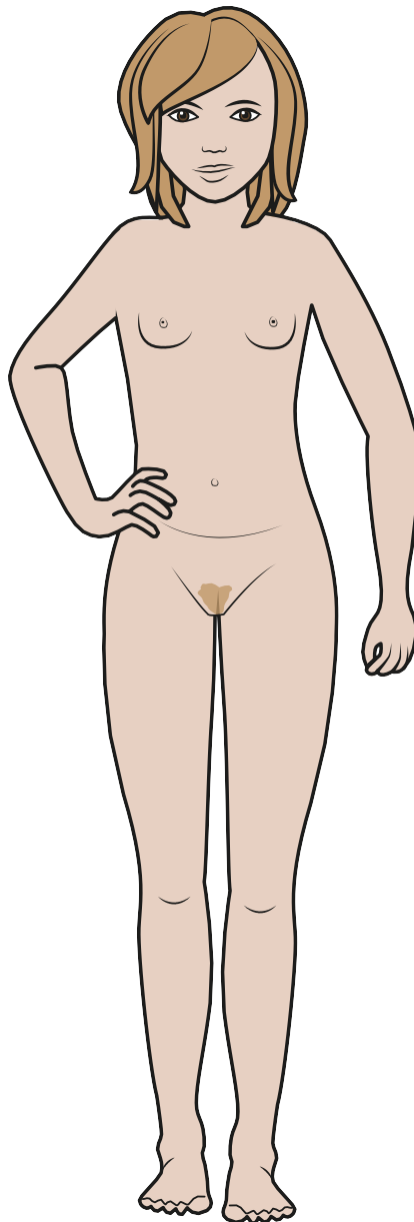
**Who am I?
What do I like?
What don't I like?
Who do I love?
Who loves me?**

I am an adolescent, my body is changing too.

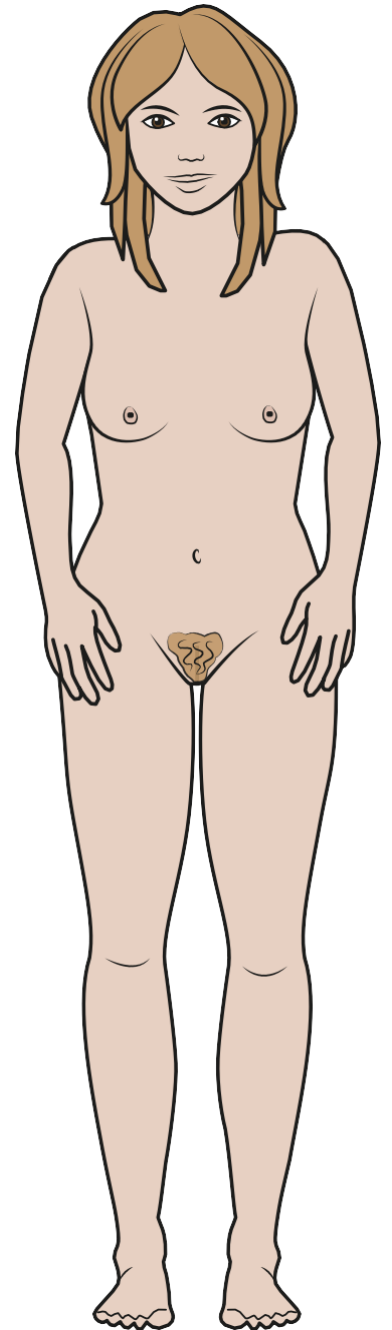
I can see and feel my body changing.



Child

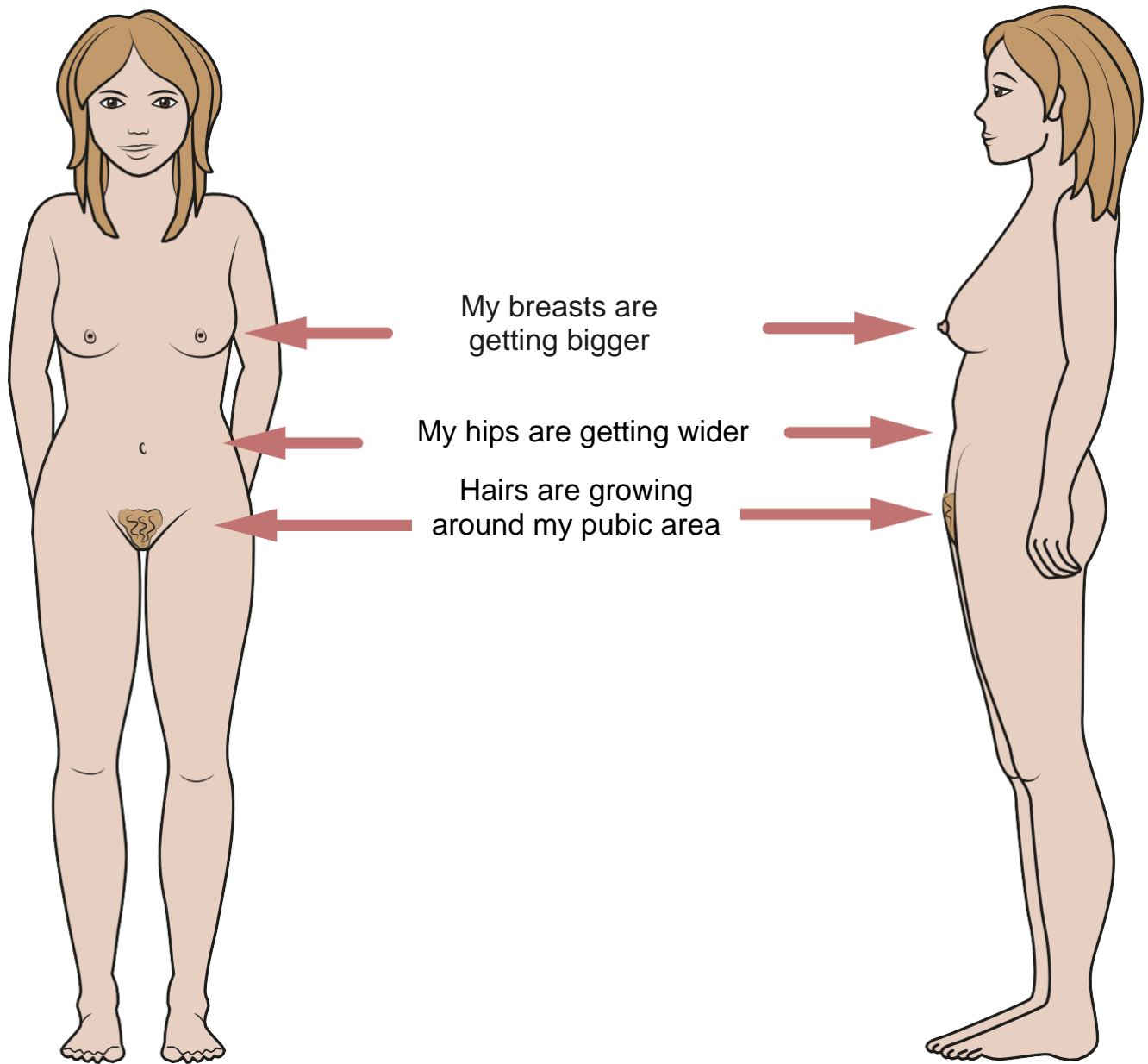


Adolescent

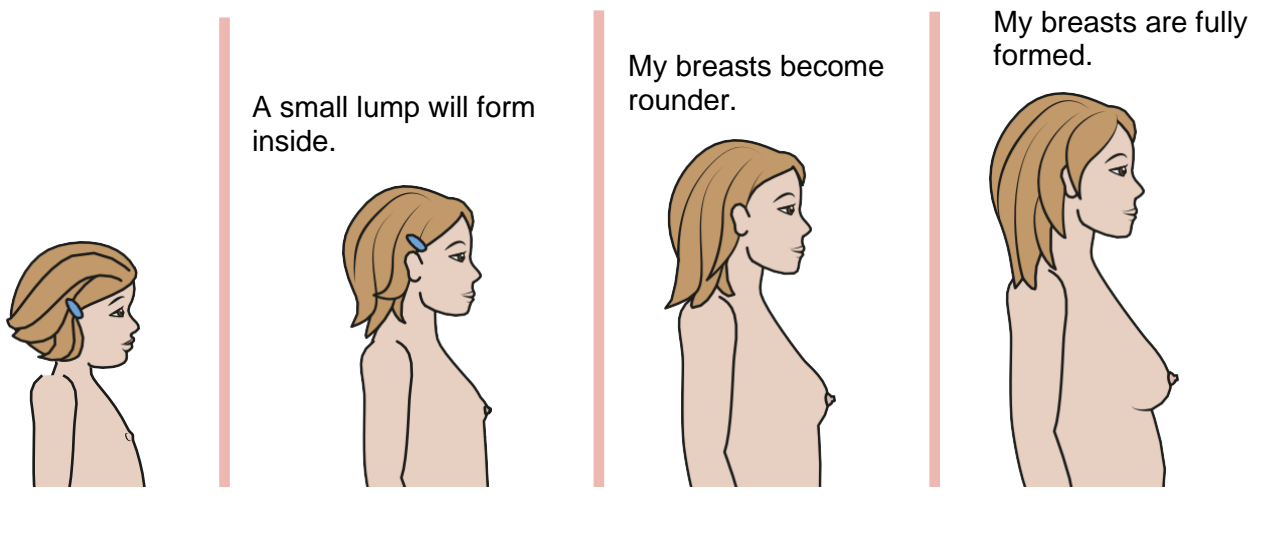


Adult

● I see that:



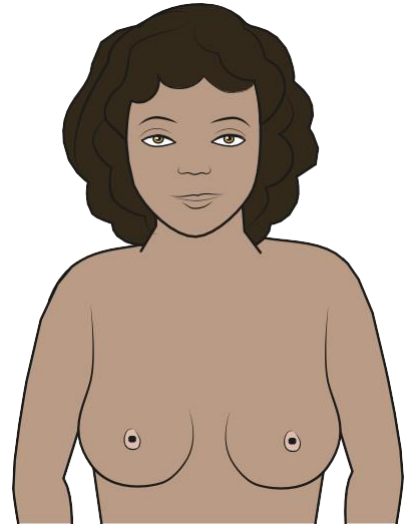
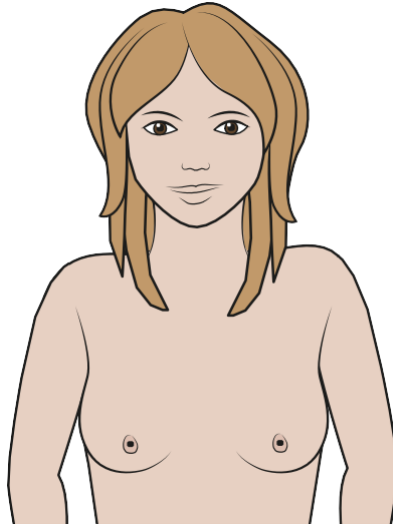
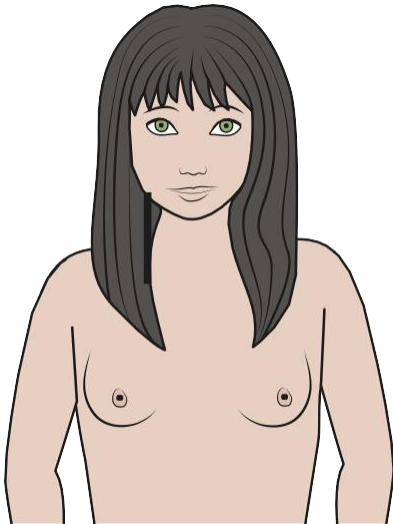
● My breasts will continue to grow for several years.



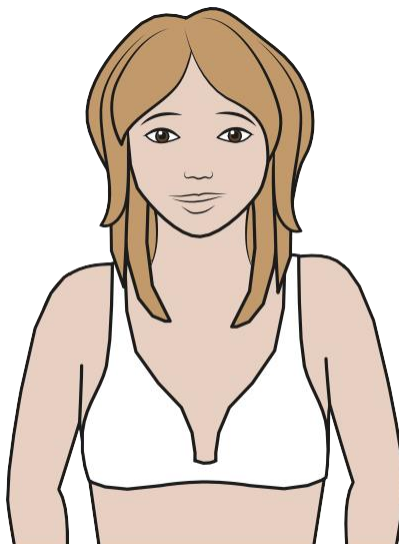
- **When they start to grow, my breasts are very sensitive.**
It can really hurt if I hit them or press on them.



- **As an adult my breasts may be big or small.**

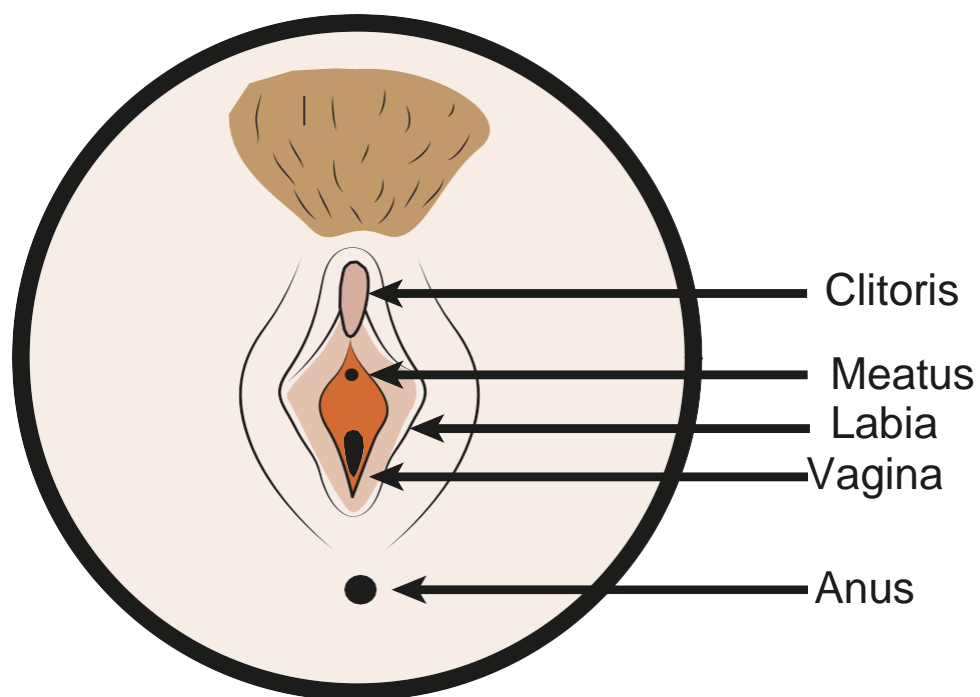
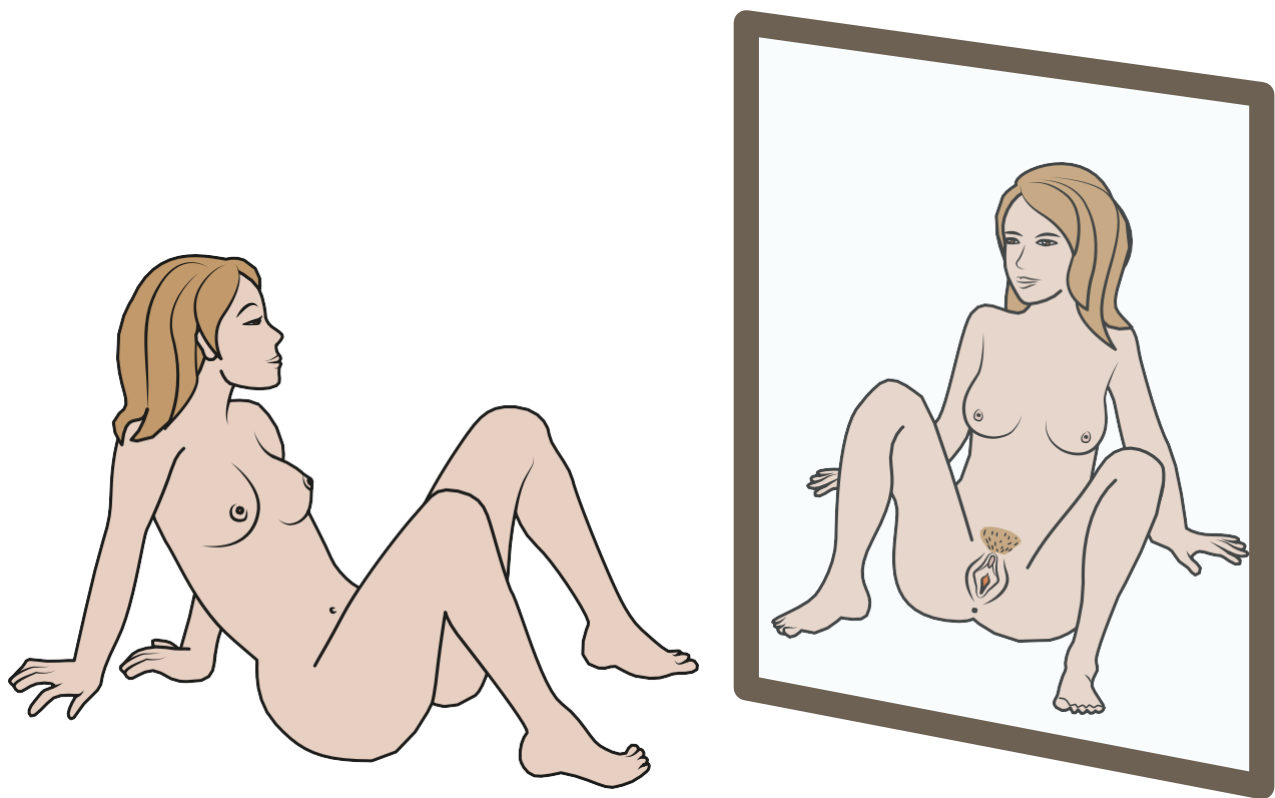


- **When my breasts start to grow, I can wear a bra.**



My sexual organs also change shape.

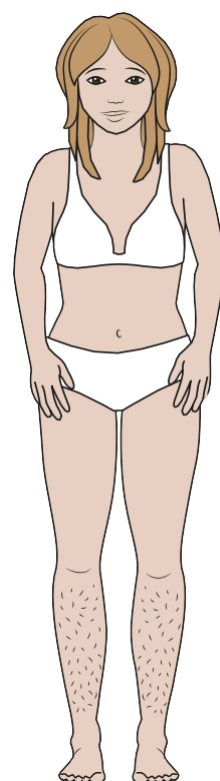
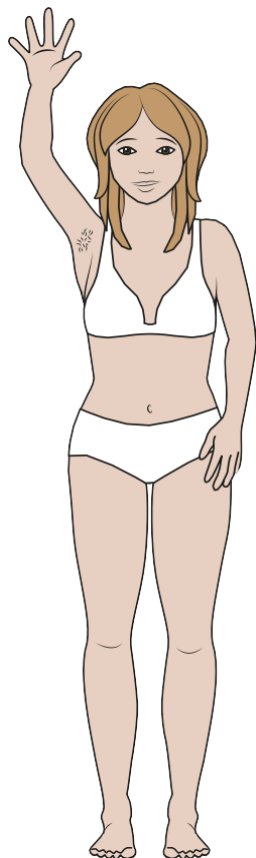
- I might want to look at my pubic area in the mirror.



Every woman's sexual organs are different.

It can be big or small, light or dark, with larger or smaller labia.

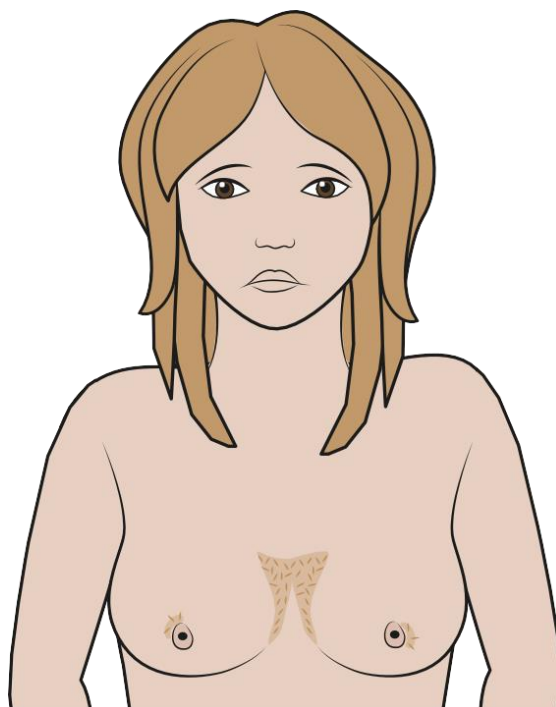
Hairs grow on my arms, on my pubic area and on my legs.



● **Sometimes I might have a few hairs:**

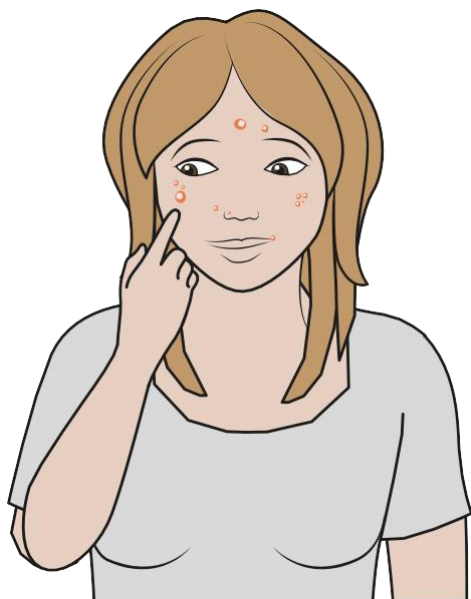
on my face,

on my breasts.



I might get acne: these are spots on my skin

● **On my face,**



● **and sometimes on my back.**



My hair might become greasy.

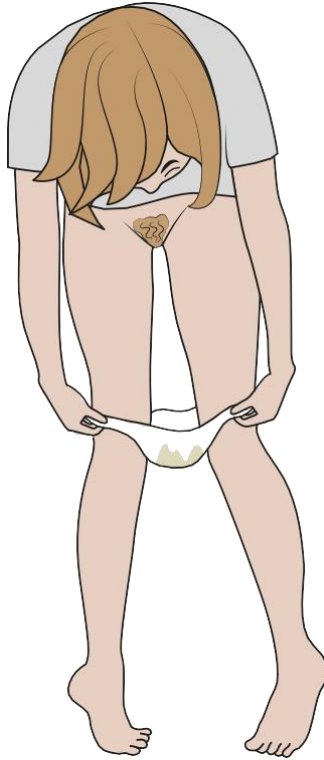


The smell of my body changes and gets stronger.



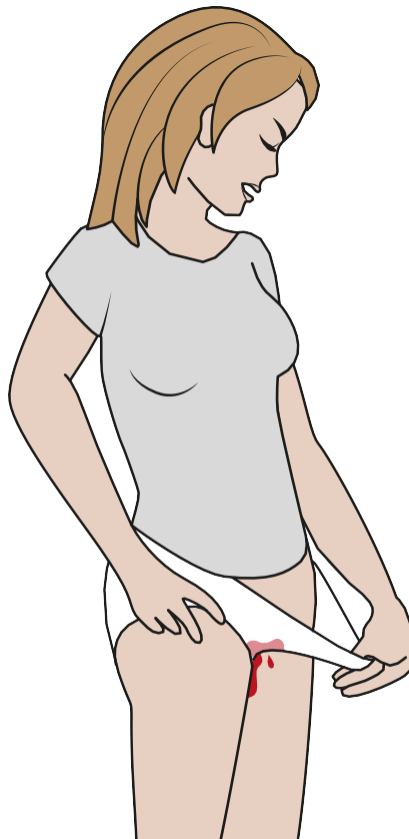
My underwear may become dirtier than before.

- **I might see white or yellow marks.**
These discharges are perfectly normal.

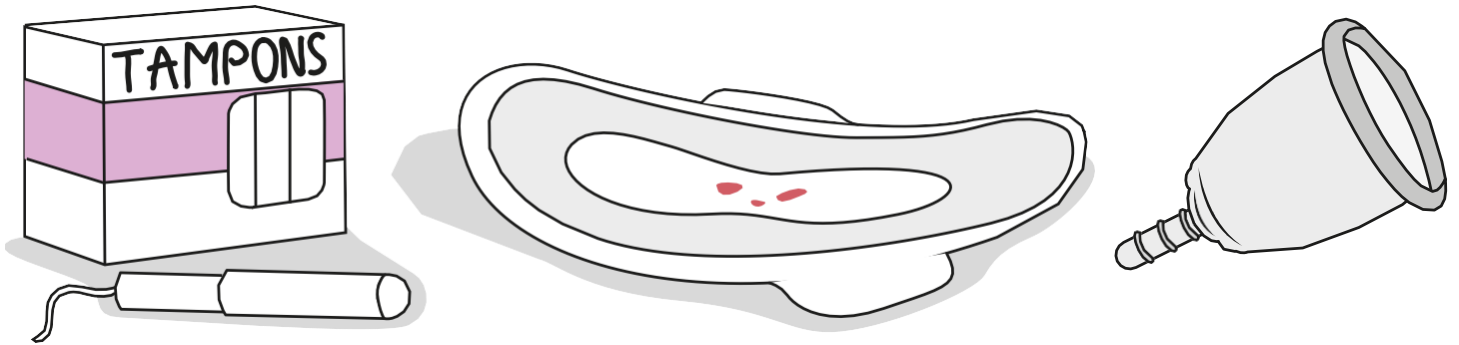


At some point, my period will start.

- **It's blood that comes from my vagina. It's perfectly normal.**
This is my menstrual cycle: it happens every month and lasts 4 to 6 days.



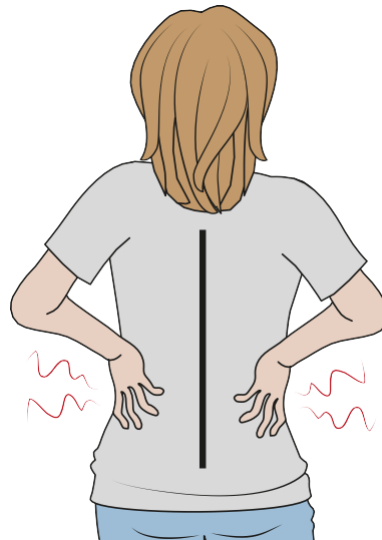
- **To avoid blood stains, I use protection.**
Tampons, a sanitary towel or napkin, or a menstrual cup.



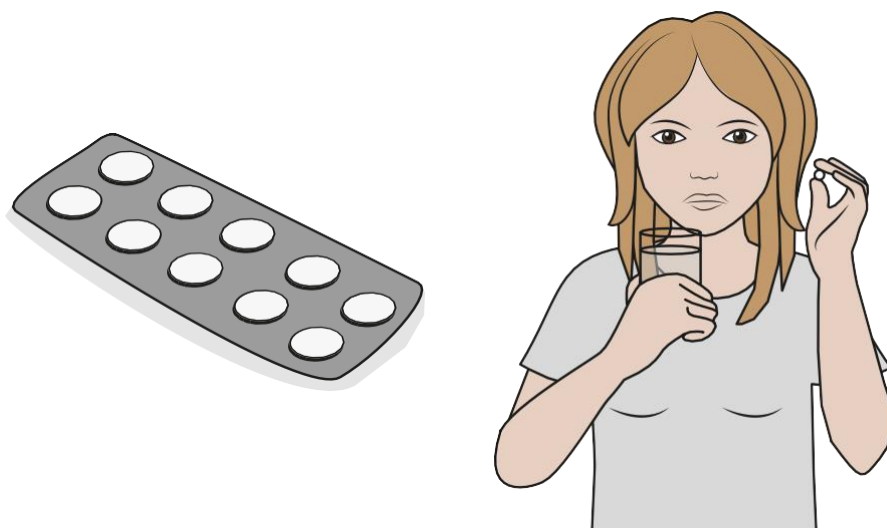
- **When I get my period, I always carry protection in my handbag.**



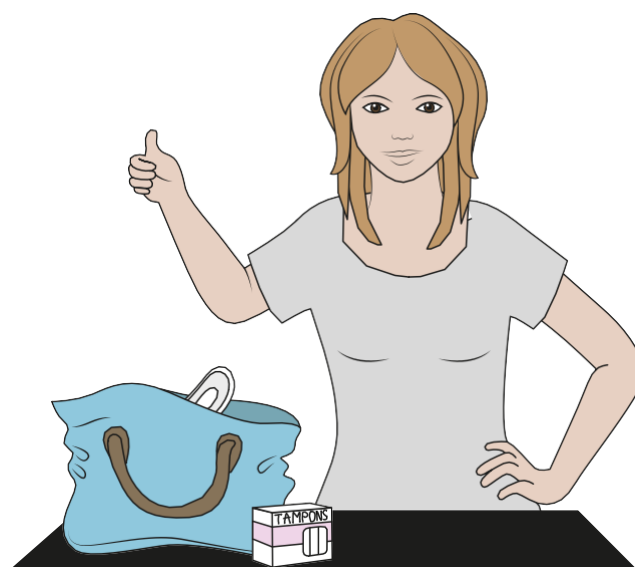
- **During my period I might get headaches, backache or stomach ache.**



- I can ask for a medication to help with the pain.



- Sometimes it doesn't hurt at all.



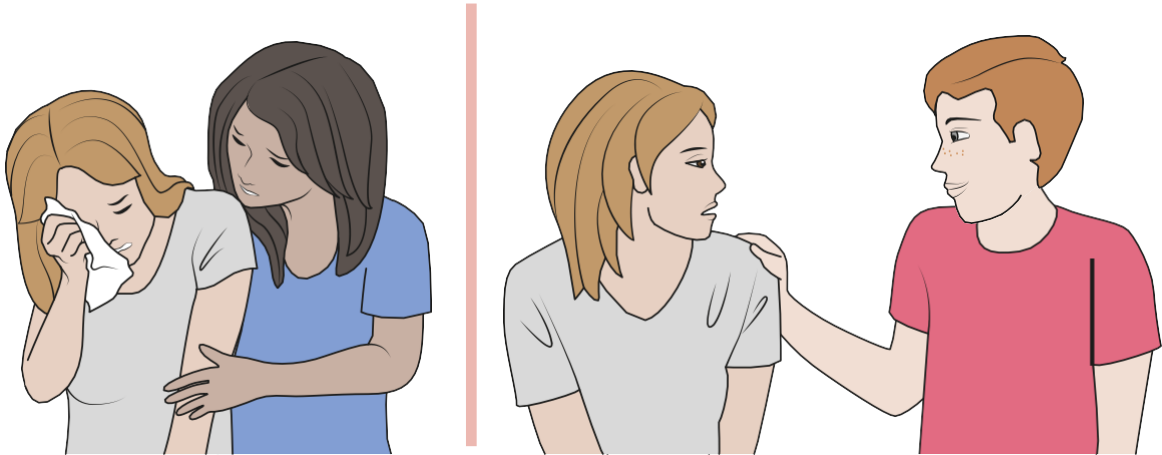
- During my period I might notice changes in my mood.



I can talk about all these changes.

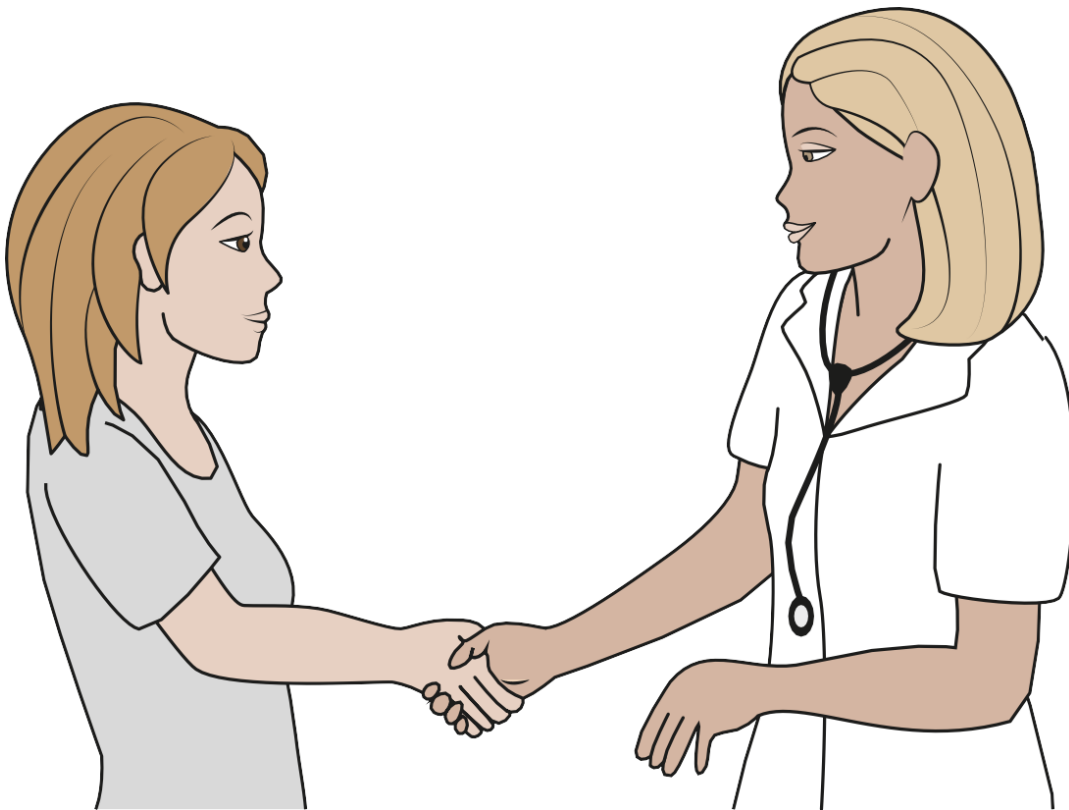
- **With someone I know and trust:**

My parents, my brother, my sister, a male or female friend, a teacher...



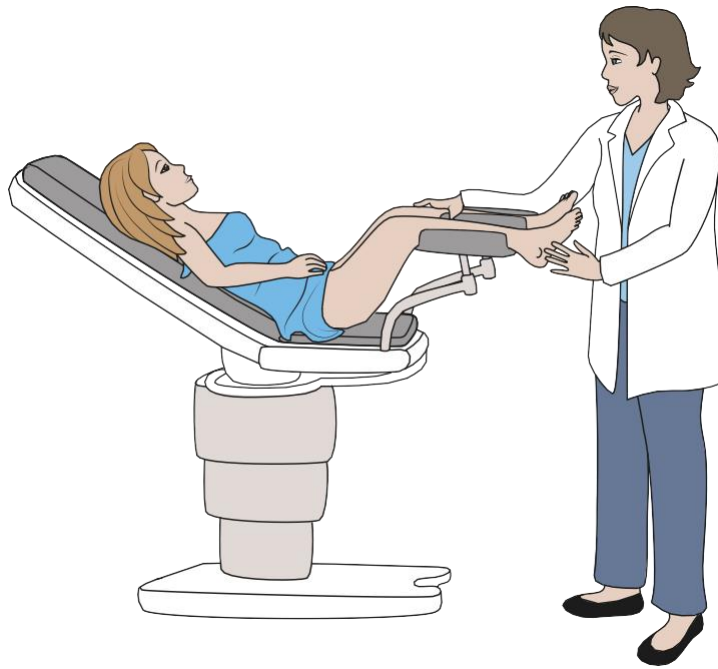
- **I can also ask to speak to a healthcare professional - my doctor, a nurse or a psychologist.**

I can ask to speak to a woman if I prefer.



- **There are also specialists I can talk to: a gynecologist or a midwife.**

These are healthcare professionals who specialise in questions about sex, periods, and pregnancy.



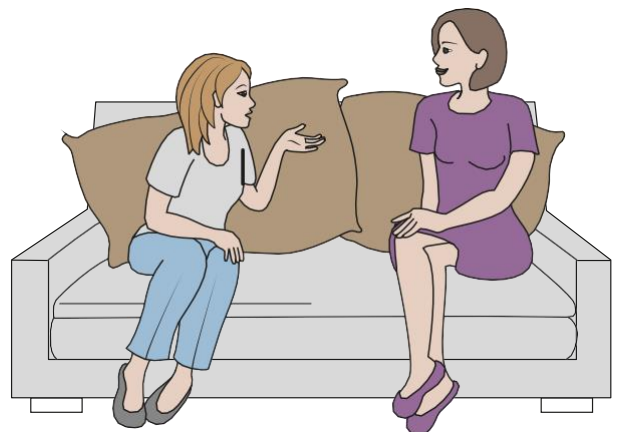
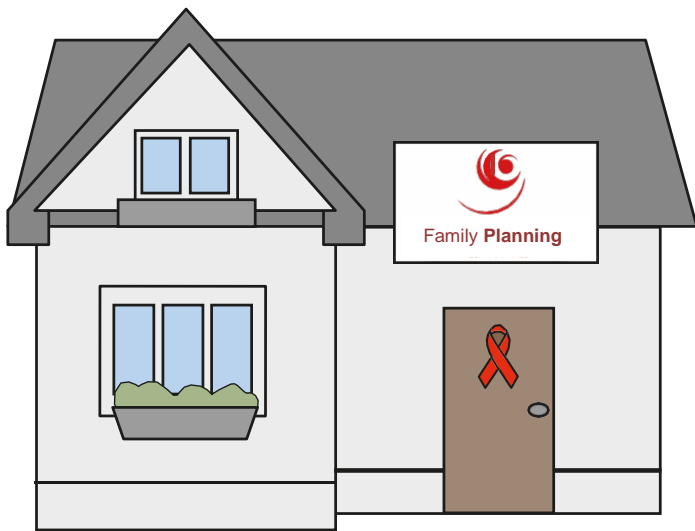
See the fact-sheet “The gynecologist appointment”

- **There are also counselling and health testing centres available.**

I can go there by myself or with a male or female friend.

I don't need to tell my parents.

It's free.

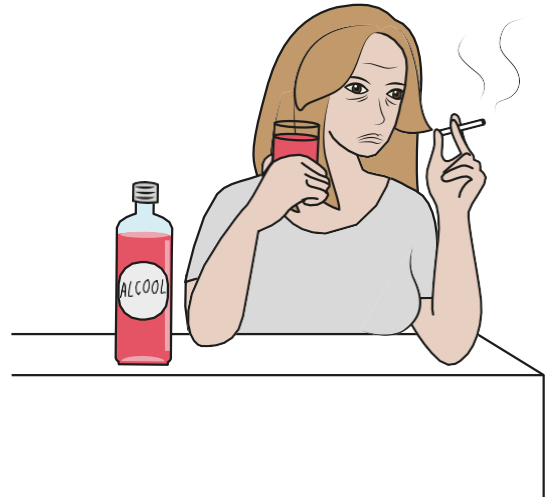


I absolutely must speak to a healthcare professional:

- I feel depressed,



- If I'm drinking or smoking too much, or taking drugs.



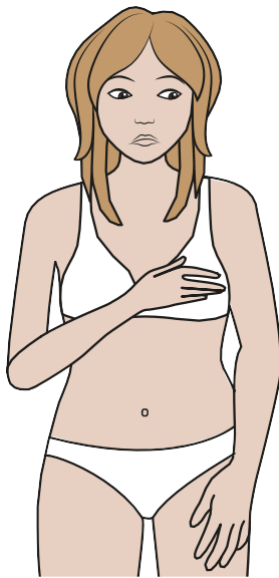
- If my periods are very painful,



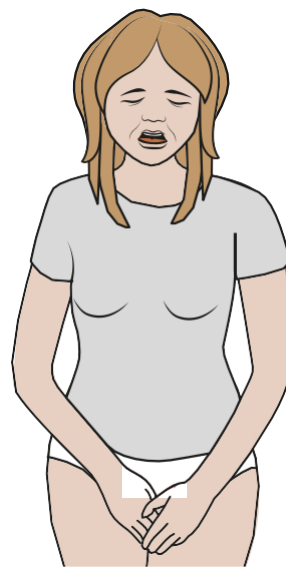
- Or if my acne is very bad,



- If I can feel a lump in my breast,



- If I have an unpleasant feeling or smell from my pubic area.



● If I have questions I want to ask before I have sex with someone:

- Questions on contraception.
- Questions on diseases I can catch - these are STIs.



See the fact-sheet:

CONTRACEPTION

What is contraception?

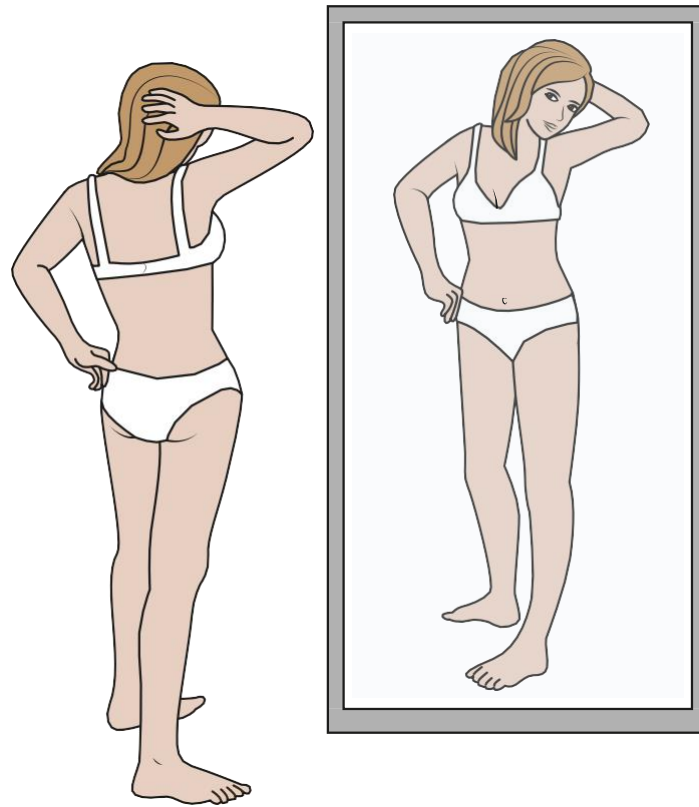
See the fact-sheet:

CONTRACEPTION

I can choose my method

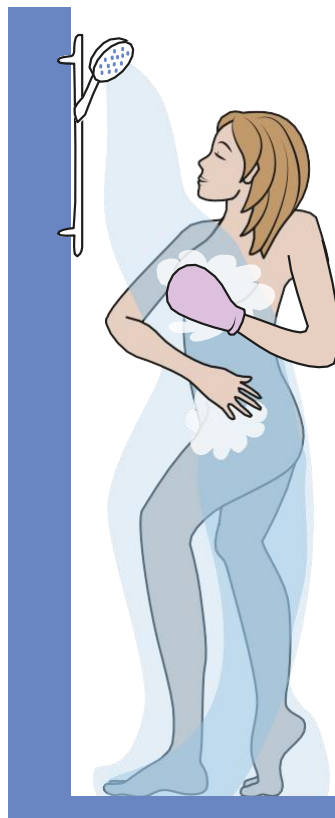
My body is changing...

I need to take care of it.



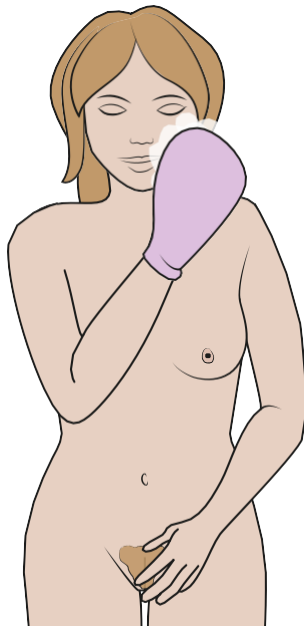
I take care of my personal hygiene.

- **I wash every day.**

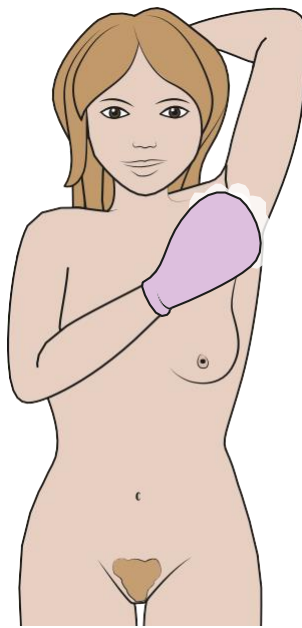


● I remember to wash:

my face,

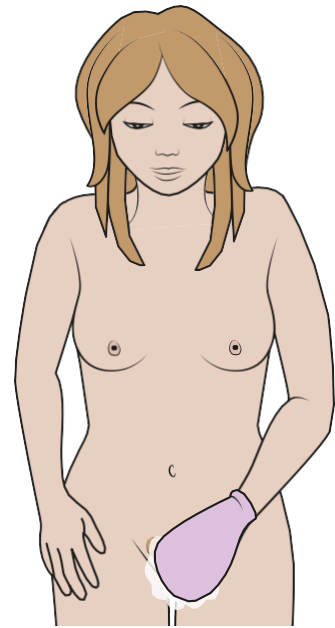


under my arms,



my pubic area.

I do it gently, washing from my pubic area towards my bottom.



I don't use too much soap.

If I have a lot of acne spots, the doctor can give me a treatment.

- I wash my face with special soap.
- Sometimes, the doctor will give me a cream to put on my acne spots.
- My doctor may give me medication to take.



- I must not squeeze my acne spots.



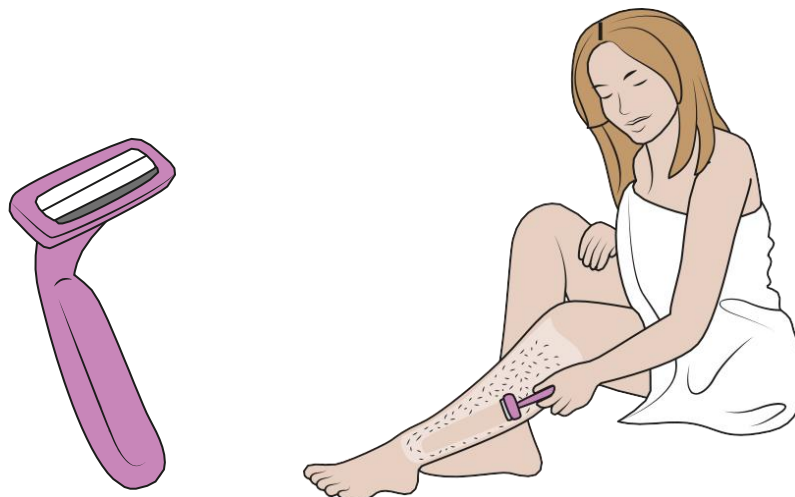
I can put deodorant under my arms after I shower.



I may want to remove the hairs that have grown.

- I can shave my legs and under my arms.

I use a razor.



● I can remove hair from my legs and under my arms:

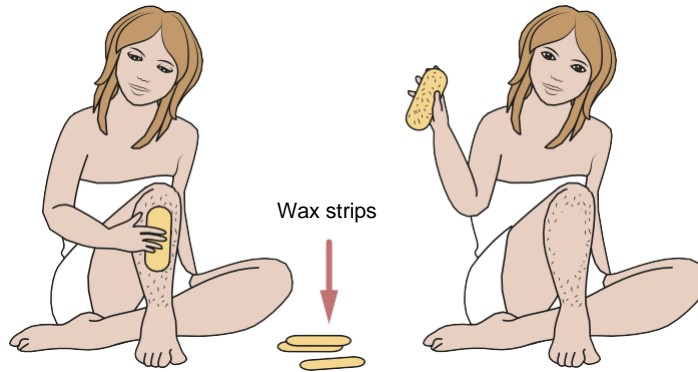
With a special cream,



With an electric razor,



With wax.



● There are special ways to remove facial hair.

I must not use cream or a razor: the hairs will grow back too quickly and even thicker than before.



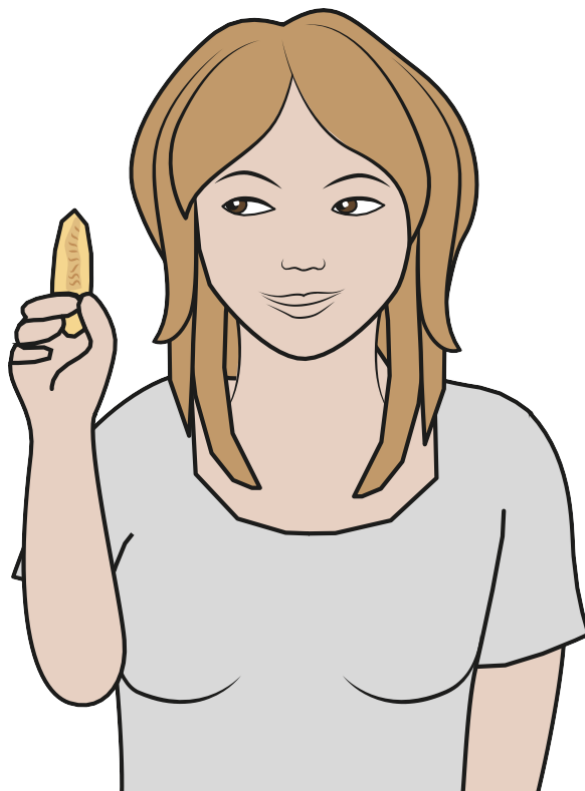
I can bleach them if there are only a few.

I use a special product.



I can remove them.

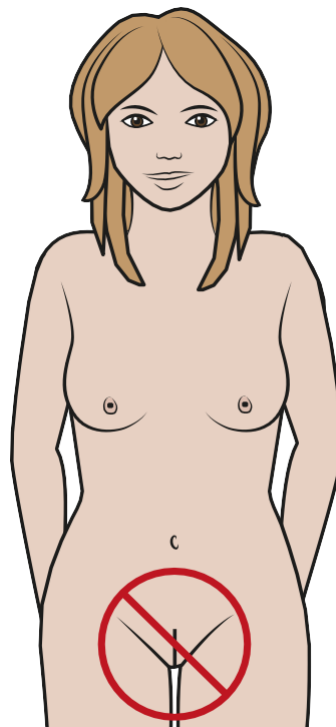
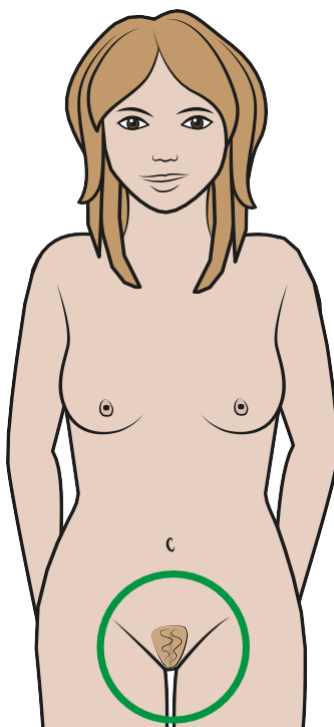
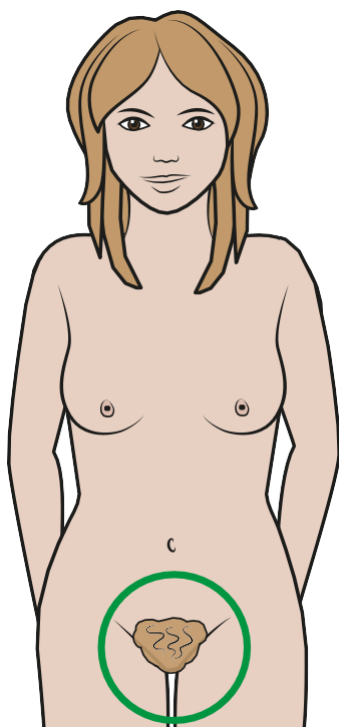
I use wax.



- **The doctor recommends not removing the hairs around my pubic area.**

My pubic hair helps to protect against bacteria.

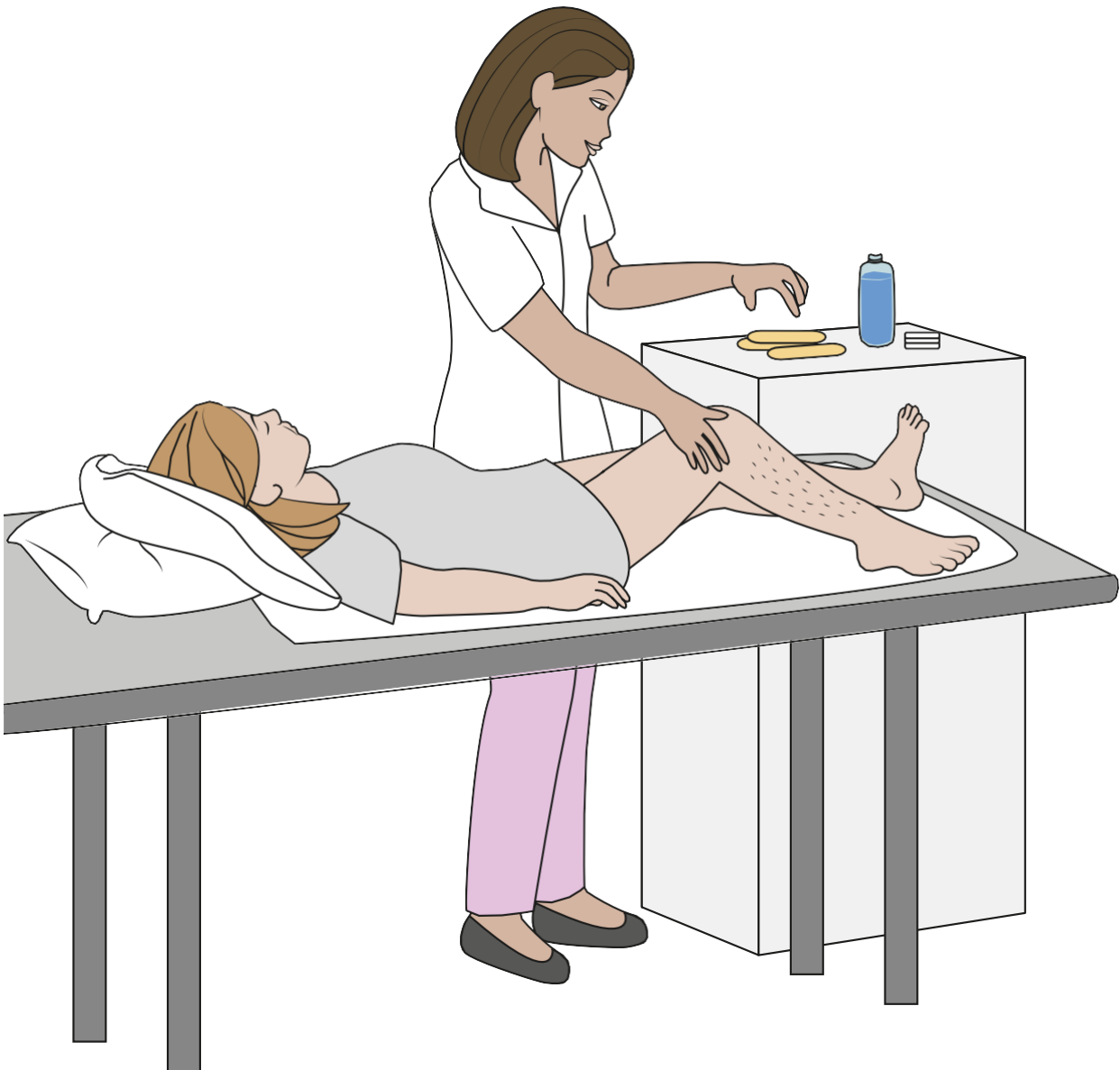
If I have lots of hairs around my pubic area, I can wax or shave them.



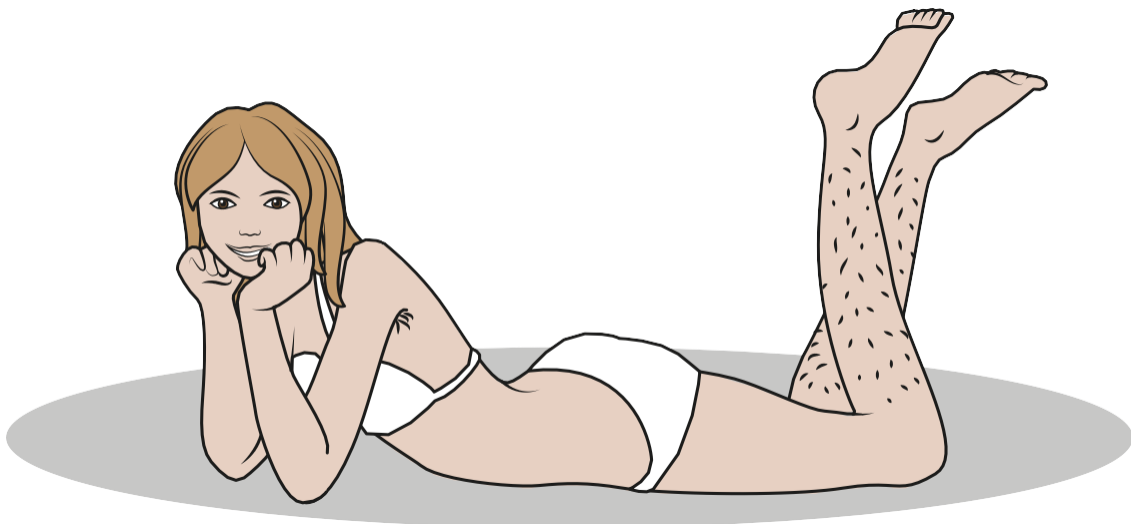
● **I can also get hair removed at a beauty salon.**

The technician can give me advice.

They explain how to remove the hairs from different areas of my body.

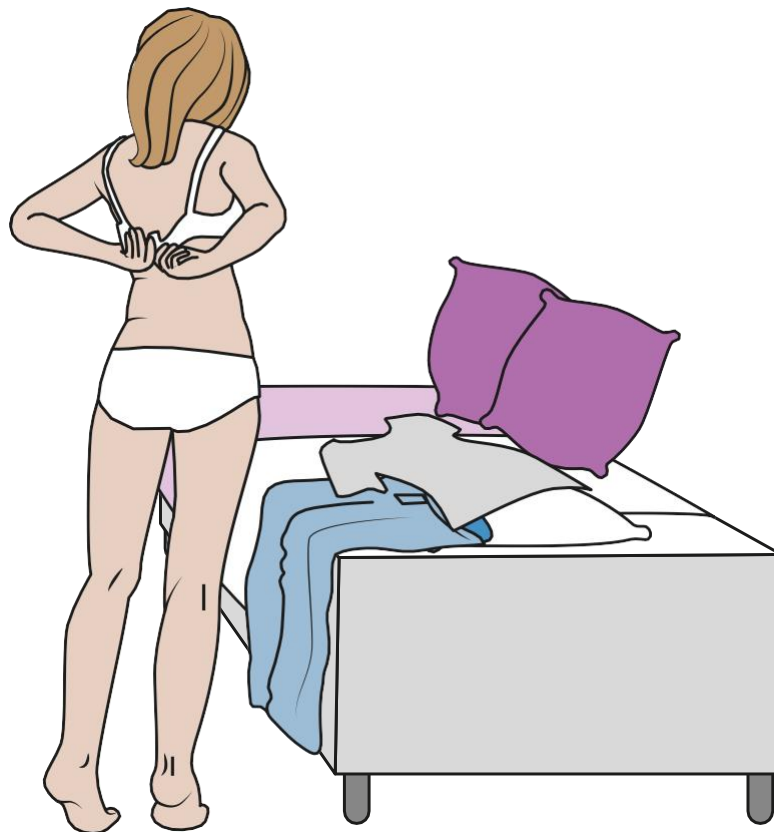
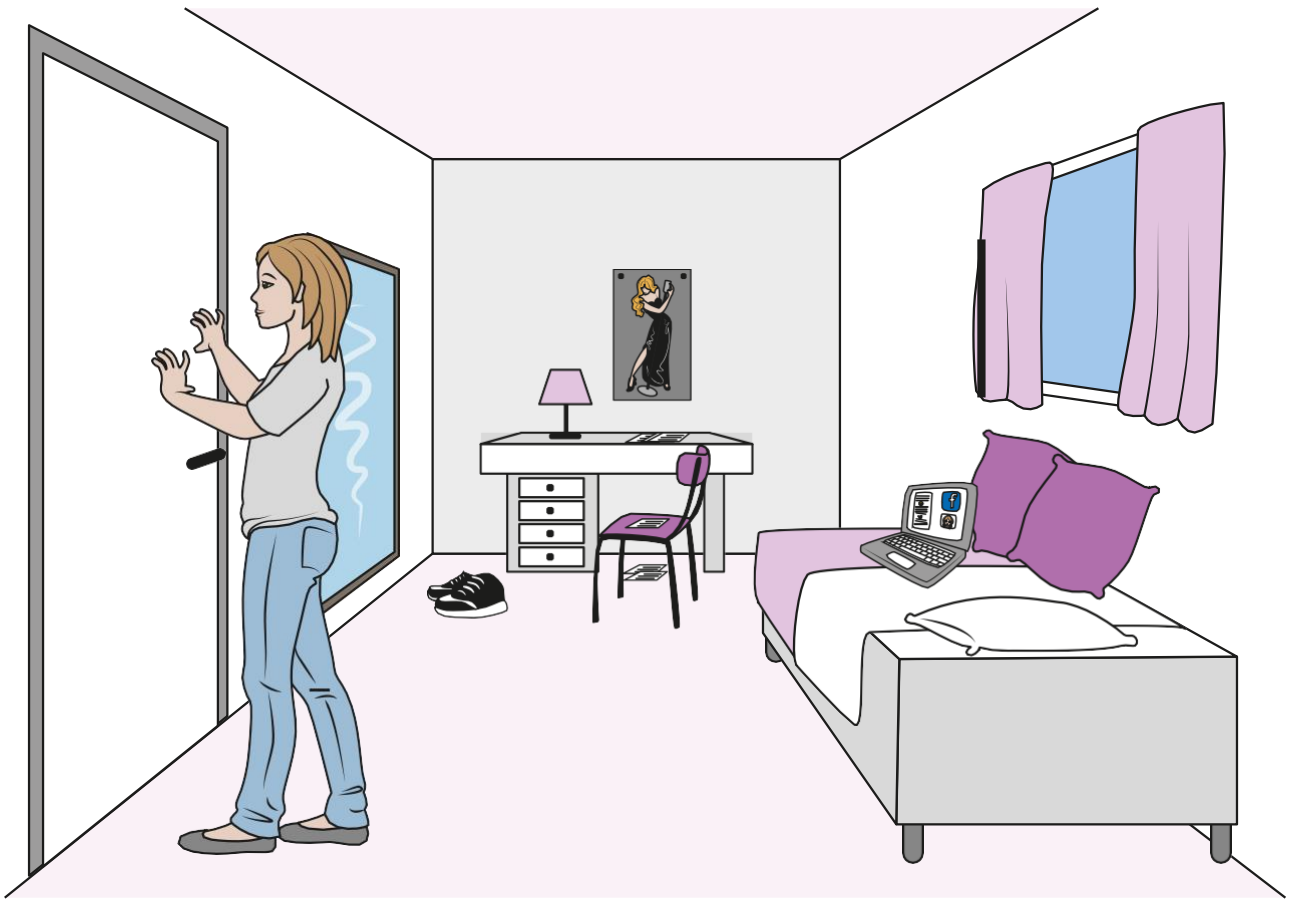


● **I might want to keep my hairs. It's perfectly natural.**

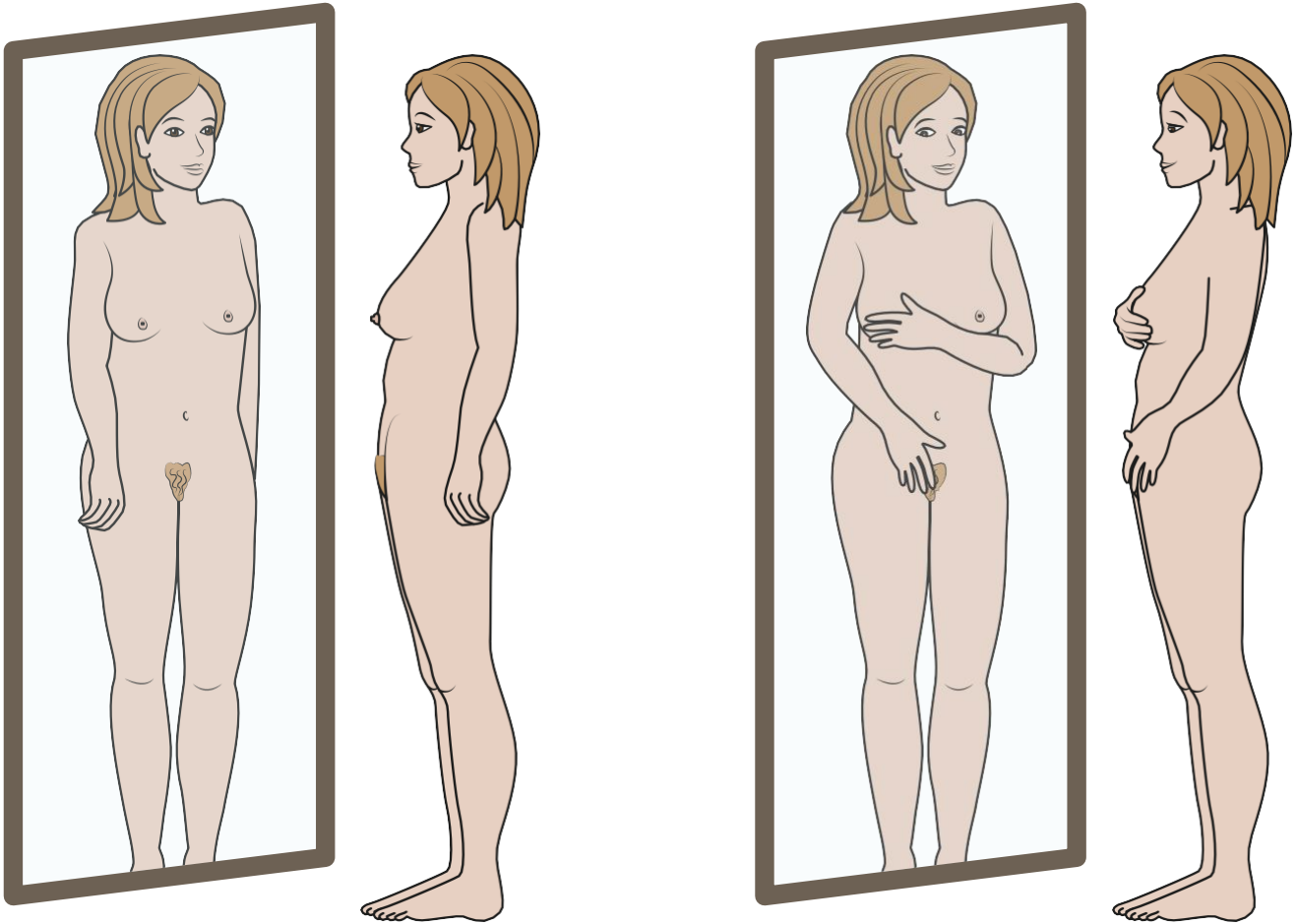


It's normal to be interested in all these changes.

Sometimes I'll look at myself when I'm alone.

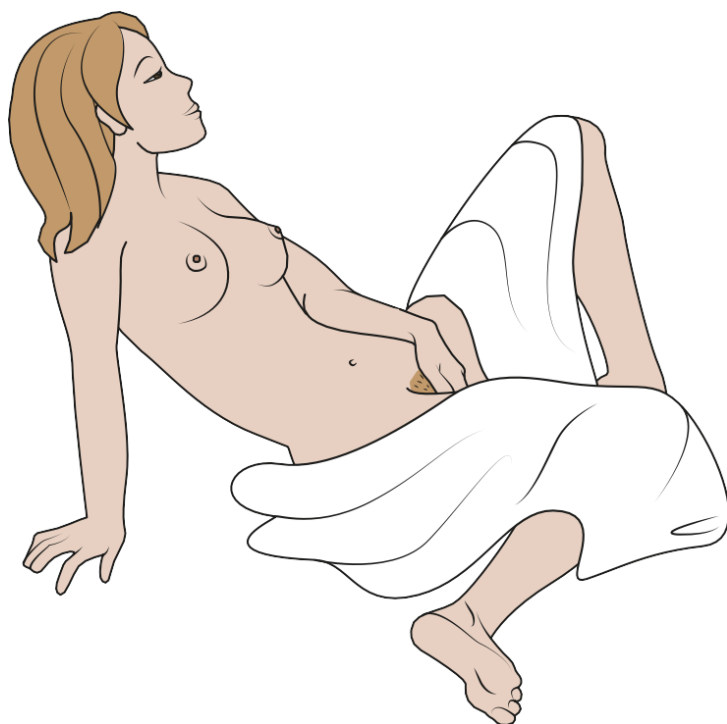


- **I look at myself in the mirror.**
I might want to touch my pubic area.



I might want to stroke my pubic area.

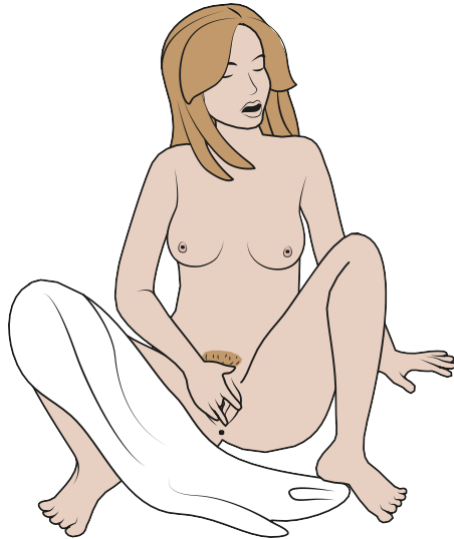
- **On the outside I can stroke my labia and my clitoris.**
- **On the inside I can stroke my vagina.**



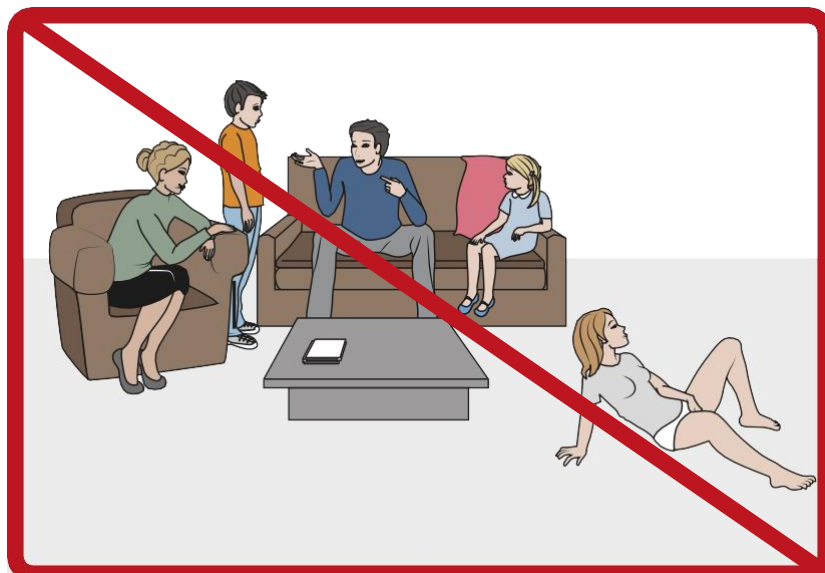
- **This can be pleasurable: it's intense and I may enjoy it.**

This is called masturbation.

I do it gently so I don't hurt myself.



- **It's OK to masturbate if I don't do it in front of other people.**

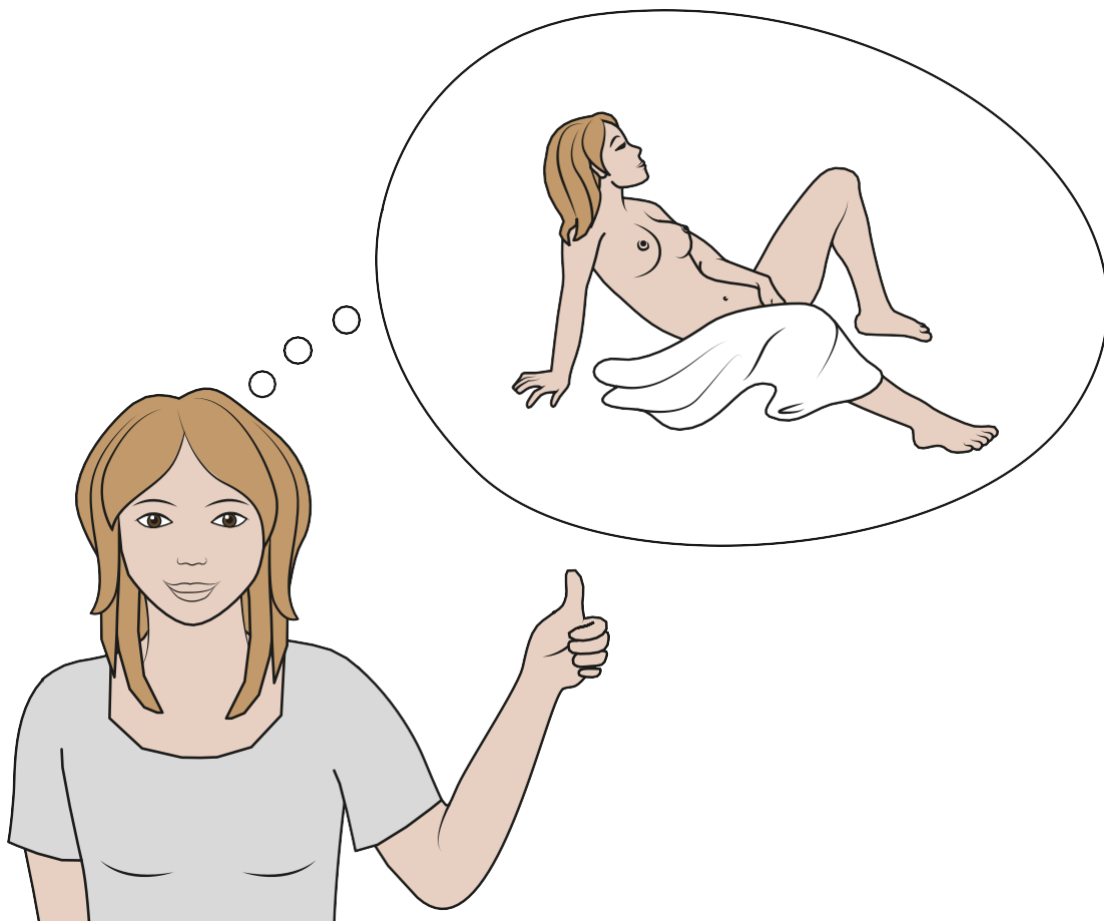


- I wash my hands before meeting up with the others.



These new sensations may be surprising.

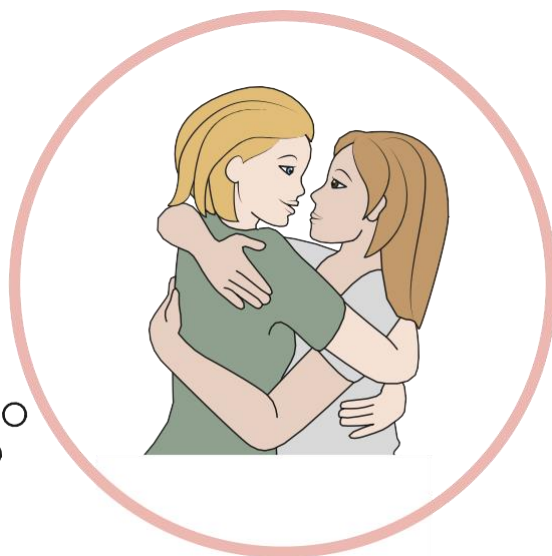
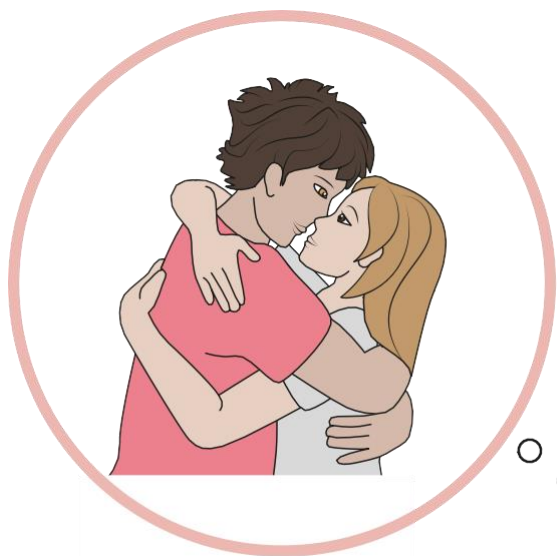
- I can find out what I like more, and what I like less.



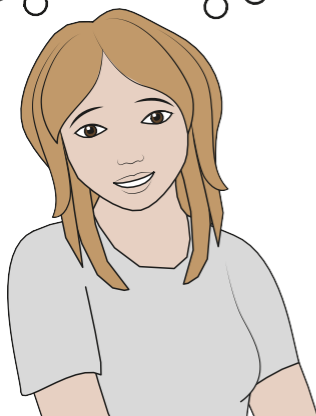
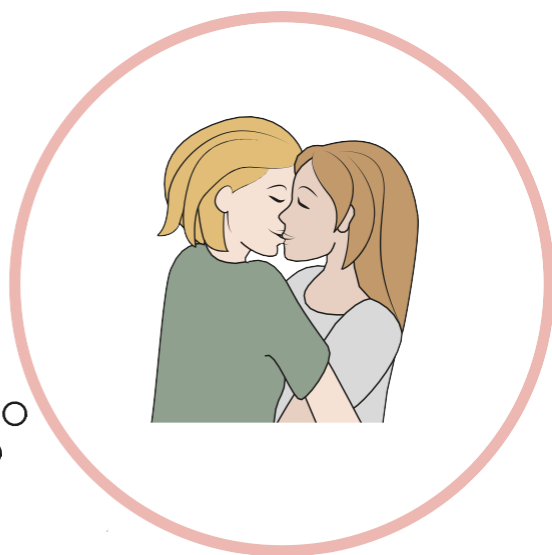
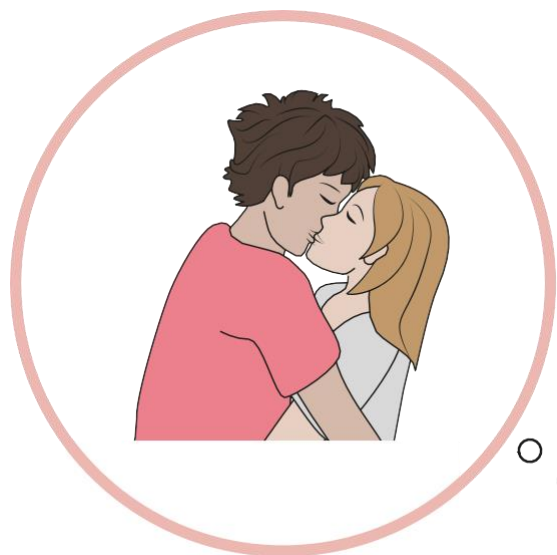
I might think about sharing the feelings with someone.

During adolescence, girls might have strong feelings for a girl or a boy.

I imagine holding someone in my arms.



I think about kissing someone.

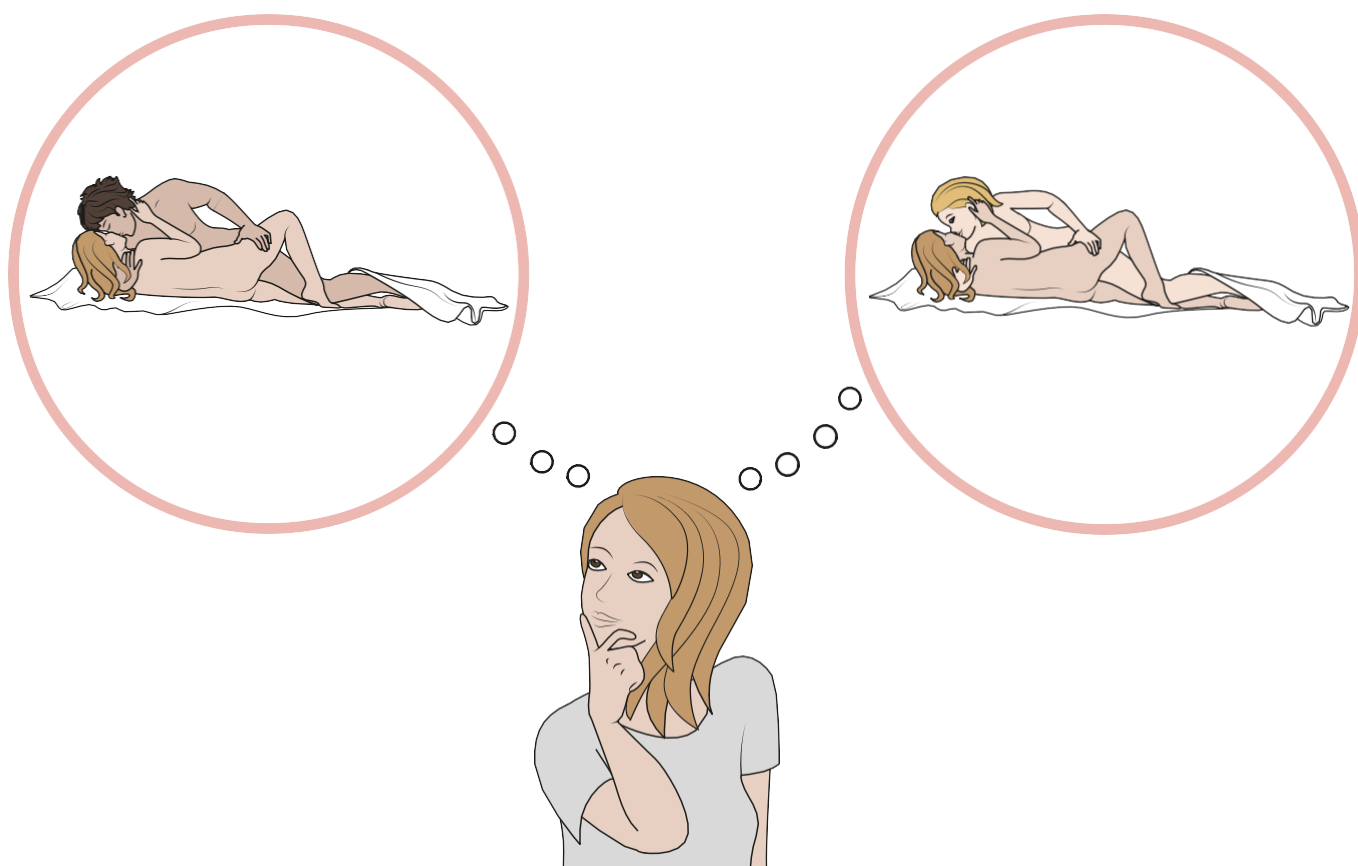


- I think about touching someone.



I think about the day I will have sex for the first time.

- How? Who with?
- I wonder if I will like it.
- I wonder if I will know what to do.



I wonder if it is normal to feel all these things.

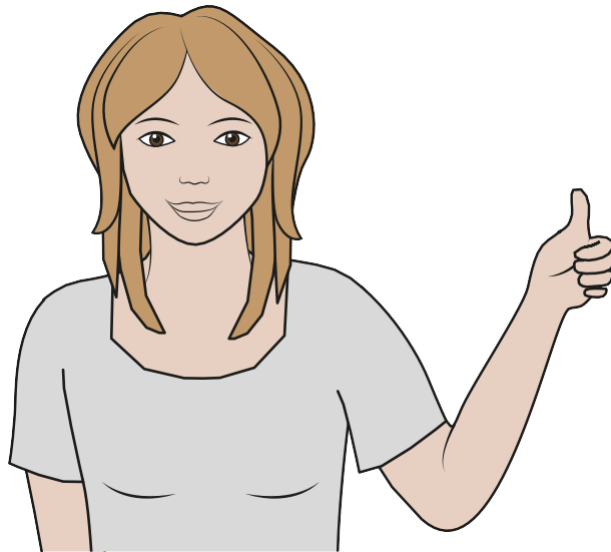
- **Does everybody ask the same questions?**



Yes!

Everybody experiences these changes and asks questions.

I am becoming an adult.



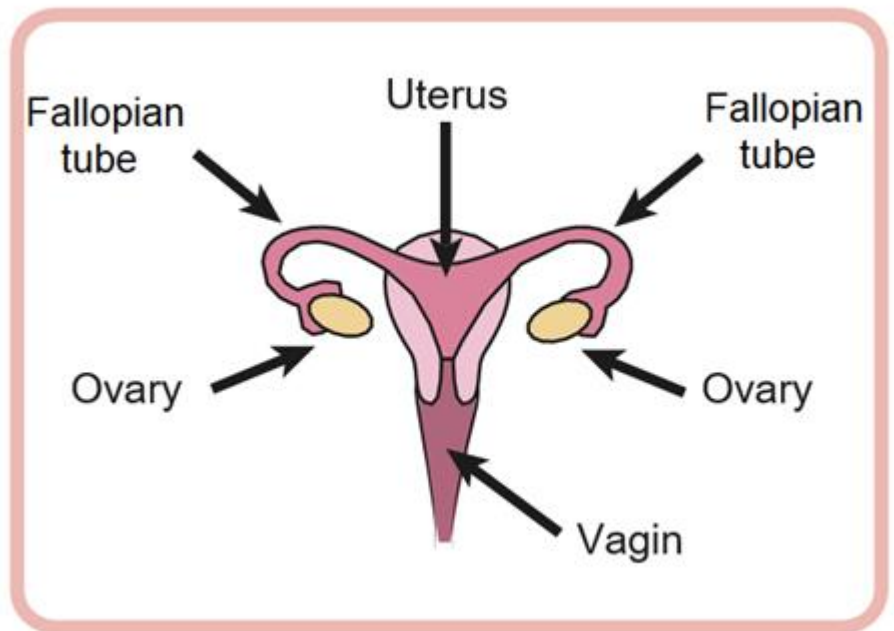
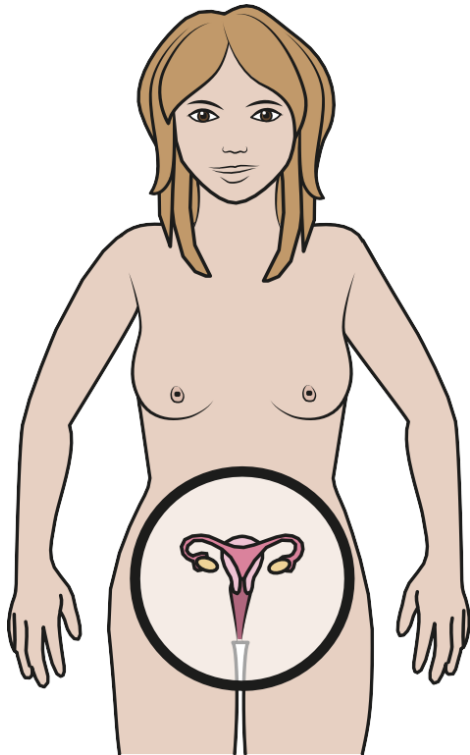
APPENDIX

What happens inside my body?

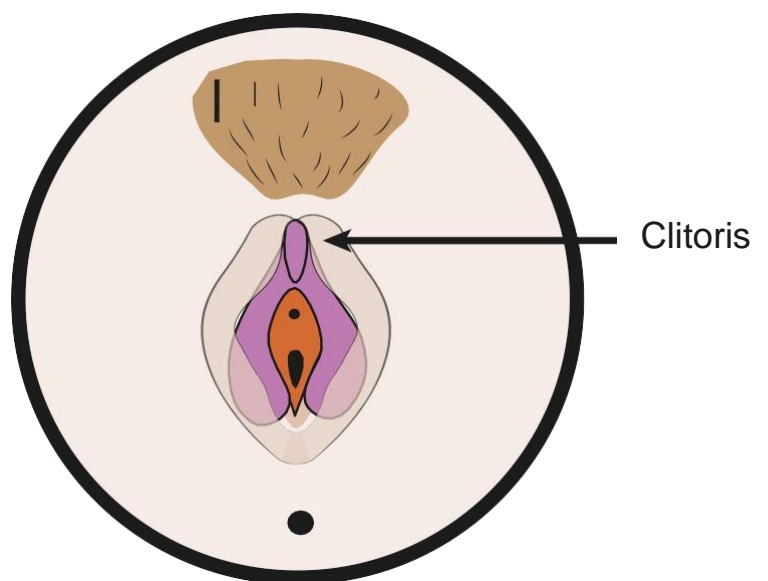
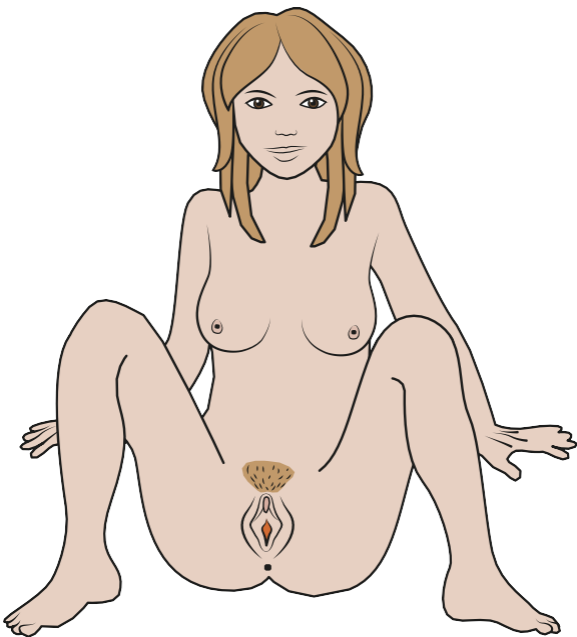
My body slowly changes on the inside.

- **My sexual organs are formed.**

These are the parts I need to have a baby and to have sex.

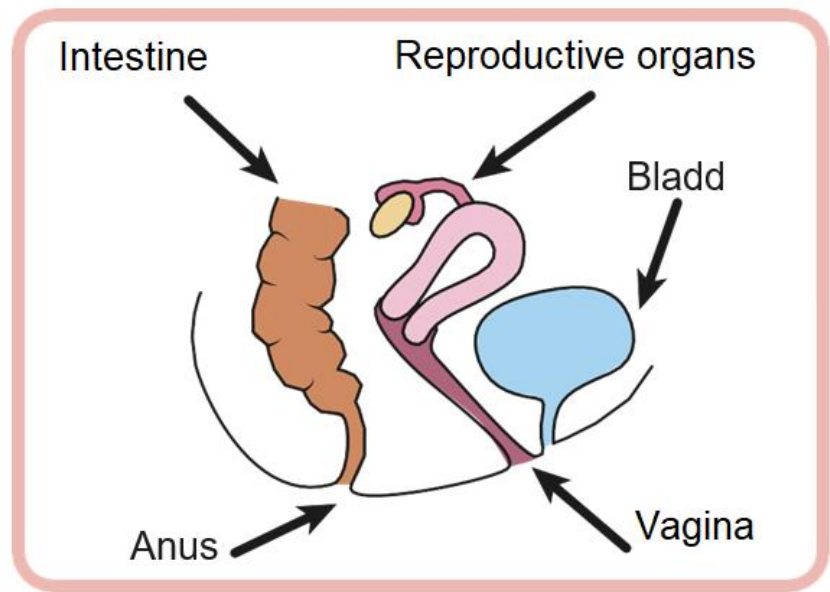
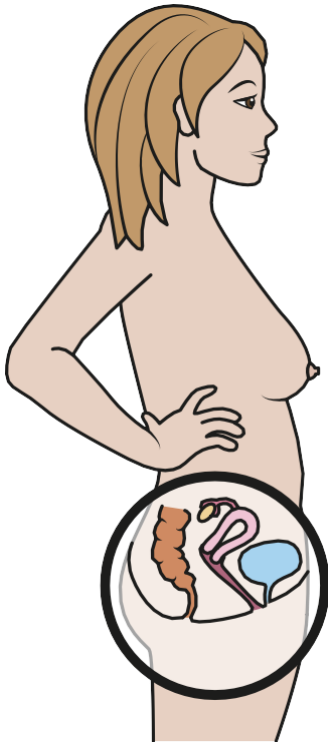


- **The clitoris is a very important organ for sexual pleasure.**



- **Just like boys, I have an anus and a bladder.**

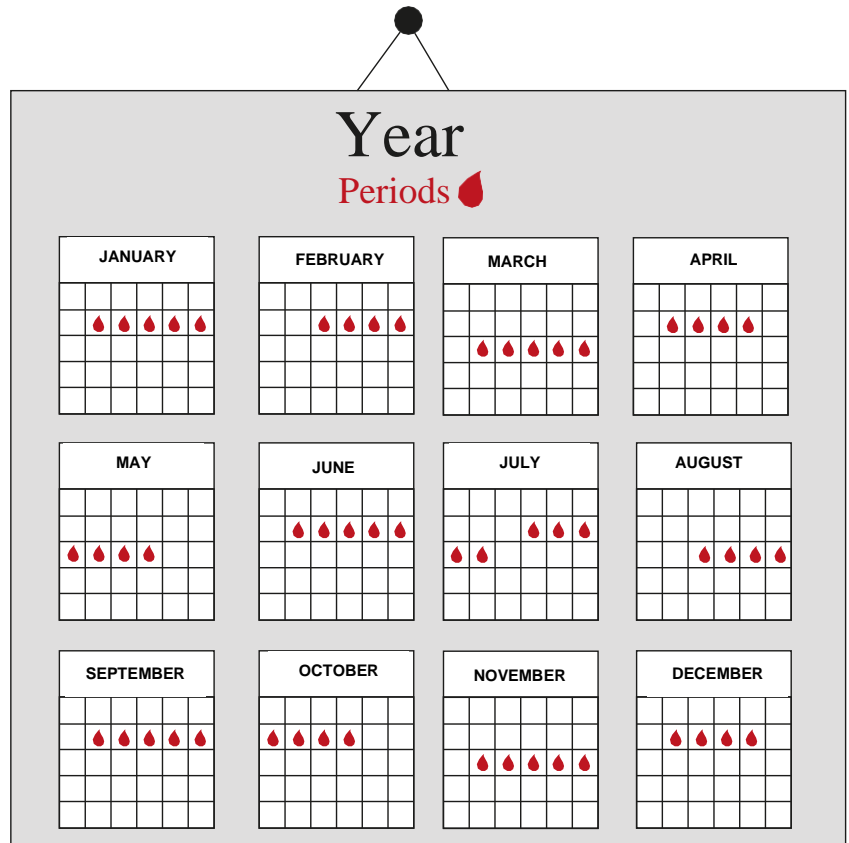
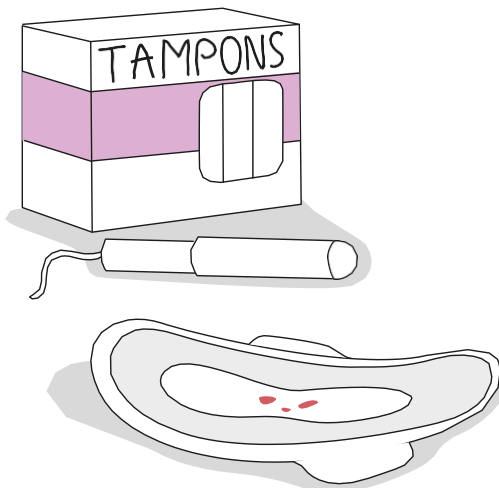
Girls have a vagina.



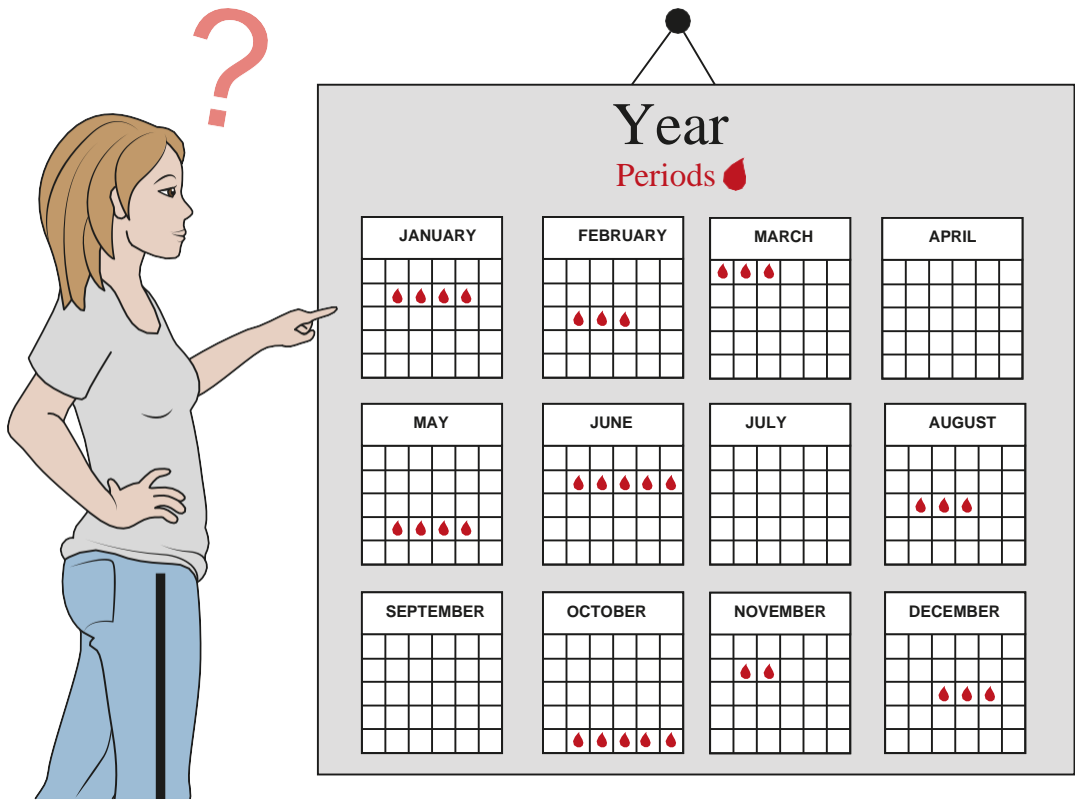
Periods

- **Normally my periods will arrive around once a month.**

They last 4 to 6 days.



- But at the beginning they are not very regular.
I don't need to worry.



- My periods are called my “menstrual cycle”.
It means my body is getting ready to have a baby if I want it to.

1 month

The day my period starts is the first day of my menstrual cycle.

Day 1 to 6 I get my period	Day 7 to 14 Ovulation	Day 15 to 28 Implantation	
Blood comes from my vagina.	An egg comes out of my ovary and heads to my uterus.	The uterus produces mucus to hold the baby if I have sex and my egg is fertilised.	
I use protection.	I can get pregnant if I have sex.	If I am not pregnant the mucus breaks down and I start to bleed.	If I am pregnant my periods stop.

- If I am pregnant, I stop getting my period.
I must take a pregnancy test or see my gynecologist.

This fact-sheet was made with help from



The fact-sheet was supervised by Sheila WAREMBOURG
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Sexual Understanding

The fact-sheet also benefited from the expertise of François CROCHON
Psycho-motor therapist and Sexual Health clinician, Director of CeRHeS®

CeRHeS
Centre Ressources Handicaps et Sexualités

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