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Volume 1

Dr Malhotra's Series

FAQs on Adolescent, Infertility & Menopause

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5 CHAPTER

Breast Development

Q. 1. What breast changes occur during puberty?

Ans. Under the influence of the hormone estrogen, the breasts develop and enlarge due to the accumulation of fat.

Q. 2. When should a girl's breasts start growing?

Ans. There is a lot of variation in the normal timing of breast growth. For example, it is normal for breasts to start growing as early as 9 years of age and it is also normal if they do not begin growing until 14 years of age.

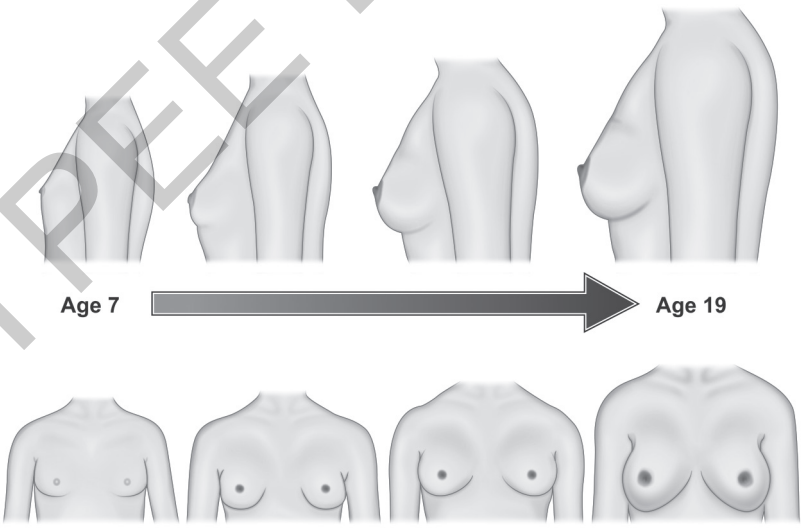

Figure 5.1 Development of breasts with age during puberty
(*For color version, see Plate 2*)

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Q. 3. How big should the breasts be?

Ans. From a health perspective, there is no ideal breast size. Some of us are tall and some short. Similarly, some girls have large, medium or small breasts. There is some genetic component to breast size.

Q. 4. I have a flat chest. Is there a way out?

Ans. An obvious query is how old are you. Presuming you are 16 years old, there are less chances for the breast to grow from now. Creams and medicines do not work in increasing your bust size. Your breasts should not come in the way of your self-esteem as there are other things you have in your personality, which others do not have. Cherish the assets you possess instead of bothering over what you do not have. You could wear padded bras to give your bosom a fuller look. Plastic surgery is an option for those of you getting into modeling or the entertainment industry.

Q. 5. I have small breasts, which I want to grow bigger. Please suggest medicines.

Ans. Though you may see ads on television and in newspapers or magazines, it must be stressed that nothing works scientifically. Giving estrogen hormones to increase the breast may work a little but will have some side effects on the periods. It is important to accept the way God has made you and accept your body as it is. Besides, small can be beautiful. There are other girls who may feel that their breasts are too big!!

Q. 6. My left breast is a little smaller than my right breast. What to do?

Ans. During the initial development of the breast, a little asymmetry may appear, which clears up with time. Asymmetry may exist later in life too but should be accepted if mild. Plastic surgery is the last resort and often not adviced from medical point of view. This asymmetry would not interfere with your future ability to breastfeed.

Q. 7. What is normal for breast size in a 16-year-old girl?

Ans. Unfortunately or rather fortunately, there is no standard. As all women do not look the same, their breast sizes too are different. It is important to accept what you possess.

Q. 8. Till what age does the breast increase in size?

Ans. The initial stage of breast development occurs usually between the ages of 8 and 13 years. Later, during pregnancy, further breast development occurs.

Q. 9. How do I choose my first bra?

Ans. Usually, your mother or an elder sister is the best person to guide you in this regard. It marks the transition from a girl to a young lady. Apart from the size and material, the bra should fit you snugly and keep you comfortable.

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Q. 10. My breasts are too big for my figure. How to make them small?

Ans. There are no medicines to shrink large breasts. Accepting them as a part of your body is the key. It should not affect your self-esteem and your interaction with others. Alternately, you may consider yourself blessed and there are many out there who would be glad to be in your place. Do not consider plastic surgery for correction unless they are causing you to develop a complex. Taking an opinion from a properly qualified doctor in this regard would be reassuring.

Q. 11. My breasts are a cause of low self-esteem. What should I do?

Ans. Why just think of breasts? What is striking in a woman is her personality and her body is just a part of it. Do not think what others think of you because it does not matter in the long-term. Remember, no one can make you feel inferior without your consent.

Q. 12. In social gatherings, I always feel boys are staring at my breasts. It is a great source of concern. What am I to do?

Ans. Blame it on testosterone. For many boys what appeals in a woman at first instance is her body. But more than boys actually staring at your breasts, it is more likely that you are thinking that way. Young lady! Think beyond breasts and you will feel much better.

Q. 13. I have breast pain, especially around the time of my periods. What to do?

Ans. Cyclical breast pain, especially around the time of periods, is something seen in 20–30% women at some time of their reproductive life. It is likely to be hormonal fluctuations around the time of menstruation and does not need medication if bearable. Only if you are in unbearable discomfort, you should consult a gynecologist and take appropriate medicines.

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FAQs on Adolescent, Infertility & Menopause

Salient Features

- A handbook with a simple text on the subject
- Deals with the three important aspects of women's life: adolescent, infertility and menopause
- Provides 100 frequently asked questions with their explanatory answers
- Illustrates the most important aspects also in the eight color plates separately for easy grasp of the concepts
- Helpful for the clinicians, students, patients, infertility specialists, counselors, etc. in sorting out queries related to the subject.

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