

**Adolescence: Developmental Milestones**

Garry Richard\*

Department of Pharmacy, Jawaharlal Nehru Technical University Hyderabad, India

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Garry Richard, College of Medicine, University of Grenada, Grenada.

**E-mail:** [richard@yahoo.com](mailto:richard@yahoo.com)**INTRODUCTION**

Adolescence is that the period when a private transitions from childhood to adulthood. It involves important physical and psychological changes in a young person's life.

Both children and their families can experience excitement and anxiety as a result of the numerous physical, sexual, cognitive, social, and emotional changes that occur during this period. Understanding what to expect at various stages of puberty and early adulthood will help to foster healthy growth <sup>[1]</sup>.

**Adolescence Stages****Early adolescence (Ages 10 to 13)**

This is life phase where child starts growing more rapidly at this age. They also start to notice other physical changes, like hair growth under the arms and round the genitals, female breast development, and male testicle enlargement. They typically begin a year or two earlier in girls than in boys, and a few changes can occur as early as age 8 in females and age 9 in males. Many girls begin their periods round the age of twelve, around two to 3 years after the start of breast development <sup>[2]</sup>.

These physical changes can make some people curious and anxious, particularly if they don't know what to expect or what is natural. Some children can begin to question their gender identity at this age, and puberty can be a trying time for transgender children.

Early adolescent reasoning is concrete and black-and-white. Without much space in between, things are either right or wrong, wonderful or bad. It's normal for young people to focus their thoughts on themselves at this age. As a result, preteens and early adolescent girls and boys are often self-conscious about their appearance and believe that they are constantly being judged by their peers.

Pre-teens have a stronger need for privacy. They can begin to look for ways to be self-sufficient from their families. They may push boundaries during this process, and if parents or guardians reinforce limits, they may respond violently.

**Middle adolescence (Ages 14 to 17)**

During middle adolescence, physical changes from puberty continue. The majority of males will have begun their growth spurt, and puberty-related changes are going to be ongoing. They will experience some voice cracking as their voices lower. Acne affects certain people. Physical transformations in females are nearly complete, and most girls now have daily cycles.

Many teenagers get entangled in romantic and sexual relationships at this age. They may challenge and examine their sexual orientation, which may be stressful if they are doing not have peer, family, or community support.

Many middle teens have more disagreements with their parents as they aim for more freedom. They can spend more time with friends and less time with family. They are very conscious of their appearance, and social pressure could be at an all-time high at this level.

In this point, the brain begins to change and evolve, but there are still many variations between how a typical middle adolescent thinks and how an adult thinks. Predominantly this this is due to the reason that the frontal lobes are the last parts of the brain to mature, and growth does not end until well into one's twenties! The frontal lobes are essential for complex decision-making, impulse control, and therefore the ability to weigh multiple options and consequences. Middle school students are better at abstract thought and understanding "the big picture," but they might still be unable to put it into practise in the moment.

**Late adolescents (18-21... and beyond!)**

Late teenagers have reached maximum adult height and have completed their physical growth. By this time, they should have more impulse control and be able to reliably assess risks and rewards.

Teenagers entering early adulthood have a greater sense of self-identity and are able to define their own beliefs. They will become more future-oriented, making decisions based on their hopes and ideals. Friendships and intimate relationships become more stable as a result of these changes. They grow emotionally and physically estranged from their loved ones. Many people, on the other hand, reestablish a "adult" relationship with their parents, seeing them as a peer with whom they can seek guidance and address mature issues rather than an authority figure [3].

#### **REFERENCES**

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