

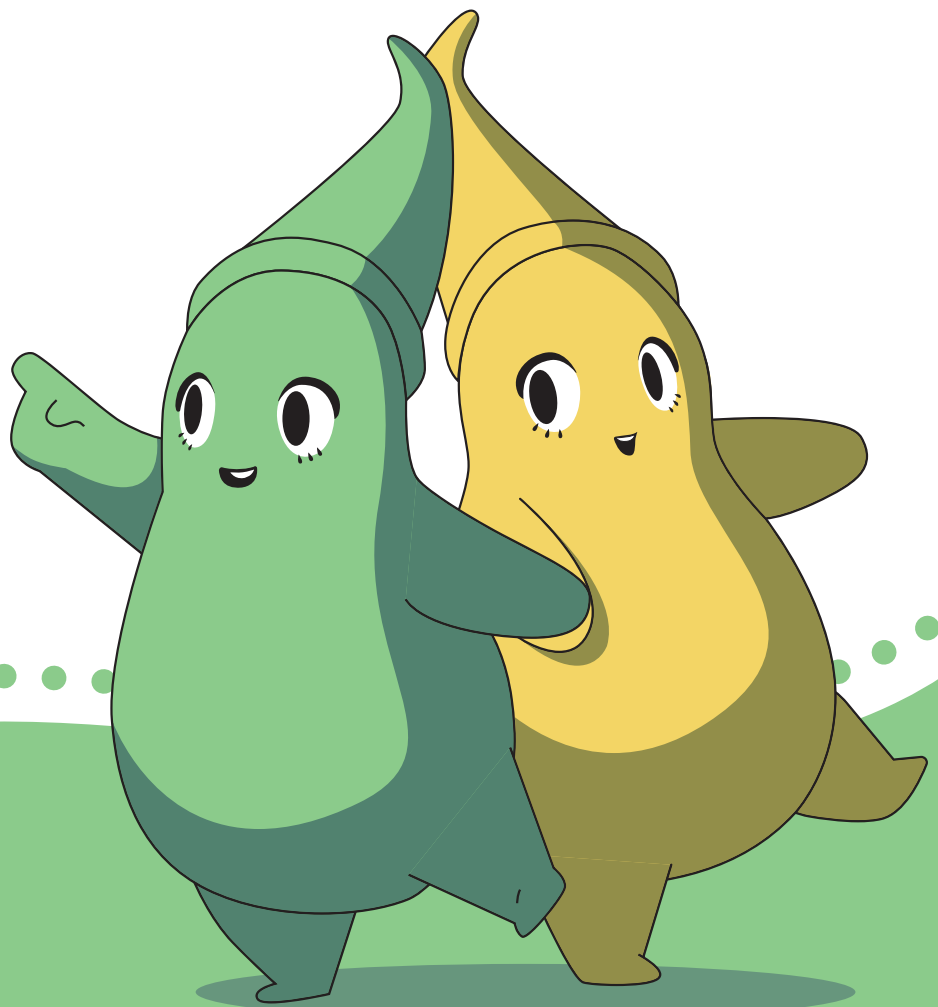


ANZSPED

AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND
SOCIETY FOR PAEDIATRIC
ENDOCRINOLOGY AND DIABETES

Want to know more about

Adrenarche



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What is adrenarche?

Adrenarche is the development of pubic hair, underarm hair, facial hair, pimples, greasy skin, and body odour and is a normal part of childhood development.

Pubic hair is usually the first sign of adrenarche and starts as a few dark strands.

It is different from “true” puberty, which also involves the development of breasts and periods, or growth of the testes and penis.

Adrenarche may start from around 6-8 years of age, and before true puberty.

Premature or early adrenarche is the development of adrenarche earlier than expected.

The hormones that cause adrenarche come from the two adrenal glands that sit on top of the kidneys.

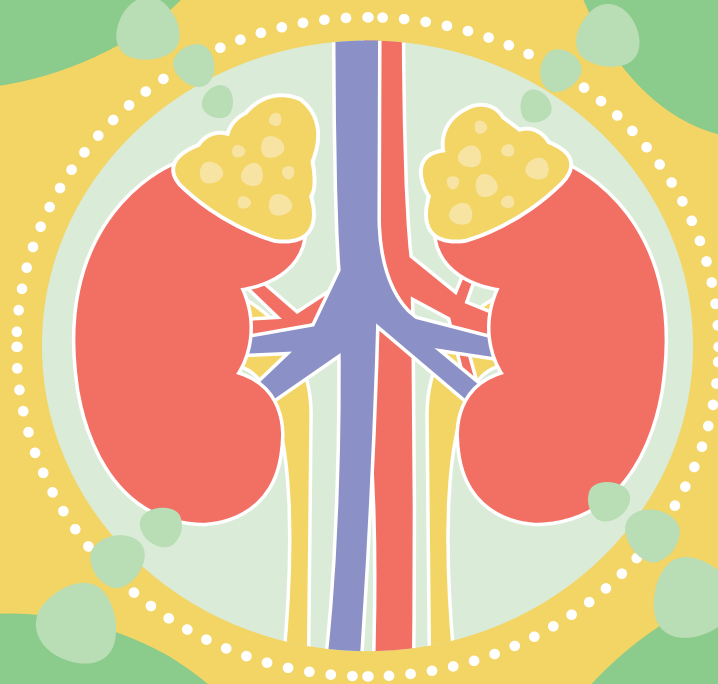
The hormones involved with adrenarche are known as “androgens” and are made in both boys and girls. The adrenal glands also produce other hormones which are not affected in adrenarche.



Adrenal glands

**Right
adrenal
gland**

**Left
adrenal
gland**



**Right
kidney**

**Left
kidney**

What causes premature or early adrenarche?

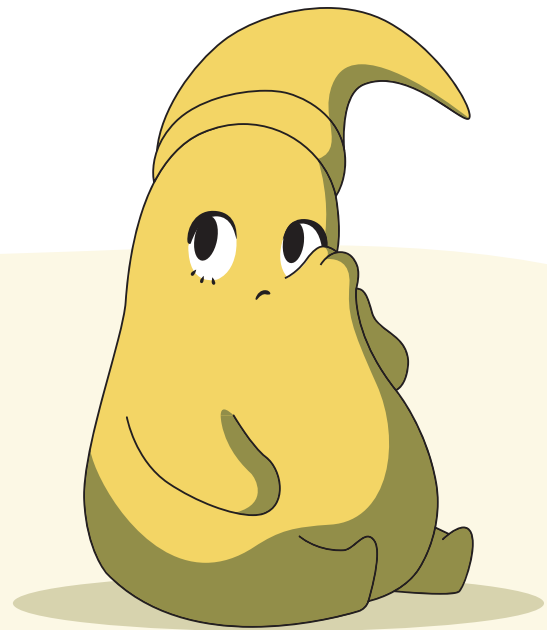
Sometimes there is no obvious cause.

Early adrenarche can be normal, however in some rare cases it may need further investigation.

Those who were born premature or with low birth weight, or, children whose weight is above the healthy target range, are more likely to have early adrenarche.

Certain ethnic groups may also be more likely to have early adrenarche.

How is adrenarche investigated?



When you see a doctor they will ask questions about your child and your family, and may ask as to when you started pubertal development. They will review your child's growth charts, do a physical examination of your child, and may want to do some tests.

Clues to other causes may include rapid growth (your child might be much taller than their classmates), very early onset of signs, and rapid thick pubic hair development.

How is adrenarche treated?

As long as other causes are excluded, early adrenarche is normal and no treatment is required.

Some children may develop a prominent body odour and it is safe to use deodorant for children who need it. It is important for children to learn to wash themselves regularly.

You may want to discuss your child's development with their teacher so that they can have privacy at changing times for sport.

Does early adrenarche impact future pubertal development?

Your child should go through puberty at the normal age. Sometimes early adrenarche can be associated with obesity, polycystic ovarian syndrome, and type 2 diabetes later in life so it is important to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

How should I explain adrenarche to my child?

Development of pubic or other hair on the body is a normal part of growing up.

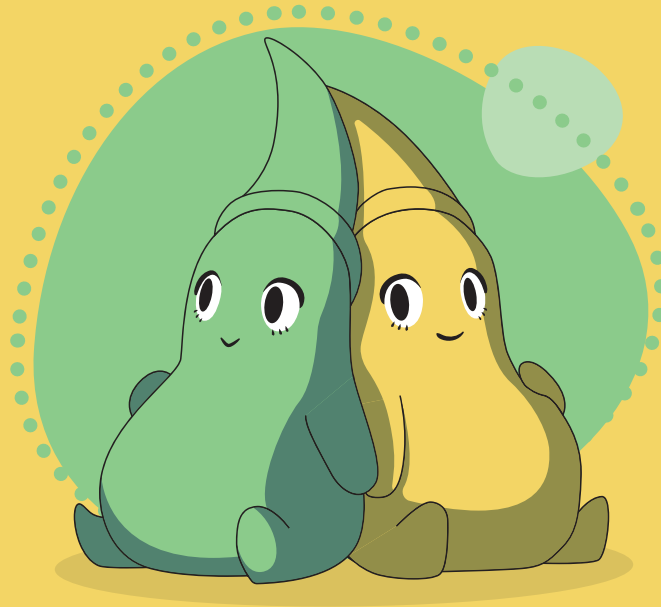
Every child's growth and development is individual, and for some it can just be earlier than others. Your child's friends will eventually have similar changes happen, even though these changes may be later than them.





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Remember

**Early adrenarche often requires no medical treatment,
but ongoing review by your medical team is important.**



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