

# Interactive Questions & Exercises

To accompany *I'm a Girl, Hormones!* for girls age 10+

Whether your daughter reads this book on her own or with you, these questions and exercises will help to make the experience more interactive and will also assure that she has grasped the important concepts.

## Question:

How do you know if you are an adolescent or not?

## Find it in the book:

*See page 10 in the book.*

Adolescence is the time between being a child and becoming an adult. During adolescence you experience puberty, a time when your girl anatomy begins to prepare to have a baby one day.

## Question:

What does dopamine do in your brain?

## Find it in the book:

*See page 13 in the book.*

Neurons, cells in the brain, make dopamine and it has a big effect on different parts of your brain. It helps you to become more independent in your thinking so one day, when you are an adult, you can make your own decisions and live on your own.

## Question:

Why are there changes in your emotions during puberty?

## Find it in the book:

*See page 14 in the book.*

Your brain is developing very fast during adolescence and this causes your emotions to go up and down. Also, puberty hormones are going to have an effect on neurons in your brain during this time and can also effect your emotions.

**Question:**

What are breast buds? Do you have them yet?

**Find it in the book:**

*See page 17, with anatomy figure.*

Breast buds are little lumps that appear under your nipples and let you know your breasts are growing. They are a signal that you are in puberty and hormones are making changes in your body.

**Question:**

Where is the pituitary gland and what does it do?

**Find it in the book:**

*See page 19, with anatomy figure.*

The pituitary gland is part of the brain and is attached beneath the brain. It sends hormones to the ovaries to tell them to mature.

**Question:**

Which girl anatomy structures are located in the pelvic cavity?

**Find it in the book:**

*Page 21, with anatomy figure.*

- Two ovaries
- Two fallopian tubes
- Uterus
- Vagina

**Question:**

The uterus looks like an upside down balloon. Describe the parts of the uterus.

**Find it in the book:**

*Page 21, with anatomy figure.*

Here are the parts of the uterus:

- Uterine wall: very muscular
- Uterine cavity: space in the middle
- Endometrium: delicate tissue that lines the inside of the uterine wall
- Cervix: part of the uterus that opens into the vagina

**Question:**

What is the menstrual cycle?

**Find it in the book:**

*See page 22 in the book.*

The menstrual cycle is a repeating monthly pattern the body uses to prepare a bed in the endometrium for a fertilized egg. The typical menstrual cycle usually lasts about 28 days, but it can be a few days more or less.

**Question:**

What is the difference between a fertilized egg and an unfertilized egg?.

**Find it in the book:**

*See 23, with anatomy figures.*  
After an egg is released at ovulation, it is sucked into the fallopian tube to travel to the uterus. If it is joined by a sperm while it is in the fallopian tube, it can become a fertilized egg and grow into a baby. An unfertilized egg does not join with a sperm in the fallopian tube and cannot grow into a baby.

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**Question:**

During the first 13 days of the menstrual cycle, the pituitary gland sends hormones to the ovaries.

In response, what hormone does the ovaries send to the uterus and what does this hormone do?

**Find it in the book:**

*See page 25, with anatomy figure.*  
The hormones from the pituitary gland tell the ovaries to make estrogen. Estrogen travels in the blood to the uterus and tells the endometrium of the uterus to slowly thicken so that it can be a nice bed for a fertilized egg to grow in.

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**Question:**

Why is day 14 of the menstrual cycle so important?

**Find it in the book:**

*Page 26, with anatomy figure.*  
Day 14 is ovulation. This is the day that one of the ovaries releases an egg and it is sucked into the fallopian tube by the beating of tiny fingers on the end of the fallopian tube. Now the egg will take a 4-day journey to the uterus. If the egg is going to meet sperm, this will happen in the fallopian tube.

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**Question:**

What is progesterone and what does it do?

**Find it in the book:**

*See page 27, with anatomy figure.*  
The ovary that let go of an egg at ovulation starts producing progesterone. Progesterone travels in the blood to the uterus and puts finishing touches on the bed in the endometrium.

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**Question:**

What happens to the breasts during the menstrual cycle?

**Find it in the book:**

*See 28, with anatomy figures.*  
Estrogen and progesterone from the ovaries causes the tiny glands inside the breast to grow. Toward the end of the menstrual cycle, the breasts might feel a little swollen and tender.

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**Question:**

By day 21 of the menstrual cycle, the endometrium has become thick and ready to receive a fertilized egg. What does the endometrium look like?

**Find it in the book:**

*See 29, with anatomy figure.*  
The thick endometrium is made up of very small blood vessels and glands. They provide nutrients for the tiny growing baby.

**Question:**

PM is the premenstrual time at the end of the menstrual cycle on days 25-28. What is happening in the uterus on these days?

**Find it in the book:**

*See page 31, with anatomy figures.*  
An unfertilized egg has arrived in the uterine cavity but it cannot attach to the endometrium because it is unfertilized. Since there is no baby, there is no need for the thick endometrium. It gradually breaks apart and is cleansed from the body. A new endometrium bed will be made in the next menstrual cycle.

**Question:**

What are the symptoms of the PM time?

**Find it in the book:**

*See page 30 of the book.*  
There are three main symptoms.

- Your breasts might feel a little swollen and painful.
- You might feel some cramping in your lower tummy or lower back.
- You might feel more emotional than usual, a little more irritated, and maybe easily frustrated.

**Question:**

What is the difference between PM and PMS?

**Find it in the book:**

*See page 30 of the book.*  
If the PM symptoms interfere with your daily activities or relationships the condition is called PMS.

**Question:**

On what day of the menstrual cycle does your period, also called menstruation, start?

**Find it in the book:**

*See the Menstrual Cycle Calendar on page 33.*  
The first day that you will notice blood is Day 1 of your menstrual cycle.

**Question:**

What are the parts of the vulva? And, what are the openings into the vulva?

**Find it in the book:**

*See 35, with anatomy figure.*

- Labia majora
- Labia minora
- Two openings
  - Urethral opening
  - Vaginal opening

**Question:**

How much blood usually comes out of the vaginal opening during your period?

**Find it in the book:**

*See the Menstrual Cycle Calendar on page 36.*

Usually only about 2-3 tablespoons comes out over about 4-7 days. Most comes out the first few days.

**Question:**

When you look inside the pelvic cavity, you see that the uterus and vagina are in the middle. What structures, that are not part of the girl anatomy, are in front and behind them?

**Find it in the book:**

*See page 39, with anatomy figure.*

The urinary bladder and urethra are in front and the rectum is in back.

**Question:**

The most common way to catch the blood during your period is to use a pad. Another option is to use a tampon. Where do you put a tampon to collect the blood?

**Find it in the book:**

*See page 41, with anatomy figure.*

You insert the tampon through the vaginal opening and it stays inside the vagina. A tampon cannot stray from the vagina because there are only two openings. One is the vaginal opening and the other is a very tiny hole in the cervix that leads to the uterus.

**Question:**

What are the names of the three skin glands?

**Find it in the book:**

*See page 47, with anatomy figure.*

- Sweat glands
- Sebaceous glands
- Apocrine glands

### Question:

Have you found any pimples on your face? What causes a pimple?

### Find it in the book:

*See 49, with anatomy figure.*

The sebaceous gland produces oil that is sent through a duct into the hair follicle. If the duct becomes blocked, the oil it produced builds up and forms a pimple.

### Question:

One of the first changes most kids notice when they enter puberty is that they have a new body odor. How does that happen?

### Find it in the book:

*See pages 50 & 51, with anatomy figures.*

Bacteria that live on the skin ingest oil from the apocrine gland and then the bacteria produce a gas which is our body odor. This doesn't happen until puberty because the apocrine glands need puberty hormones to start working.

### Question:

After you have been in puberty for a little while, you notice that your arms and legs are getting longer and that you are getting taller. How does that happen?

### Find it in the book:

*See page 53, with anatomy figure.*

In our bones are little patches called growth plates. Growth hormone tells cells in the growth plates to make more bone and the bones grow longer and wider.

### Exercises:

- When you are alone, use a mirror and see if you can find these parts of the vulva and the two openings. Look at *anatomy figure 11 on page 35* to help you.
  - Mon pubis
  - Labia majora
  - Labia minora
  - Urethral opening
  - Vaginal opening

Exercises:

2.

March						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4 Period Starts	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31	April 1	2	3	4

Let's see how good you are at predicting when your next period will happen. On this calendar, you can see that your period started on March 4th.

- 1. What day is the most likely day for ovulation?
- 2. What days are most likely for PM?
- 3. What day will your period again?

*Answers:*

1. March 17th
2. March 28th – March 31st
3. April 1<sup>st</sup>

3. Girls often wonder if a tampon can wander out of the vagina once it is in there. After you try this little exercise, you will never question that again.

- Place a tampon in a small cup of water.
- What happens to the tampon?