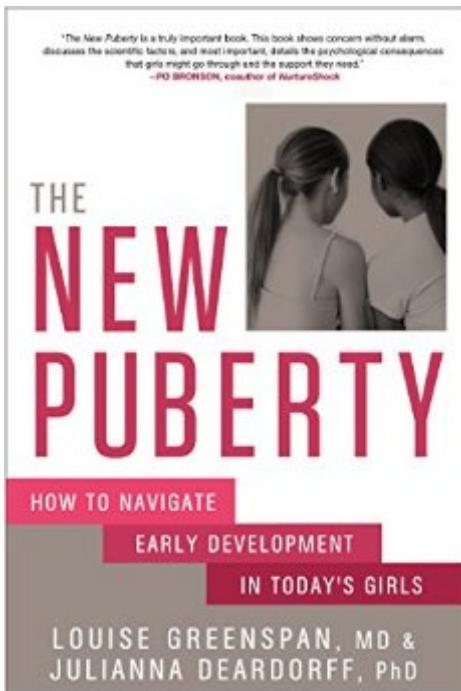


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The New Puberty: How To Navigate Early Development In Today's Girls



Synopsis

A generation ago, fewer than 5 percent of girls started puberty before the age of 8; today, that percentage has more than doubled. Early puberty is not just a matter of physical transformationâ •itâ ™s also deeply psychological, with a myriad of effects that can put a girl at higher risk for behavioral problems and long-term health challenges. In this reassuring and empowering guide, Louise Greenspan, MD, and Julianna Deardorff, PhDâ •two leading experts on the root causes and potential consequences of early puberty in girlsâ •deliver vital advice on how to prevent and manage early puberty. They explain surprising triggersâ •from excess body fat to hormone-mimicking chemicals to emotional stressors in a girlâ ™s home and family lifeâ •and offer highly practical strategies, including how to limit exposure to certain ingredients in personal care and household products, which foods to eat and which to avoid, ways to improve a childâ ™s sleep routine to promote healthy biology, and more. The New Puberty is an engaging, urgently needed road map to helping young girls move forward with confidence, ensuring their future well-being.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The focus of the New Puberty book is early development in girls - with examples as young as 5 year old hitting puberty (but mostly geared at the 8-9 year range). Yet ideally this is also a book for parents with young girls who haven't started showing puberty signs yet to give them an idea of what to look for and some insight into why the modern girl is hitting puberty so much earlier/younger than her predecessors. The book is extremely informative and ideal for both parents (written in a friendly

and accessible way) and practitioners (many recent studies are published and put together). As a parent, I look for these types of books to be informative and yet not have all the answers - I don't want another 'fad' or narrowminded perspective on parenting. What I do need is to know what recent findings there are and have those put into perspective of our past approaches to dealing with girls hitting puberty (earlier or otherwise). The book is broken down as follows : Part 1: Causes of Early Puberty (defining puberty, potential repercussions, and puberty prompters). Part 2: Strategies (is medicine necessary, precautionary steps, healthy habits, the brain of a developing girl, the "talk"). In effect, the "Why" and then the "what to do." This isn't a hype book with a lot of call outs or pretty pictures. It's a very straightforward, informative, intelligent approach to the subject with the understanding that we are still learning so much about the subject (and will probably never know completely about the process of turning girls into women). And, although hitting puberty early is natural, it can also be very problematic for the girl and create issues that will need to be dealt with by parents.

Written primarily for mothers whose daughters are on the verge of or in the midst of puberty, "The New Puberty" doubles as both a research compendium and guide. The most important point that authors Louise Greenspan and Julianna Deardorff want to get across is that the transition to puberty is a normal process. The second issue, which is probably what brings most readers to this book is that puberty is occurring at an earlier age in girls than ever before. This is not the case for boys. So, why is that? As recently as 100 years ago, which is not long in evolutionary time, the average age of puberty in girls (as mapped to the first menstrual period) was 16. In the past half-century it has moved from age 14 to roughly age 12 1/2, where it is now. While there is still considerable variation among girls, there is no question that the average age has dropped. The authors explore a number of avenues to explain this: diet; hormonal treatments in animals (milk and meat); the use of prepared foods; chemicals in the environment; and obesity. Many of these factors have been known for some time to be associated with earlier menarche. Indeed, when diet is inadequate or insufficient, the menarche is delayed. What I found to be intriguing is the area coming to be known as epigenetics. These include a mix of biological, psychological and social factors that seem to be associated with the earlier onset of puberty. Family stability, family relations, racial and ethnic background, the parents own behavior and type of guidance and community norms figure into patterns. There is empirical evidence to show these factors combine to have an effect. The authors explore so-called "precocious puberty," when puberty onsets at an unusually early age.

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