

# The Human Body

There are two periods in our lives when the human body changes very rapidly and quite dramatically. The first period went by without your noticing it, but the adults around you were very aware of the changes in your body. In the first year of your life you probably tripled your birth weight, and by the time you were about two and a half years old, you had already reached half of your adult height. Imagine how large you would be now had you continued growing at that rate!

The second period of rapid growth and significant body change occurs at puberty. The shape of the body changes, there are obvious signs of the development of fertility, and a growth spurt results in a rapid change in height and weight. Even the appearance of the face is changed because of the growth of the facial bones.

These important changes lead to an increase in awareness of the body. At some time or another, young people who are going through puberty become very conscious of their bodies and concerned about their appearance. They may feel awkward because they aren't used to their new height and shape, or self-conscious because they are growing faster or slower than their friends. These are natural responses to such big changes.

