

ADOLESCENCE WELLNESS – THE WAY FORWARD !!

Children embark on an interesting phase towards adulthood during adolescent. The age groups of 10-18 years make children undergo rapid changes in body size, shape, physiology, & psychological & social functioning. Hormones set the developmental agenda in conjunction with social structure designed to foster the transition from childhood to adulthood.

Adolescence proceeds across three distinct periods – early, middle & late (each marked by characteristic set of salient biologic, psychologic, and social issues. However, individual variation is substantial, both in terms of the timing of somatic changes and the quality of the adolescent's experience. Gender and subculture profoundly affect the developmental course, as do physical and social stressors.

Biological development – androgens and hormones are triggered to bring about the sexual maturity, particular weight gain & growth acceleration. This occurs from 9-11 years of age. Children grow approx. 3 – 4.5 cm per year during this period. Bone maturation correlates closely with the sexual development. Girls achieve menarche & boys have gonadal enlargement during this phase.

Sexuality development – This includes not only sexual behavior but also interest and fantasies, sexual orientation, attitude towards sex and its relationship to emotions, and awareness of socially defined rules and morals.

Cognitive & Moral development – In piagetian theory, adolescence marks the transition from the concrete operational thinking characteristic of school children to formal logical operations including academic expressions, to reason from known principals, and to weigh the pros & cons of specific situation. Children during this phase go through a keilodoscope of personal dilemmas including emotional out bursts, magical thinking such as convictions of invulnerability, which may interfere with critical decision making & risk taking behavior. Most adolescence perceives right & wrong as absolute and unquestionable.

Self Concept development – includes self-consciousness exponentially increasing with somatic transformations of puberty. Self-awareness tense to centre on external characteristic in contrast to introspection of later adolescence. Scrutinizing self appearance, apparent viewing themselves as being over weight, nutritional habits, feeling of depression & image distortion, altering self esteem, struggle of inequalities in power and prestige, all have a lucid interplay.

Relationships with family, peers, & society – The trend of separation from family and involvement in peers accelerates adolescence undergo stylistic sharp conflux ranging from rebel, rejection and peer pressure. Friendships and associations develop for sharing thoughts and informations.

Implications focus on the physical, mental & psychological – sexual growth of children. Parents should address these core issues with the growing children with trust and confidence needs for privacy, self expression & development should be allowed. Adolescence should have a stable sense of identity and realistic planning for academic and economic independence. Sexual counseling and guidance is of paramount significance in the family and the school. Genetic and environmental factor affect the onset and course of puberty.

Skin acne, physical growth, and even mental freedom and space for development are crucial to be addressed. Adolescence is the young sailors who will captain their ship in the years to come.



Optimizing growth potential



Nutrition is key to health



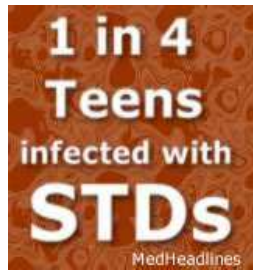
Adolescent depression



© Aventis Pasteur MSD



Vaccinations prevent long term diseases & mortality –
For Pneumonias, Meningitis, Flu, Cervical Cancer



Unwanted teen pregnancy, alcoholism & sexually transmitted diseases are a scourge in teenagers



Regular exercise & sports is a corner stone to good health