

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## Islamic Puberty and Health Workshop

Allah Ta`ala says in the holy Quran,

{ وَإِذَا بَلَغَ الْأَطْفَالُ مِنْكُمْ الْحُلُمَ فَلْيَسْتَأْذِنُوا كَمَا اسْتَأْذَنَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ  
كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ آيَاتِهِ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ }

*And when the children among you have attained to puberty, let them seek permission as those before them sought permission; thus does Allah make clear to you His communications, and Allah is knowing, Wise.*

### Definition of Puberty:

The process of physical changes by which a child's body matures into an adult body capable of sexual reproduction to enable fertilization. It is initiated by hormonal signals from the brain to the gonads; the ovaries in a girl, the testes in a boy. In response to the signals, the gonads produce hormones that stimulate libido and the growth, function, and transformation of the brain, bones, muscle, blood, skin, hair, breasts, and sexual organs. Physical growth—height and weight—accelerates in the first half of puberty and is completed when the child has developed an adult body.

### The Signs of Puberty are Three:

1. Reaching the age of 15 (lunar) years for a male or a female.
2. Experiencing a wet dream by a 9 year old boy or girl.
3. Menstruation for a 9 year old girl.

\*Footnote: When a child reaches the age of seven and is *mumayyiz* (discerning) i.e. he can eat, drink and clean himself after using the toilet unassisted, he is ordered to perform *ṣalāh* and all other injunctions pertaining to *ṣalāh* (e.g. *wuḍū`*). When he reaches ten, he will be beaten for neglecting it, not severely, but so as to discipline the child, and not more than three strikes. *ṣalāh* and other injunctions of *Sharī`ah* become *wājib* when a child reaches the age of puberty.

### **Boys' Physical Changes:**

- Growth spurts
- Appearance of facial hair
- Broadening of shoulder muscles, development of chest muscles
- Body odor
- Pimples or facial breakouts
- Hair growth in pubic area and underarm area
- Growth of testicles
- Erections or wet dreams
- Deepening of the voice, although this is more likely in the later stages of puberty

### **Boys' Emotional Changes:**

- Interest in the opposite sex
- Mood changes
- Anxiety or excitement about the changes he's going through
- Less talkative and open with parents
- Shy, nervousness around girls, or flirtatious with girls

### **Stages of Puberty:**

Here's a quick look at how it works. Usually after a girl's 8th birthday or after a boy turns 9 or 10, puberty begins when an area of the brain called the hypothalamus starts to release gonadotropin-releasing hormone (GnRH). When GnRH travels to the pituitary gland (a small gland under the brain that produces hormones that control other glands throughout the body), it releases two more puberty hormones — luteinizing hormone (LH) and follicle-stimulating hormone (FSH).

What happens next depends on gender:

- **Boys:** Hormones travel through the bloodstream to the testes (testicles) and give the signal to begin production of sperm and the hormone testosterone.
- **Girls:** Hormones go to the ovaries (the two oval-shaped organs that lie to the right and left of the uterus) and trigger the maturation and release of eggs and the production of the hormone estrogen, which matures a female's body and prepares her for pregnancy.

At about the same time, the adrenal glands of both boys and girls begin to produce a group of hormones called adrenal androgens. These hormones stimulate the growth of pubic and underarm hair in both sexes. Estrogen in a female and Testosterone in a male.

### **What does reaching puberty mean spiritually?**

It means that you are legally responsible for everything you say and do, the good and the bad. Allah places two angels on your shoulders, Raqib and `Atid, who follow you everywhere you go, writing down everything you do. Allah Ta`ala says,

{ إِذْ يَتَلَقَّى الْمُتَلَقِّيَانِ عَنِ الْيَمِينِ وَعَنِ الشِّمَالِ قَعِيدٌ } { مَا يَلْفِظُ مِنْ قَوْلٍ  
إِلَّا لَدَيْهِ رَقِيبٌ عَتِيدٌ }

*Two recording (angels), at right and at left, are constantly recording. Not a word does he utter but there is a sentinel by him, ready (to note it).*

### **The Fiqh (Jurisprudence) of Purity:**

#### **The Obligatory Acts of Wudū' (Ritual Ablution) are Six:**

1. Intention.
2. Washing the face.
3. Washing both hands and arms including the elbows.
4. Wiping any part of the head.
5. Washing the feet including the ankles.
6. *Tartīb* (to observe the above-mentioned sequence).

\*Footnote: The person performing ablution either intends removing a state of *ḥadath* (ritual impurity) or purification for the ṣalāh. Washing the entire face, from the point where the hairline usually begins to the chin in length, and from ear to ear in width. Washing both arms completely, up-to and including the elbows once. The minimum is to wipe part of a single hair, provided this part does not hang below the limit of the head (i.e. below the hairline).

\*Note: The Cleanliness of the Body: It is sunnah (1) to trim the fingernails and toenails, (2) to clip moustache to the extent that the pink of the upper lip is visible, it should not be plucked or shaved, (3) to pluck (or to shave) the hair of the underarms and nostrils, and to shave the pubic hair (4) to apply kuhl (an antimoniac compound), (5) to apply henna for women. Circumcision is wājib for both men and women.

#### **The Factors that Nullify the Wudū' are Four:**

1. Anything that exits from either the front or the rear private parts, whether wind or anything else, except semen.
2. Loss of intellect through sleep or other causes, except sleep while firmly seated on the ground.
3. Skin-to-skin contact between an adult, non-mahram (marriageable), male and female without any barrier.
4. Touching the private parts of a human with the palm or inner surface of the fingers.

**The Things Make a Ritual Bath Compulsory are Six:**

1. Sexual intercourse.
2. Discharge of semen.
3. Menstruation.
4. Postnatal bleeding.
5. Childbirth.
6. Death.

\*Footnote: Male sperm and female sexual fluid are recognized by the fact that they come in spurts by contractions, with sexual gratification and when moist, smell like bread dough, and when dry, like egg-white. Periodic discharge of blood from the vagina.

**The Compulsory Acts of a Ritual Bath are Two:**

1. Intention.
2. To ensure that water reaches the entire body. Plus the mouth and the nose for the Hanafis.

**The Forbidden Actions for a Person in the State of Minor Impurity (in need of wudū') are Four:**

(1) Ṣalāh, (2) ṭawāf, (3) touching or (4) carrying the Qur'ān.

**The Forbidden Actions for a Person in the State of Major Impurity (in Need of Ritual Bath) are Six:**

(1) Ṣalah, (2) ṭawāf, (3) touching, (4) carrying or (5) reciting the Qur'ān and (6) to remain in the masjid.

**The 'Awrahs (Private parts) are Four Types:**

1. The 'awrah of a man generally is the area between the navel and the knees.

2. The 'awrah of a woman in ṣalāh includes the whole body except the face and the two palms.

3. The 'awrah of a woman in the presence of a stranger is the entire body (except the face and the two palms according to some scholars).

4. The 'awrah of a woman in the presence of a mahram (unmarriageable kin) or women is the area between the navel and the knees.

\*Footnote: Men includes young boys, even if they are not yet of the age of understanding. It generally means in all conditions; whether in ṣalāh or outside ṣalāh. The knees and the navel themselves are not part of the 'awrah, but it is wājib to cover them in order to fulfill the command of covering the 'awrah completely.

Allah Ta`ala says,

{ قُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَغُضُّوا مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِمْ وَيَحْفَظُوا فُرُوجَهُمْ ذَلِكَ أَزْكَى لَهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا يَصْنَعُونَ } { وَقُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنَاتِ يَغْضُضْنَ مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِنَّ وَيَحْفَظْنَ فُرُوجَهُنَّ وَلَا يُبْدِينَ زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَلَا يَضْرِبْنَ بِجُمُرِهِنَّ عَلَى جُيُوبِهِنَّ وَلَا يُبْدِينَ زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا لِبُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ آبَائِهِنَّ أَوْ آبَاءِ بُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ أَبْنَائِهِنَّ أَوْ أَبْنَاءِ بُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ إِخْوَانِهِنَّ أَوْ بَنِي إِخْوَانِهِنَّ أَوْ بَنِي أَخَوَاتِهِنَّ أَوْ نِسَائِهِنَّ أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُهُنَّ أَوِ التَّابِعِينَ غَيْرِ أُولِي الْإِرْبَةِ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ أَوِ الطِّفْلِ الَّذِينَ لَمْ يَظْهَرُوا عَلَى عَوْرَاتِ النِّسَاءِ وَلَا يَضْرِبْنَ بِأَرْجُلِهِنَّ لِيُعْلَمَ مَا يُخْفِينَ مِنْ زِينَتِهِنَّ وَتُوبُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا أَيُّهَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ }

*Say to the believing men that they cast down their looks and guard their private parts; that is purer for them; surely Allah is Aware of what they do. And say to the believing women that they cast down their looks and guard their private parts and do not display their ornaments except what appears thereof, and let them wear their head-coverings over their bosoms, and not display their ornaments except to their husbands or their fathers, or the fathers of their husbands, or their sons, or the sons of their husbands, or their brothers, or their brothers' sons, or their sisters' sons, or their women, or those whom their right hands possess, or the male servants not having need (of women), or the children who have not attained knowledge of what is hidden of women; and let them not strike their feet so that*

*what they hide of their ornaments may be known; and turn to Allah all of you, O believers! so that you may be successful.*

{ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِفُرُوجِهِمْ حَافِظُونَ } { إِلَّا عَلَىٰ أَزْوَاجِهِمْ أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُهُمْ }  
{ فَإِنَّهُمْ غَيْرُ مَلُومِينَ } { فَمَنْ ابْتَغَىٰ وَرَاءَ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْعَادُونَ }

*And who guard their private parts, Except with those joined to them in the marriage bond, or (the captives) whom their right hands possess, - for (in their case) they are free from blame, But those whose desires exceed those limits are transgressors;*

'Abd al-Rahman, the son of Abu Sa'id al-Khudri, reported from his father: The Messenger of Allah (may peace be upon him) said: A man should not see the private parts of another man, and a woman should not see the private parts of another woman, and a man should not lie with another man under one covering, and a woman should not lie with another woman under one covering.

#### **Hadiths On Modesty:**

Ibn `Umar (May Allah be pleased with them) reported: Messenger of Allah (PBUH) passed by a man of the Ansar who was admonishing his brother regarding shyness. Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said, "Leave him alone, for modesty is a part of Iman." [Al-Bukhari and Muslim]

Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri (May Allah be pleased with him) reported: Messenger of Allah (PBUH) was even shier than a virgin behind her veil. When he saw something which he disliked, we could perceive it on his face. [Al-Bukhari and Muslim].

Abu Mas`ud Al-Ansari (May Allah be pleased with him) said: The Prophet (PBUH) said, "One of the admonitions of the previous Prophets which has been conveyed to people is that if you have no modesty, you can do whatever you like." [Al-Bukhari].

#### **Ayahs and Hadiths On Gender Relations:**

Allah Most High says: *"And they (i.e. the servants of Allah) do not commit zina (fornication)- And whoever does this shall meet a full penalty. The torment will*

*be doubled to him on the Day of Resurrection, and he will abide therein in disgrace."*

Allah Most High says: *'And We sent Lot as a Messenger: Remember that he said to his people, "Have you become so shameless that you commit such indecent acts as no one has committed before you in the world? You gratify your lust with men instead of women: indeed you are a people who transgress the limits!" . . . And We rained upon his people; then behold what happened in the end to the guilty ones!'*

The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) explained: "If one of you were to be stabbed in the head with a piece of iron it would be better for him than if he were to touch a woman whom it is not permissible for him to touch." (Reported by al-Tabaraani; see also Saheeh al-Jaami, 5045).

The saying of `A'ishah, "No, by Allah, the hand of the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) never touched the hand of any woman ..."

Umaymah bint Raqeeqah said: 'The Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "I do not shake hands with women (not permissible to touch)."' (An-Nasaai, #4181 and Ibn Majah, #2874)

The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) said, "Whenever a man is alone with a woman the Devil makes a third." (Al-Tirmidhi 3118, Narrated Umar ibn al-Khattab, Tirmidhi transmitted it as authentic)

The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) is reported as having said: "And the eyes commit zina (fornication). Their zina is gazing."

He (peace and blessings be upon him) commanded Ali (as) said: "Ali! Do not look once after another, for the first look is for you (since it happens accidentally) while the second is against you."

It was narrated by Jaabir: "The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said: 'There is nothing I fear for my ummah more than the deed of the people of Lot.'" (Tirmidhi 1457)

Narrated Ibn 'Abbas: The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) cursed effeminate men; those men who are in the similitude (assume the manners of women) and those women who assume the manners of men, and he said, "Turn them out of your houses." The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) turned out such-and-such man, and 'Umar turned out such-and-such woman. (Sahih Bukhari 7:72:774)

## The Beginning of Life (Conception):

Allah Ta`ala says,

{ وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ سُلَالَةٍ مِنْ طِينٍ } { ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَاهُ نُطْفَةً فِي قَرَارٍ  
مَكِينٍ } { ثُمَّ خَلَقْنَا النُّطْفَةَ عَلَقَةً فَخَلَقْنَا الْعَلَقَةَ مُضْغَةً فَخَلَقْنَا الْمُضْغَةَ عِظَامًا  
فَكَسَوْنَا الْعِظَامَ لَحْمًا ثُمَّ أَنْشَأْنَاهُ خَلْقًا آخَرَ فَتَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ أَحْسَنُ الْخَالِقِينَ }

*Man We did create from a quintessence (of clay); Then We placed him as (a drop of) sperm in a place of rest, firmly fixed; Then We made the sperm into a clot of congealed blood; then of that clot We made a (fetus) lump; then we made out of that lump bones and clothed the bones with flesh; then we developed out of it another creature. So blessed be Allah, the best to create!*

`Abdullah bin Mas`ud (May Allah be pleased with him) reported: Messenger of Allah (PBUH), the truthful and the receiver of the truth informed us, saying, "The creation of you (humans) is gathered in the form of semen in the womb of your mother for forty days, then it becomes a clinging thing in similar (period), then it becomes a lump of flesh like that, then Allah sends an angel who breathes the life into it; and (the angel) is commanded to record four things about it: Its provision, its term of life (in this world), its conduct; and whether it will be happy or miserable. By the One besides Whom there is no true god! Verily, one of you would perform the actions of the dwellers of Jannah until there is only one cubit between him and it (Jannah), when what is foreordained would come to pass and he would perform the actions of the inmates of Hell until he enter it. And one of you would perform the actions of the inmates of Hell, until there is only one cubit between him and Hell. Then he would perform the acts of the dwellers of Jannah until he would enter it." [Al-Bukhari and Muslim].

The beginning of life is called conception. It takes place when the egg of the female is penetrated by the sperm of the male. This union between the sperm and the egg is known as fertilization. The entire process of conception is one of the great wonders of Allah's creation. Let's start from the beginning:

The male's sperm are deposited in the vagina near the cervix, the entrance of the womb or uterus. Nature seems to have sensed that it would be a difficult trip for the sperm to bring about conception, for this reason, 100 to 200 million sperm are provided just for the purpose of fertilizing one female egg. The millions of



tiny sperms, which can be seen only under a microscope, are so delicate that they are successful in passing through the cervix into the uterus.

The sperm have tails, called Flagella, which push them forward. Actually, sperm look very much like miniature tadpoles, and they move forward like tadpoles by wiggling their tails from side to side. When they reach the cervix, the sperm must swim through a mucous barrier that covers the entrance to the inside of the uterus. Tens of millions of sperm are unable to do this and are lost. Those sperm that pierce the cervix then swim up the three to four inches of the inside of the uterus to find the two exits at the upper ends where the fallopian tubes begin. Tens of millions more sperm are lost before they get to the fallopian tube where they may finally meet an egg. But this meeting can take place only during one day of each month.

Females normally have one egg, no larger than the point of a pin, that leaves an ovary each month. This is called ovulation. Ovulation usually occurs 14 days before a woman's menstrual period.

When an egg leaves an ovary it finds its way to the funnel-shaped opening of the Fallopian tube. Nobody knows how it manages to get from the ovary to the Fallopian tube because an egg has no ability to move by itself. However, it gets there somehow. Once inside the Fallopian tube, the egg is very slowly swept down towards the uterus by tiny hair-like structures, called cilia, which line the tubes. The cilia are so small they can be seen only under a microscope. It takes anywhere from three to five days for the egg to travel the three inches of the Fallopian tube, and during this time it may meet the sperm.

If an egg meets the sperm in the Fallopian tube, there is a good chance that one of the sperm will enter the egg and unite with it. This is called fertilization.

So, even if there are 100 million sperm that meet an egg in the Fallopian tube, only one will be able to pierce the outer coating of the egg and cause fertilization. When this happens, all the other sperm die. Sometimes, however two or more eggs emerge from the ovary. They too may be fertilized, each one by a different sperm, and the result will be twins or triplet or even more. Also, twins can result by the splitting of a single fertilized egg into two.



