

Gynecomastia in Males

What is gynecomastia?

Gynecomastia is an increase in the size of the breast tissue in males. It can happen in one or both breasts. It is very common in teenage males during puberty. Overweight males can have large breasts from an increase in fat tissue. This is called lipomastia.

Gynecomastia may be caused by:

- Too much of the hormone estrogen. Estrogen is needed for bone and sperm health. A Newborn infant can also get it because of his mother's hormones.
- Some medicines for depression, anxiety, infections, and blood pressure
- Many illegal drugs, steroids, and alcohol, can also cause this condition
- Thyroid, liver, and kidney problems
- Poor nutrition
- In very rare cases, cancer
- The cause is not known in one in every 4 males.

What should I do if I think I have it?

Your healthcare provider will do a physical exam and ask questions about your symptoms. The healthcare provider will decide what to do next. Most cases are mild and will be watched. Some tests may be needed.

How is it treated?

Many times gynecomastia goes away on its own and there are no lasting problems. If these are normal changes, you will be re-checked at your regular office visits. If medicine is thought to be the cause, your healthcare provider may have you stop the medicine. If it does not go away on its own, you may need treatment such as hormones, other medicines or surgery.

Are my feelings normal?

It is important to feel good about yourself. Males with gynecomastia may feel uncomfortable about their increased breast size. If you are feeling sad about anything, including your breast size, talk to your healthcare provider or a counselor.

ALERT: Call your healthcare provider, nurse, or clinic if you have any questions or concerns or if you:

- Feel very upset or sad.
- Have lots of breast pain or discharge from your nipples.
- Have special health care needs that were not covered by this information.

This teaching sheet is meant to help you care for your child. It does not take the place of medical care. Talk with your healthcare provider for diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up.