Puberty refers to the biological changes associated with sexual development in adolescence. Puberty is often defined as acquiring the ability to reproduce.

The Pituitary Gland (at the base of the brain) may be the best-known agent of pubertal change.

However, before the pituitary can act, it must receive gonadotropin-releasing hormone (GnRH) from another part of the brain, the hypothalamus.

(See slide 2 of this presentation. Note that LH operates in both sexes, as does FSH.)

Order in Which Pubertal Changes Occur
Girls’ puberty occurring earlier now than in previous generations (video)

Possible chain from:

Chemical products known as phthalates (here and here)

Larger body-mass

Early puberty

Some evidence exists of earlier puberty in boys, but studies are not entirely consistent.

Social Consequences of Physically Maturing “Too Early” or “Too Late”

Theories in this area (Skoog & Stattin, 2014)

Discovery Channel video on puberty