



Pediatric Clinic  
PATIENT EDUCATION HANDOUTS

## **Adolescent Gynecomastia**

### **Description**

Gynecomastia is a condition that often occurs in boys during puberty. During this time a boy's breasts may begin to take on female breast characteristics. He may notice that his breast is tender and that a small area of breast tissue can be felt beneath his nipple. This condition is very common; about half of all 12- to 16-year-old boys have some degree of gynecomastia.

### **Cause**

Gynecomastia is thought to be caused by an imbalance of hormones in boys during the middle part of puberty.

### **Diagnosis**

Gynecomastia is diagnosed in a boy who has entered puberty and has no other medical conditions or symptoms that suggest a reason for the breast to develop.

Some medicines may cause enlargement of the male breast. Tell your doctor about any unprescribed medications or supplements your son is taking.

### **Expected Course**

In most cases the tenderness lasts for a few months and then goes away. The breast tissue eventually decreases in size. It is unusual for the condition to last longer than 2 years. Rarely, this condition advances to the point where your son is embarrassed about the amount of breast growth.

### **Home Care**

No specific treatment is needed. Loose clothing may be more comfortable than more tightly fitting shirts.

### **CALL YOUR CHILD'S PHYSICIAN IMMEDIATELY IF:**

(1-888-887-4111 after hours)

- Gynecomastia is causing emotional problems.
- Discharge from the breast occurs.
- You have other concerns about your child's progression through puberty.