

Tips for Middle School Girls and Boys: Keeping Clean and Taking Care of Yourself

Keeping your body clean is an important part of keeping healthy. Caring about the way you look is important to feeling good about yourself. By the way, you don't need to wear the latest designer clothing to look good.

There are other things you can do which are much more important for your "image". Below are some ideas on smelling and looking your best.

Smelling Clean

Puberty is the time when special sweat glands roar into full production pouring out sweat which smells! Even if you're not heavily into puberty-style sweating yet, clothes can get stained, dirty and generally grubby, so you need to change and wash them often. Underclothes are right next to your skin and collect dead skin cells, sweat, etc. Overnight bacteria start to work on these stains so you would not smell nice if you wore them a second day.



Shoes

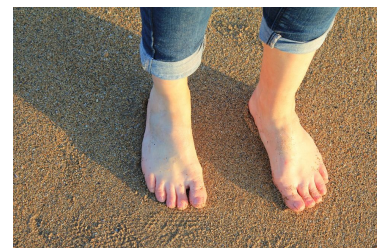


You spend a lot of time on your feet and your shoes are very close to the place where a very large collection of sweat glands live - your feet! Sweat gets into your shoes and then bacteria arrive. Bacteria love the moist leather or fabric environment so much that they multiply! If you have one pair of shoes for school then try to get them off as soon as you get home so that they can air and dry out overnight. If you have more than one pair then use them on alternate days to give them a better chance of drying out. Keep your shoes clean by brushing, polishing or washing. They will look better, last longer and be less

likely to smell. Most sneakers or running shoes will survive being washed by hand or even in the washing machine.

Feet

Wash your feet well at least once a day. Dry them carefully, especially between the toes where more bacteria collect than anywhere else on your skin.



Using 'Smell Nice' Products



As you enter puberty, you may want to start using a deodorant or anti-perspirant under your armpits. Be aware that some people have problems with perfumes, which can be a trigger for asthma or hay fever. **Remember:** Nothing smells better than clean skin and clothes. Perfumes are not a good substitute for a shower and wearing freshly cleaned clothes.

