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Publisher's Note

This book was written by a mom who had wished for more help to guide her daughters through the changes of adolescence. Her desire and experience inspired her to write this book. To be useful, such a book understandably needs to be frank. It is not a book for the family bookshelf.

You will want to be familiar with its contents before you decide how to make use of it. Perhaps your daughter is ready for parts of it now, but other parts you may want to save till later. Use your discretion. May God bless you with wisdom as you walk together through the changes of this season of life.



*I will praise thee;
for I am fearfully and
wonderfully made:
marvellous are
thy works;
and that my soul
knoweth right well.
My substance was not
hid from thee,
when I was made
in secret,
and curiously
wrought in the lowest
parts of the earth.*

Psalms 139:14, 15

Preface

Especially for Moms

I well remember when my first daughter began showing the telltale signs of awakenings in her body, and I knew it was time to give her The Talk. It seemed only yesterday my mom had The Talk with me, and so soon, it was my turn to share this timeless information with my daughter. I wished she could remain an innocent little girl, but I knew the passing of time wouldn't allow it. I also knew if she didn't hear the information from me, she would hear it from another source, and I wanted the honor. Since my daughter was not quick to ask questions, I worried about how The Talk would go. The perfect answer seemed to be a book I could give her to read.

I went to the library and began searching. But everything I found had inappropriate photos or too much information for a young girl. Where was that book filled with easy-to-understand info about the changes that happen in a girl's body written in a girlish but godly way?

And then the thought came: "You're a writer; why don't you write a book?" I pushed the thought away, arguing with many reasons why I wasn't capable. But the thought kept returning, and I finally relented.

I wrote with my three daughters in mind, as if we were chatting together while taking a walk. I wrote to tell them all the things I wanted them to know about growing up: some simple things, some complex things, some awkward things, and some things I learned the hard way.

I wrote with other girls in mind—girls who perhaps yearn to know what is normal or not normal about the puberty years.

I wrote with moms in mind, thinking of the thousands who will be faced with giving The Talk each year and maybe feeling as unequipped as I had.

As with all sensitive subjects, every mom has her own idea of what information needs to be shared. Maybe you feel this book contains more than your daughter needs to know, or perhaps you wish it explored other subjects more deeply. I hope it can still be a useful resource for you. I collected feedback from a large variety of moms and several people in the medical profession to help me present information about puberty and growing up in an easy-to-read, God-honoring way. A glossary in the back of the book gives definitions for the boldfaced words in the text.

Ideally, a daughter and mom could read this book together, discussing each chapter. But maybe there is a girl whose mom is too shy about sharing this kind of information. Maybe there is a girl whose mother is no longer available to teach her about what to expect during puberty. An older sister, concerned aunt, or caring schoolteacher can give this book to equip a girl in understanding the changes happening in her body.

My prayer and goal is to help girls build connections and trust with other godly women and friends in their lives as they discover how fascinating and special this time of girlhood is. May the knowledge gained take away any fear and confusion

about their developing bodies. As they comprehend God's marvelous design to nourish new life, may they worship and praise Him.

I am honored for you to read this book. I am humbled for you to entrust your precious daughters with these words.

-Regina





Introduction



Especially for Girls

The memory is so vivid in my mind. I still cringe when I think of my first menstrual cycle. But I'm getting ahead of myself. Let me start at the beginning.

I was thirteen. My mom had picked up my siblings and me early from school. That was always exciting, and this time especially so because we were driving three hours to a young people's Bible school for the closing program. Mom had packed ham sandwiches and chips and apples to eat on the way. I could clearly picture walking into the Bible school in my nicest dress with my favorite purse as if I were eighteen and almost grown-up.

While getting ready at home, I noticed it. What was it? My heart skipped a few beats, and my face felt hot as I stared at the red smear on the toilet paper. And then I realized this was my period, that thing my mom had told me would happen someday. I had seen big girls secretly clutching brightly colored wrappers in the school bathroom, noticed the wrappers in my older sisters' bedroom, and seen them in little trash cans beside public toilets. To think I now had my own secret starting in my body and needed to find my own colorfully wrapped pad.