

College of Public Health News

April 14, 2014

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Recommended Citation

Georgia Southern University, "College of Public Health News" (2014). *Public Health, Jiann-Ping Hsu College of - News*. 67.
<https://digitalcommons.georgiasouthern.edu/coph-news-online/67>

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Precocious Puberty

April 14, 2014



A collaborative study including Dr. Linda Synovitz, professor at Southeastern Louisiana University, and Dr. Joanne Chopak-Foss, health education and promotion program director at Georgia Southern University Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health examines precocious puberty: pathology, related risks, and support strategies. Children are currently starting pubertal development much earlier than 20 to 30 years ago.

Data from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES III) conducted from 1988-1994 revealed that the median age for breast development in White females was approximately 9.7 years and 8 years in African-American females versus 10.9 years ago. More recent data, however, indicate that some children are starting pubertal development even earlier (age 7 or 8 in females or age 9 in males). Very early pubertal development is identified as precocious puberty, a phenomenon that brings great concern to others besides parents: the child, their peers, school nurses, teachers, and counselors. This paper discusses precocious pubertal development, possible causes or relationships, related risks, treatment, and helping strategies.