

Hormone creams may trigger puberty

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U.S. researchers say skin creams and other cosmetic products containing hormones may put children at higher risk of early puberty.

Dr. Michael Dedekian of the University of Massachusetts Medical School told the annual Pediatric Academic Society meeting a preschool-age girl and her kindergarten-age brother developed signs of early puberty after being exposed to a concentrated testosterone skin cream their father was using on himself, the New York Times reported.

The newspaper said pediatric endocrinologists in California reported a similar cluster of five children in 2004.

In a 1998 paper in the journal *Clinical Pediatrics*, a doctor at the Brook Army Medical Center in Texas reported early breast development in four young girls who used shampoos that contained estrogen and placental extract, the newspaper said.

The University of Colorado School of Medicine reported several cases this year of young men who developed breast enlargement from using shampoos containing lavender and tea tree oils. Researchers said the lavender and tea tree oil had the same effect on breast tissue cells as estrogen, the newspaper said.

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