Bone health is important at every age and stage of life, especially when children are still growing. The average girl stops growing between the ages of 14 and 15 and the average boy stops between 17 and 18.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

Infants start with a skeleton made largely of cartilage that slowly matures into bone during development. As children grow, their bones have a softer structure, which causes their bones to fracture in different ways than adult bones. Knowing how to keep your child’s bones healthy and prevent injuries is important to ensuring life-long bone and joint health.

Test your knowledge about growing bones.

Circle below whether each statement is a FACT or MYTH.

*Answers are at the bottom of the handout.*

1. **FACT**  MYTH  Because children are still growing, their bones are subject to a unique injury called a growth plate fracture, which can stunt their growth.

2. **FACT**  MYTH  Bones are the same in children and adults, so they can be treated by the same doctor.

3. **FACT**  MYTH  High school sports injuries can cause problems that require surgery as an adult, and may lead to arthritis later in life.

4. **FACT**  MYTH  Each year in the U.S., more than 156,000 children under the age of 14 are treated in hospital emergency rooms for injuries occurring on public playgrounds.

5. **FACT**  MYTH  Overuse injuries occur in a wide range of sports, from baseball and basketball to track, soccer and gymnastics.

6. **FACT**  MYTH  Calcium is NOT an essential mineral for babies and young children to ensure they are able to grow strong bones and teeth.

**The Hard Truth About Bones**

The Pediatric Orthopedic Center at Miller Children’s & Women’s Hospital Long Beach has a dedicated team of pediatric orthopedic surgeons who specialize in children’s bones and growth, and can help you separate the facts from myths.