

Reaching the Age of Adolescence

Sex Determination

SEX DETERMINATION

All human beings have 23 pairs of chromosomes in the nuclei of their cells. Two chromosomes out of these are the sex chromosomes, named X and Y.

A female has two X chromosomes, while a male has one X and one Y chromosome. The gametes (egg and sperm) have only one set of chromosomes. The unfertilised egg always has one X chromosome. But sperms are of two kinds. One kind has an X chromosome, and the other kind has a Y chromosome.

When a sperm containing X chromosome fertilises the egg, the zygote would have two X chromosomes and develop into a female child. If the sperm contributes a Y chromosome to the egg (ovum) at fertilisation, the zygote would develop into a male child. The sex chromosomes of the father determine the sex of an unborn baby. The belief that the mother is responsible for the sex of her baby is completely wrong and to blame her for this is totally unjustified.

