



THE TEEN CLINIC VISIT: WHAT PARENTS NEED TO KNOW





GOAL:

At Mission Health we share your goal of seeing your teenager grow up to be strong, confident, well-informed adult who has all the tools to be healthy and safe so that they can fulfill all of their dreams. We want our clinic to be a place where your child feels comfortable discussing their needs and can get all of the information and resources that they need to be healthy and safe.

What is unique about teen patients?

- Teenagers are, for the most part, healthy and resilient. Helping teens maintain their personal strengths as they develop into adults is essential for their long term success.
- Many healthy habits develop during adolescence. These habits will carry through and affect their health as adults.
- Teens develop and grow very quickly when going through adolescence. This period of growth and development can begin as early as 10 and last well into their 20's. During this time period there are multiple unique health challenges they may encounter.
- Topics that are most likely to negatively affect your child's health and safety are unfortunately also the topics that are hardest to talk about. Some of these topics include: mental and sexual health, pregnancy and birth control, substance use, and bullying
- Transitioning from childhood to adulthood can be confusing and complicated! Balancing different parts of this transition can be difficult for both patients and parents. Mission Health is here to help



Stages of Adolescence	Physical	Social-Emotional	Cognitive
Early 11-13yo	Puberty begins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Struggle with identify • Desire independence and privacy • You may notice more conflict 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on the present. Limited thought to the future
Middle 14-18yo	Puberty is complete	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-involvement • Adjusting to changing body • Peer relationships tend to be the most important 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to set more goals • Interest in the meaning of life
Late 19-21yo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women are typically fully developed • Men continue to grow and gain muscle mass 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved sense of identity • Develop more serious relationships, concern for others and emotional stability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern for the future • Able to practice delayed gratification

What is different about visiting the clinic when my child is a teen?

- One-on-one time with provider: We start building this into part of your child's clinic visit at age 11-12.
- Patient, parent, and provider time: The one-on-one part of the visit will be combined with time that you and your child will be able to see their medical provider together.
- Increased patient responsibility: We will start encouraging teens to take charge of certain parts of their visits including checking in when you arrive, providing a personal phone number, filling out any screening questionnaires independently, and checking out after the visit. We feel this is an important step that prepares patients to feel confident as they transition into adulthood when they will see their medical provider alone.

- Transition to Adult Care: As part of this process, we will begin planning your teen's transition to Adult Care no later than 12-13 years of age. By the age of 18-21, we hope to have your teen transitioned to an independent relationship with an adult medical provider.

Why is it important that my child start seeing their medical provider one-on-one?

- More important health topics are talked about when patients get one-on-one time with their provider.
- We believe that one-on-one time is important for patients to be able to have time to talk about what they believe their needs are and start taking responsibility for their own health.
- Patients may avoid talking about important topics that can really affect their health in front of their parents

What if my child tells their medical provider something worrisome about their health or safety? Will I be told about it?

- If your child lets us know that they or someone they know are in immediate danger, we will absolutely tell you. However, confidentiality is an important reason why one-on-one time with the medical provider is so effective and in some cases is protected by law.
- In addition to one-on-one time with their medical provider, we encourage parents to ALSO talk with your child about the tough topics of adolescent and teenage years.

If you want to talk with your child about any of the topics listed above, but don't know how to start the conversation, check out the free app "SAHM THRIVE" for some ideas. You can also always ask to talk to your child's medical provider for a couple moments alone the next time you are at the clinic.

We want you to have an open and supportive relationship with your child and we are happy to help figure out how to make this happen.

