



# Teen Health Essentials



**Remember what being an adolescent was like?** Adolescence is a time of major changes in the mind and body that stick with us for much of our adult life. As teens grow, their health is influenced by many factors: biological, behavioral, emotional, social and physical environment. Which is why it is important that they see a healthcare provider yearly. The American Academy of Family Physicians wants you to know that great health is achieved when each person, at every age, receives proper medical and developmental care. You, your teen and your provider can work together to be as healthy as possible!

For more information on any of the topics below, ask us. We are happy to provide the information you need to empower you and your teen.

## What you can expect from your teen's medical provider:

### Physical Health Assessment



As teens grow, helping them take care of their body is important so they can be as healthy as possible in the future. A yearly visit is recommended to check on their growth and attend to areas like nutrition, bones and muscle development, metabolic changes and genital organ growth.

### Cognitive Health Assessment



During teenage years, the brain changes a lot and continues to change until at least the age of 25. As a result of this ongoing change, other areas of development are affected. Those areas include emotional growth, sexual health, relationships and how they feel about their place in the world.

### Behavioral & Mental Health Assessment

As your teen grows physically and mentally, the chance of getting involved in risky behavior is increased. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, teens and young adults have higher rates of reckless driving, substance abuse, unprotected sex and violent behavior. A yearly checkup helps teens talk about any mental health worries and learn about ways to stay safe.



### How can parents or caregivers help?

It is important to help your teens handle the demands of being young.

You can help by:

- Bringing them to their provider when needed and to their yearly medical check-up
- Encouraging them to have one-on-one time with their provider
- Listening to them when they talk to you about life

When a teen is honest with their provider and parent, it helps them become more involved in their own healthcare. This prepares them to take responsibility for their own health when they become adults.



Sources:  
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Available at: [www.hhs.gov/ash/oah/adolescent-development/explained/](http://www.hhs.gov/ash/oah/adolescent-development/explained/)  
2. Saleno, J. (2019). Teen Speak; a guide to understanding and communicating with your teen. Dexter, Michigan: Possibilities for Change.  
3. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention <http://www.cdc.gov/parents>

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