

Adolescent well-child visits
WHAT TO EXPECT

You've probably noticed: your child is growing up fast!

As they move into the adolescent years, roughly ages 11–21, they will undergo a huge transformation — physically and mentally. We want to be there for them.

That's why we adjust our approach to well-child exams during adolescence. We spend time with the child and their parents in the room at the same time, but we also take time alone with the patient.

This one-on-one time between doctor and patient helps young people build a trusting relationship with their care provider, which gives them confidence and encourages them to take responsibility for their own wellbeing.

It probably comes as no surprise that teens are more likely to share information with us when their parents are not in the room. When we have this one-on-one time with our patient, we can delve into all kinds of issues:

- Nutrition, exercise and general wellness
- School success, stress and bullying
- Screen time and social media
- Sleep, seat belt use and safety
- Sexual and chemical health and risk reduction
- Mental health and emotional wellbeing
- Individual strengths and protective factors

So much change in adolescence. And those changes lead some teens to try new things, experiment —and sometimes those experiments are unhealthy or even risky. We hope teens will trust us, in a private setting, to help us guide them toward good choices. We know that families have different values and expectations, and we respect those differences. We simply want to be a resource for accurate information for you and your child.

It's also important to know that Minnesota law protects your teen's privacy if she/he comes to us for issues related to sexuality or alcohol and drug use. Generally, records of these visits can only be released with the teen's permission. This law allows us to contact parents if there are serious health risks related to these matters. Be assured that your child would be encouraged to discuss these confidential issues with you, but we can't force them to do so.

At the end of the well-child exam, the pediatric provider will meet with you and your teen to wrap up the visit. This may include recommendations, referrals or follow-up appointments.

We hope this information is helpful as you enter these amazing years of adolescence. Thank you for your trust in our team.