

15-17 YEAR OLD WELL CHILD VISIT

A Note about Confidentiality

It is important that teens have confidentiality with their doctor about some issues, especially in regards to sexuality, mental health, and substance use. We will provide a safe environment to talk about these concerns while at the same time encouraging teenagers and parents to talk with each other. Please talk to us if you have any questions about this. Our priority is the health and safety of our patients. We want parents and teens to have a supportive relationship through what can be difficult years.

For Parents:

The teenage years are both challenging and rewarding for teens and parents. Being able to talk openly and freely with you is very important to your teenager's well being. Here are some things you can expect:

- Appearance becomes very important to teenagers at this age. Encourage your child to have a healthy body image and ask about any concerns she has about her appearance. Help her to focus on the positive things about who she is rather than how she looks. Watch closely for signs of low self-esteem, low confidence, and lack of attention or depressed mood. Warning signs include drop in grades, changes in appearance, changes in interest in his usual activities, or changes in sleep.
- Friends will have major influence on your child's life. Stay involved in your child's friendships and ask her to bring her friends home. Talk openly with her about "saying no" to alcohol, tobacco, drugs, inhalants and sexual activity.
- Teenagers this age are interested in dating and at some point may experience pressures to have sex. Encourage your child to talk to you about any pressures that she may be facing and how to be safe. It is okay to give your child privacy but make sure you can talk comfortably with her. Know where she is, who she is with, and what she is doing.

Living a Healthy Life

Diet

- Your teen needs 3 cups of low-fat (1% or skim) milk daily. He should eat 3 meals (including breakfast!) and 2 snacks a day with food from all food groups: dairy, vegetable, fruit, meat and grains. Aim for 5 servings of fruits and vegetables per day. Give him lean meats, chicken, fish or other sources of protein and iron daily.
- Eat meals together as a family as much as possible so you can share your experiences with each other; don't watch TV during dinner.
- Talk with his doctor about calcium supplements and multivitamins with folic acid.

Sleep: Your teen needs 8-10 hours of sleep every night.

Oral Hygiene: Your teen should brush his teeth twice a day and floss once a day. Make sure he sees his dentist twice a year.

Activities: He should be physically active for at least 1 hour per day most days of the week and should limit "screen time" (TV, DVDs, computer or video games) to 1-2 hours in a day. Encourage his participation in sports or other activities (dance, music, art); attend his activities and make sure he does not take on too much.

School: Emphasize the importance of school, praise her efforts and recognize your child's successes and achievements. School can be hard for some teens and it is important for you make sure your child is not having any trouble. Help him plan for college or other goals after high school.

Discipline: Try to be a positive role model for your teenager with your activities, values, morals and attitudes. It is also important that you give your child clear and fair limits (and consequences). Ask her to help out at home with chores and keeping her room clean. Give her words of encouragement and praise. This will help keep your relationship strong and build her confidence.