



Orangetown Pediatrics
Boston Children's Health Physicians
Until every child is well™

GUIDE TO YOUR ADOLESCENT VISIT

Adolescence is a crucial time for yearly well checks. Although adolescents tend to be very healthy patients, they are undergoing huge changes physically, cognitively, emotionally, and socially. Although young children need their parents in the room for reassurance and to provide a good medical history, adolescents need some private time with their provider. The health care provider will start by meeting with the parent and teen together to address any mutual concerns. Then the parent will be asked to leave the exam room so the provider can address adolescent issues and perform a physical exam. This is done to allow adolescents time to discuss issues they are concerned about and have privacy during their examination. Many parents appreciate that we take the time to address these adolescent issues. Some parents feel concerned about this private time, imagining that this time is being used to divulge secrets of the teen's sexuality or drug use. Still, it is important for teenagers to begin developing their own relationship and rapport with their healthcare provider, separate from the relationship that may exist between their parents and the provider. It is important that the teenager has private time to ask questions or discuss concerns that might be hard to talk about in front of the parent.

Topics that will be discussed include personal safety, mental health, smoking, alcohol and drug use, sexuality, sexually transmitted diseases, contraception, nutrition, exercise, sports, making good choices, and social issues. These discussions will remain confidential unless there is a risk to the adolescent OR he/she allows us to discuss them with the parent. Studies have shown that, if the goal of the parents and the provider is the good health and safety of the adolescent patient, then assurance of confidentiality is crucial to the teen. On the other hand, the providers will be honest about the need to break confidentiality if the teen discloses information that suggests that he/she is in real danger.