

# Family Education Sheet

## Navigating College with a Chronic Condition



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The Teen Advisory Committee (TAC) here at Boston Children's Hospital advocates for the health and wellbeing of adolescents. They assembled this guide to give adolescents steps to be proactive in their care as they look ahead to college and adult life.

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### Selecting a college / before you go

- Consider what accommodations you may need (physical, emotional, academic, sensory, etc.).
- Research the potential school's accommodations, disability and healthcare services, nearby pharmacies, hospitals, etc.
- Talk to your providers about your transition to college and things to look out for when selecting a school.
- Practice describing your condition in a way that gets you the support you need. Write out your thoughts.
- Fill out a medical ID on your phone or create an info sheet about your condition and the support you may need during emergencies. Include a list of all your prescriptions.

### Heading to college

- Sign up for the Boston Children's patient portal.
- Research your school's accommodation request process.
- Figure out what services you might need. Request them / connect with student services ASAP.
- Ask your provider for a letter (be specific!) about your accommodations.
- Determine if you will be staying on your family's insurance or using your school's insurance plan (if available).
- Think about who you **need** to tell about your condition (medical team) and who you **want** to tell (friends, roommates, professors).
- Get things in writing (documentation of accommodations, letters to inform professors, etc.).

### Reminders

- Start the process **early** – before you apply, while touring schools, etc.
- Stay up to date with your needs and communicate them.
  - Do you need a new letter? Who's responsible for communicating needs to your professors?

### While at college

- Find nearby pharmacies or places to get medicine delivered.
- Connect with the Office of Disabilities and University Health Services.
- Decide with who and what you want to share about your condition – and do it, whether that's a conversation or in writing.
- Reassess your needs and update people when necessary.

### Things to think about

- What do you want your living situation to look like? On/off campus? Roommates? What options are available?
- What dining accommodations do you need?
- Is there physical/sensory accessibility?
- What are your priorities in choosing a school (distance from home, physical campus, climate, etc.)?
- Who's in your support system who can help you advocate?

### Helpful contacts

- High school guidance counselor
- Providers
- Disability services/Student services office
- Insurance company
- Family and friends

- It's OK to ask for support and advice while still advocating for yourself!
- When in doubt, ask!
- Stay in contact with your support system throughout the process.