**GUIDE TO YOUR CHILD’S 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. Young children need their parents in the room for reassurance and to provide a good medical history; adolescents need some private time with their doctors. The doctor will start by meeting with the parent and adolescent together to address any mutual concerns. Then the parent will be asked to leave the exam room so the doctor can address adolescent issues and perform a physical exam. This is done to allow adolescents time to discuss concerns privately during their examination.

Many parents appreciate that the doctor takes the time to address 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 doctor. It is important that teenagers have private time to ask questions or discuss concerns that might be hard to talk about in front of a parent.

A number of topics will be discussed, including 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 doctor is the good health and safety of the adolescent patient, then assurance of confidentiality is crucial to the teen. On the other hand, the doctors will be honest about the need to break confidentiality if the teen discloses information that suggests that he/she is in real danger.

**ALSO INCLUDED IN THE ADOLESCENT VISIT WILL BE:**

* Height, weight, blood pressure, vision, hearing, scoliosis screening
* Monitoring general growth and pubertal development
* Discussion of school performance, peer relationships, and future plans
* Cholesterol and hemoglobin screening at age 10 and 17. (The American Academy for Pediatrics (AAP) recommends a screening cholesterol test for all children between the age of 9 and 11 and again at 17-21)
* Urine Screening for STDs (Chlamydia and Gonorrhea at age 16 and above OR whenever necessary)
* Mental health checklist for all adolescents
* We recommend baseline impact testing for patients 10 years or older who participate in the following sports: Football, Ice Hockey, Lacrosse, Cheerleading, Soccer, Basketball, Baseball, Softball, Wrestling and Volleyball.

**VACCINES:**

* HPV vaccine for both males and females starting at age 11
* Menactra (meningitis) at ages 11 and 16
* Hepatitis A vaccine and varicella booster for anyone not already fully immunized