

Well-child check up: 12 to 16 years

Child's name: _____ Date: _____ Height: _____ Weight: _____

Immunizations received: _____

Next visit: _____ Immunizations needed: _____

Remember to bring your child's vaccine record with you.

This sheet is meant to provide you with general information about your child's teenage years.

Nutrition

Avoid battles with your teenager about food. Try to have one meal a day together and offer healthy choices. If you are worried about your child's eating habits, talk about these concerns. Model and encourage healthy food choices. Talk to your child about limiting sodas, high fat snacks, and junk foods.

Exercise

Regular exercise is an important part of physical health. Many teenagers participate in either team sports such as tennis, football, and basketball or individual sports such as swimming, bicycling, and inline skating.

Sports participation can be a very important activity for teenagers. While it not only provides exercise, it is also an opportunity to learn important social skills including striving for a goal and working on a team. Discuss the importance of helmets and other protective equipment for sports activity.

Friends and dating

Friends become very important in your teen's life. Being a part of a group is a good

thing if the people in the group are respectful and have fun together. Not all teenagers are a part of a group. Many teenagers have one or two good friends that they enjoy and talk to.

Many young people begin to date during the teenage years. At first, teenagers tend to participate in group activities. Older teens may start dating one or two people.

Positive parenting

Adolescence is a time of rapid change. While most teenagers manage these times without great difficulty, others have some adjustment problems. Parents remain a very important part of a teenager's life. Make time to talk openly with your teen. Be open to discussing your teen's ideas, which may be different than yours. This will make it easier for your child to ask questions and talk to you about any concerns.

Sexuality

It is important to talk to your child about dating, sex, date rape, pregnancy, and sexually transmitted diseases including HIV and AIDS. Engage your teenager in conversation about these topics often. This will make it easier for your child to ask questions and talk to you about any concerns.

Drugs

There is strong peer pressure to try alcohol, tobacco, and drugs at a young age.

Tobacco, alcohol, marijuana, and cocaine are easily available.

Parents can take steps to prevent alcohol, tobacco, and drug use:

- Set a good example at home by limiting use of alcohol, cigarettes, and medications. Discuss topics of alcohol, drugs, and cigarettes.
- Praise your teenager often and look for good things to say rather than being critical. Build confidence from an early age to increase the ability to resist peer pressure.
- Listen to your teenagers and pay attention to who they spend time with and what they are doing.
- Provide guidance on problem solving and managing stressful situations.

Safety

Topics to discuss with your teen:

- Seat belts are a must.
- Never drink and drive.
- Never ride with someone who has been drinking or using drugs.
- Discuss gun safety and gun use; encourage your teen not to spend time with others who carry guns or have guns in their homes.

Are you and your children safe in your home? Please talk to your doctor, nurse practitioner, or social worker if you have any concerns about safety for you or your child.

When should I call the clinic?

Call the clinic if your teen:

- has a sudden drop in grades at school.
- has a sudden change in appearance.
- withdraws from family and friends.
- spends more time alone.
- seems depressed.
- has unusual eating behaviors.
- shows risky behavior.
- talks about suicide.

Questions?

This sheet is not specific to your child, but provides general information. If you have any questions or concerns, many resources are available to help you.

Resources at Children's of Minnesota

Minneapolis clinic (612) 813-6107
St. Paul clinic (651) 220-6700
Teen Age Medical Service (612) 813-6125

Family Resource Center (health, parenting, and community resource library)

Minneapolis (612) 813-6816
St. Paul (651) 220-6368

Parent Warmline (612) 813-6336
(child development and behavior)

Web site www.childrensmn.org

(includes information about visiting Children's, illnesses, and parenting, as well as Children's Medical Organizer—a free easy-to-use Web site to help organize your family's medical history)

Community resources

2-1-1 Phone Helpline (confidential information and referral to thousands of community services) dial 2-1-1, or (651) 291-0211

www.teenhealth411.org

(a website that provides information on many teen related issues and questions)