

Annual Physical: 11-13 years (patient)

Early adolescence is a time of transitions and transformations for you in so many areas. These changes can occur at different rates and this handout will give you more information to help you on this journey.

General Advice

- This is an important time in your life to connect with family.
- Spend time with family and help at home. This can include chores such as setting the table for meals, taking care of a pet or tidying up.
- Follow your family's rules, such as curfews, as this builds trust. If your parents/caregivers see that you are responsible and following rules and responsibilities, they are more likely to give you more independence.
- Find activities you are really interested in besides schoolwork. Discovering a hobby is a great way to build confidence and self-esteem. Some ideas include trying out a sport, theater, volunteering or learning a new language!

School

- As you navigate through middle school, take more responsibility for your schoolwork.
- If you are having trouble organizing your time or struggling in school, talk to your parents or another trusted adult to come up with some solutions.

Your Changing Body

- **Puberty** is when your body starts changing from that of a child to that of an adult. The changes that take place are caused by hormones.
- Everyone goes through puberty, but not always at the same time or in the same way - and that is okay.
- Teasing someone about pubertal changes is never okay.
- You may have questions about gender identity, sexual attraction and relationships. These questions are part of growing up. Talk to a trusted adult, such as your doctor, if you have any questions.
- Lots of kids find that reading a book about puberty can be helpful. There are many great books about it, including one called "You-ology" from the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP). Consider taking it out of the library.

Healthy Behaviors

- Find fun and safe things to do with friends. As you become more independent and spend time away from your family, it is important to avoid risky situations.
- Say "no" to drugs, alcohol, cigarettes and vaping/e-cigarettes.
- Choose friends who support your decision not to vape, smoke cigarettes, drink alcohol or use other drugs. Support friends who choose not to use.
- Aim for at least 1 hour of physical activity every day.

Emotional Wellbeing

- It's okay to have different emotions. Even negative emotions teach us valuable lessons. What matters is how we respond to these emotions. If you are angry with someone, try to walk away and calm down before addressing them.
- Always talk through problems and never use violence.
- It is normal to have up-and-down moods, but if you feel sad, angry, nervous or frustrated a lot of the time, it is important to speak with someone, like a counselor, a family member or your doctor.

Social Media

- Follow your family's rules about media usage and screen time.
- Be safe online as you would in the real world. Do not give out personal information, share passwords, send mean messages, use the Internet to make someone look bad or meet up with someone you only know online.
- Remember that anything you post online (videos, photos, comments) is no longer private and often can't be taken down or deleted from the Internet. Posting something that is not appropriate can even become a problem years later when you are applying for a job or college.

Nutrition

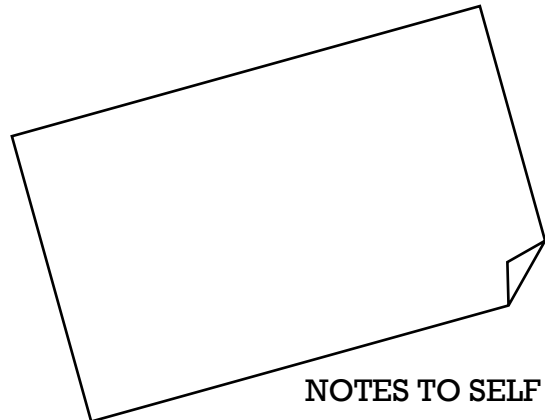
- Have fun learning how to prepare foods and dishes with your family. It helps to learn more about what you like and to try new foods.
- Limit fatty, sugary and salty foods that are low in nutrients, such as candy, chips and ice cream.
- Choose water instead of soda or sports drinks.
- Instead of drinking juice, eat the fruit. This contains less sugar, and you get many more nutrients this way.

Oral Health

- ✓ Brush your teeth twice a day and floss once a day.
- ✓ Visit the dentist twice a year.

Sleep

- There are many benefits of good sleep. Getting enough sleep improves mood and energy as well as increases focus that contributes to better school performance.
- Children your age need about 8-10 hours of sleep each night.
- It is a good idea to go to sleep at the same time each day. Having the same bedtime each day keeps the body in a rhythm.
- If you have trouble falling asleep or staying asleep, your doctor can give you some tips for better sleep.



Safety Tips

Dos

- Know your family's emergency plan and practice what to do in case of an emergency.
- Call your parents or another trusted adult if you feel unsafe.
- Use safety equipment during sports.
- Wear a helmet when riding a bike, skiing or skateboarding.
- Use sunscreen and wear hats when outside.
- Wear your lap and shoulder seat belt.

Don'ts

- Ride ATVs.
- Ride in a car with someone who you think may have used alcohol or drugs.
- Turn the volume on your device too high when you use earbuds or headphones.
- Fight or carry weapons.
- Share prescription medicines or use other people's medicines.



Health Care Transition

During childhood, your parents and caregivers have helped you with your health and healthcare needs, such as calling for appointments, filling out forms and keeping track of medications. As you get older, taking care of your health becomes your responsibility. Your doctor will begin to meet with you privately for part of the clinic visit. Not only is this a good time to talk about some things privately, but you may get more comfortable asking questions about your own health. This will not happen overnight, and your doctor is here to help. To learn more, visit www.gottransition.org.

Confidentiality

The doctor-patient relationship is built on trust. Confidentiality is a big component of maintaining trust. This does not mean keeping secrets. The information that you share with your doctor is kept private unless the doctor is worried about your safety or that of someone else. It is important for you to share information with your doctor so they can give you the best care. Your doctor cares about you and wants to keep you safe and healthy. If you have any questions about confidentiality, you can ask your doctor.

Vaccines (*vaccine schedule may vary slightly by practice)

- The influenza vaccine is recommended during flu season.
- At 10-12 years of age, the tetanus/pertussis booster, meningitis and human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccines are given.

A vaccine is used to make your body stronger to fight against an infection.

Do shots make you nervous? You are not alone. Some ways to make shots easier include taking slow, deep breaths and even coughing as the needle goes in.

Websites

- **American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) Family Media Plan**
www.healthychildren.org/English/media/pages/default.aspx
- **Cooking Matters**
<https://cookingmatters.org>
Nonprofit organization with recipes and budget-friendly tips for healthy eating
- **AAP Healthy Children**
www.healthychildren.org
Health topics and news updates from the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)
- **Got Transition**
www.gottransition.org
Resource that aims to help youth and young adults move from pediatric to adult care
- **MGH Clay Center for Young Healthy Minds**
www.mghclaycenter.org

A free, practical online educational resource dedicated to supporting the mental health of young people