





**GETTING
READY
FOR ADULT
CARE**



**Getting ready to make the
switch to adult care?
Learn how things work.**



A Time of transition

You will soon be leaving your pediatric health care team and moving on to adult care. This can be an exciting time for you and your family. It's normal to feel fear, relief or even sadness. It helps to know about how things work in the adult health care system.




Adult care is different... Not bad, just different

Will my care change? This is a very common question. It's true, the adult health care system is different from what you are used to. One of the biggest changes is about responsibility. In adult care, it will be your responsibility (not your parents) to watch your health and report on it. Your adult health care providers should discuss your health with you first - rather than with your parent or guardian. Of course, you can ask to have someone else, such as your parent(s), attend your appointments with you.



Continued care is important



You know from your experience that catching problems early makes a difference. Keeping your appointments with your health care providers will be important. It's very important to have a primary care provider (family doctor or nurse practitioner) for regular check-ups and health problems. It is also important that the specialists in your condition from the adult care team monitor your health.





Tips for adult care

Getting ready

Becoming an adult involves many changes. For example, you are expected to take more responsibility to keep healthy. This doesn't happen overnight.

We encourage you to start doing things like:

- Seeing the health care provider by yourself, for at least part of the appointment
- Knowing about your health condition and your treatments
- Telling your health care provider about any worries or concerns
- Remembering to take your medicines
- Booking your own appointments
- Getting your prescriptions filled at the pharmacy

You may have some questions about becoming an adult with a chronic condition.

You may have concerns about:

- Smoking and use of drugs and alcohol while taking medications
- Changes in your mood like feeling anxious or depressed
- Relationships and sex
- Birth control methods
- Getting pregnant or having a baby
- Fitting your health care in with school or work
- How to pay for your medicines and treatments

**These concerns are normal!
Feel free to discuss them with your health care provider.**





Practice talking with your health care providers

Communicating well with your health care providers is very important. You may find the “GLADD” method very helpful. “GLADD” is a recommended way to talk with health care professionals:

GIVE

Give information about how you are feeling and what you have done to stay healthy. Be honest. If you have not taken your medication, say so. Also, give your health care provider information about how your condition affects your everyday life and share any concerns you have with them.

LISTEN

Listen and learn. Listen carefully to your health care providers. Learn all you can from them about your condition and what you can do to be healthy.

ASK

Ask your health care providers questions about your health. All your questions are important. If you do not understand something, let the health professional know. Then, ask that it be explained in a different way.

DECIDE

At every visit with a health care provider, decisions need to be made about what to do next. Make sure you are involved with that plan.

DO

Do your part to follow the plan.

You should always carry your provincial health card with you.



How you can prepare for adult clinic visits



Remember, this is YOUR health-care appointment. Your questions and concerns are important and will be the focus of the visit.

Plan Ahead – What to do before your appointment:

- Ask a support person (like a family member or friend) to come with you to the clinic if that makes you more comfortable
- Think about how you will be getting to your appointment (car, bus, cab, or walking?)
- Find out about how to get to the building and clinic
- Find out where parking is available and bring money to pay for parking (if you are driving)
- Give yourself enough time to get to your appointment
- Know about your condition and past medical history
- Think about what you want to talk about at your appointment

Be in charge of your medications:

- Know the names and dosage amounts of your medications
- Keep track of when you need refills and new prescriptions
- Before your next appointment, check to see if you need refills or a new prescription



Download Drug Hub to help you keep track of your prescriptions and refills, your medications, what time you should take them, and more. (Or, put your own reminder in your phone one week before your prescription is due to be filled. This way, you will have time to fill your new prescription before you run out).





Appointment Checklist

What to remember:

- Provincial Health Card
- Your family doctor or nurse practitioner's name
- A list of questions or issues you want to talk about
- A medication list with your pharmacy's phone number on it
- The understanding that you will be the one giving consent to treatment
- Something to pass the time while you are waiting
- A snack or some cash to buy something to eat or drink

Questions you can ask at your appointment

What will the clinic do if I miss or cancel an appointment?

Will my health care provider telephone in a prescription if I run out of my medication?

Where do I go if I need to see a physiotherapist, occupational therapist or social worker?

Where do I go for blood work or x-rays?

Who can I call with a problem related to my condition?

What are the clinic phone numbers and when is the clinic open?

When will I have my next appointment?

Is my adult team communicating with my family physician?





Remember...you are the most important part of the team.



Resources

Here are some great resources that may help you get ready for adult care.

http://kidshealth.org/teen/your_mind/problems/deal_chronic_illness.html

www.youth.gc.ca

<http://teens.drugabuse.gov>

www.sexetc.org

www.cmha.ca

www.teenmentalhealth.org

Your teams
at the IWK Health
Centre and at your
adult-care clinic wish
you the very best in this
important step toward
adulthood.



