

Your Teenager

Diet

- Offer a variety of healthy foods, and try to eat together as a family. Make time for breakfast; encourage fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. Enlist your teen's help with food shopping and cooking.
- As much as possible, limit fast foods, junk foods, soda and sweets. Try to avoid caffeine, and strongly discourage energy drinks.
- The teenage years are crucial for building bone strength. Encourage exercise and calcium intake. Try for 16–20 ounces per day of low-fat milk, or substitute other calcium containing foods (yogurt, cheese, soy or almond milk, tofu, kale, broccoli). Calcium supplementation is also an option.
- Multivitamins may be recommended for teens whose diets are consistently inadequate.
- Discuss concerns about your teen's weight with your provider. If you observe any preoccupation with weight or food choices, please let us know. If you wish to discuss this (or any other) issue without your teenager in the room, please call.
- Support your teen's evolving self-image by commenting on positive accomplishments rather than physical appearance or weight.

Sleep

Many teenagers have busy schedules, and their body clocks are shifting into "night owl" mode. Sleep deprivation often results. Try to help your teen with time management, and set a goal of 8–10 hours of sleep each night.

Development

- The main developmental task for adolescents is achieving independence. It is critical to their well being to gain confidence and skills, and to have their growing independence honored by their parents. The challenge for parents is to offer guidance, monitor safety, and to know when to jump in and when to stay out of the way.

- Everyday issues, often seemingly mundane ones, can trigger parent-child struggles. Try to think of these events as opportunities for your child to master new skills and demonstrate responsibility.
- Peer relationships and acceptance are very important. Positive and negative peer pressure can be stressful. Keep the conversation going. Encourage relationships with supportive adults; other relatives, teachers and coaches can be positive influences.
- Teens tend to have a small group of friends who share similar activities and interests, including dress, hairstyle, music and behaviors, but they also take pride in their own "uniqueness!"
- Physical, emotional and intellectual changes are occurring. Encourage abstinence and ask direct questions.
- Talk to your daughter about her menstrual cycle — encourage her to track it. A responsible teen may wear tampons during the day. They must be changed at least every four hours.

Safety

- Wear a seatbelt at all times, as a driver and passenger. Remind your young driver to never text and drive!
- Absolutely no drinking and driving, or riding with a drinking driver. Discuss a plan to get home safely (a "no questions asked" policy can be helpful).
- Appropriate protective equipment (helmets, mouth guards, pads, shatter-proof eyewear) should be used while engaging in high-risk sports. Seek medical attention for head injury.
- Discuss water safety with your teenager. Knowing how to swim is important, but does not ensure safety - supervision is still necessary. Make sure your child always wears a life jacket when on a boat.
- Provide sunscreen with SPF of 30 or higher. Tanning salons should be avoided.
- Discuss privacy and boundaries at home and away from home.

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- Discuss avoidance of tobacco, alcohol, drugs (including inhalants) and guns.
- If you own a gun, store it unloaded and locked in a separate location from ammunition (which should also be locked).

General Parental Guidelines

- Emphasize the importance of school and praise positive efforts. Encourage reading for pleasure and relaxation.
- The computer should be in a location that allows you to monitor your child’s internet activity (not in your child’s bedroom). Teach your child to never give out identifying information online. Get to know the services and websites that your child uses. Instruct your child to tell you about any online interactions that are suggestive, obscene, threatening or make your child feel uncomfortable.
- Know your teen’s friends and their parents. Try to provide a teen-friendly home.
- Establish rules and curfews.
- Acne is a common issue. Discuss treatment options with your provider.
- Encourage the habit of exercise — a good goal is an hour each day (not necessarily all at once).
- Assign mutually agreed upon household chores. Consider giving an allowance; discuss money management.
- Anxiety and depression are common among adolescents. If you have concerns, call our office. We have social workers on staff, and can refer you to other mental health providers.

Fever/Illness

- Fever is a common symptom in children, usually caused by the immune system’s response to an infection. Any temperature over 100.4° F is considered a fever. Once you’ve identified a fever, you can treat it with acetaminophen or ibuprofen to make your child more comfortable. Depending on other symptoms, it may be necessary to come to the office, although most fevers are caused by viruses, and can be managed at home.
- More important than the number on the thermometer is how your child looks and acts. If your child is interactive after receiving fever medicine, that is a good sign.
- Please call our office to report fever that lasts more than 72 hours, or is accompanied by other concerning symptoms (decreased drinking, decreased urine output, labored breathing, or looking very ill).
- Being prepared can help you cope with fever. Keep your thermometer handy, have acetaminophen or ibuprofen (and dosing information) available, and take these with you when travelling.

Prevention

- Schedule dental visits every six months, and make sure your child is brushing and flossing.
- A good resource for information about vaccines is vaccine.chop.edu/parents.
- A useful website for reliable information about a wide variety of pediatric health topics is healthychildren.org.

Today and at each yearly check-up

- Your child will have a physical examination and opportunity to ask confidential questions.
- Breast self-exam or testicular self-exam handouts will be given.
- Shots may include a Meningitis vaccine, Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis booster), Human papilloma virus vaccine (HPV) and/or a tuberculosis (TB) skin test.

Acetaminophen Dosing Instructions			
Every 4–6 hours and no more than 4 doses per day			
Weight	Liquid	Chews	Tablets
72–95 lbs	3 tsp x 160 mg	6 x 80 mg or 3 x 160 mg	1 x 325 mg
96–150 lbs	—	—	2 x 325 mg or 1 x 500 mg

Ibuprofen Dosing Instructions			
Every 6–8 hours and no more than 3 doses per day			
Weight	Liquid	Chews	Caps
72–95 lbs	3 tsp x 100 mg	6 x 50 mg or 3 x 100 mg	1 x 200 mg
96–119 lbs	4 tsp x 100 mg	8 x 50 mg or 4 x 100 mg	2 x 200 mg
121–150 lbs	6 tsp x 100 mg	12 x 50 mg or 6 x 100 mg	3 x 200 mg