



## Transitioning to Adolescent Medicine

As children approach adolescence, their health care needs and the nature of their well child visits will change. At Rainbow Pediatric Center, we start adolescent care at 13 years old as risk-taking behaviors are increasingly observed in this age group.

### What does Adolescent Medicine look like?

Starting at the 13 year well child visit, the adolescent will be asked to scan a QR code on their phone and complete the secure online teen questionnaire. Please allow your child to complete this alone, without your assistance. The provider will then start the visit with both the patient and the parent present in the room. The provider will ask if there are any issues/concerns the patient and/or parent would like to discuss together. After that, the parent will be asked to leave the room so that the provider and the patient may discuss potentially sensitive information about growth, development, and health as answered in their questionnaire. These topics, such as school, family, friends, sexuality, mental health, drug, alcohol use and safety are all discussed confidentially. This means that the provider is bound by law to keep everything discussed private, even from parents, **unless the patient gives** direct permission for the provider to disclose the information. However, if there are any concerns of abuse, or for the safety of the patient or others, the provider is obligated by law to disclose the information discussed. Additionally, adolescent physical exams will include genital exam for both males and females in the presence of a chaperone of the patient's preference, either a medical assistant or the parent.

### But my child is only 13 years old, I need to know everything being discussed in the well child visit.

*This is a common concern that parents have.* We know this can be a big change, for both patients and parents, from the care you are used to. We strongly encourage teens to talk openly with their parents, but research show that adolescents are more likely to disclose important information about their health when parents are not present in the room. This approach helps us to provide the very best care for your developing adolescent, striving to foster healthier and happier teens.

### My child is only 13 years old and doesn't need to talk about the topics such as sexuality, drugs, alcohol and mental health.

While these topics may not directly apply to every patient at every adolescent well visit, they are all important topics to openly discuss. Some topics are hidden on the questionnaire unless the patient is 15yr or older for this very reason. Talking about these areas of health year after year helps the teen to become more comfortable talking about them and allows opportunities to ask questions.

### How do I talk to my child about puberty?

We have some great resources to help parents start the conversation of puberty with their child.

[www.girlology.com](http://www.girlology.com)

[www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/](http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/)

Guyology: A Guys Guide to Growing Up by Melissa Holmes MD

American Girl Books: The Care and Keeping of You

Please sign below indicating your understanding of the information above. Also, at age 13yr of age, the teen will have the choice to have their medical information kept private. This includes limited access by the parent to the patient portal. It is best to discuss this choice with your child as they may want to allow proxy access for the parent so that the parent will still have complete access to their medical records.

Parent Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Adolescent's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to adolescent: \_\_\_\_\_

Today's date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

Thank you for allowing us to care for your most precious gifts!