

Navigating Your Care as a Young Adult

Now that you're getting older, you may be doing more things on your own. And that may include being responsible for your own health care.

A wellness visit is something you can do each year to help you stay healthy. And there are many other reasons you may need to see a doctor too. For example, you may need to see a doctor if you get sick or if you have a concern about your health. You may also want to see a doctor to talk about birth control. Or you may see a doctor if you're feeling depressed or anxious.

It may seem like a lot to manage at first. And you may have a lot of questions.

But just like most things, once you learn more about what to expect, you'll probably find you can manage it on your own.

If you *are* going to see a doctor for a wellness visit, here are five things to expect.

One. Check in and fill out forms.

When you arrive for your appointment, you'll usually need to check in at the front desk.

You'll likely be asked to fill out some forms. Your provider's office may even ask you to fill out forms online ahead of your visit.

The forms will probably include questions about your health history, your family's health history, any medicine or vitamins you take, and your emergency contact information.

The people at the front desk may ask to see your identification, such as a driver's license or a school identification card, and ask if you have health insurance.

Two. You'll go to a private exam room to start your visit.

When it's your turn, someone will call your name and take you to a private exam room.

They might weigh you, measure your height, and take your blood pressure. You may be asked some personal questions.

For example, they may ask if you're sexually active, if you drink alcohol or take any drugs, or if you use nicotine or vape.

Navigating Your Care as a Young Adult

It's important to be open and honest about these answers because it helps your doctor make sure you get the care that's right for you.

And remember, it's okay to ask your parent or adult guardian to step out of the room if you'd like some privacy with your doctor.

Three. Ask your doctor questions.

During your visit, ask your doctor about what you need to do to maintain your health.

Your doctor can tell you about any vaccines, tests, or other things that may be part of routine health maintenance. And your doctor will talk to you about what you can do to help you reach any health goals that you have.

Talk to your doctor about any privacy concerns you have, including who might have access to the information you share or any treatment you receive during your visit.

Also talk with your doctor about which health care decisions you can make on your own.

Four. Know that your visit may include certain tests.

The tests you may need will depend on your age and other factors.

For example, your doctor may suggest a test to check cholesterol and triglyceride levels. Those are blood tests that measure lipids—fats and fatty substances—that are found in your blood.

And if you talked to your doctor about any symptoms or concerns you're having, you may need other tests.

Sometimes tests can be done during your wellness visit.

But you may need to schedule another appointment for other tests.

And you may need follow-up visits if you're being treated for certain conditions.

Five. Choose a pharmacy.

Navigating Your Care as a Young Adult

If you need medicine, your doctor will send a prescription to a pharmacy.

They will ask you where you want to have the prescription filled.

Some people find it helps to choose a pharmacy that's close to where they live or work to make it easier to pick up their medicine.

If you have time, you could also check with a few different pharmacies to find the best price for your prescription.

The pharmacy will call or text you when your prescription is ready. You'll also receive calls or texts from your pharmacy when prescription refills are ready.

When you go to your doctor's appointment, be sure to bring a photo ID.

If you have insurance, bring your insurance information too.

It also helps to bring a list of any questions you want to ask.

Remember, your doctor's job is to give you information and options.

It's up to you to make your own decisions about what to do with that information.

And if you have any questions, you can always call your doctor.