



Life for your son has been full of big steps. From first steps, to first grade, to his first job, each year has brought increased independence as well as responsibility. With each stage you have equipped him with the tools and knowledge needed to move forward successfully. Now, with the passage into adulthood another transition awaits him- the transition to an adult healthcare provider.

It has been our privilege to work with your family and do our part to guide and equip you for each stage of childhood. We hope now to do the same for this next step. For our patients, the transition to an adult provider generally occurs once they have completed school and are living independently. For some that comes with graduation from high school, while for others they may remain with our practice through the completion of college. By age 21, all patients should identify an adult health care provider and take the necessary steps to transition their care to that provider.

While this transition may still be a few years off for your son, it is good to begin preparing for this move now. To aid you in this, we have provided a packet of materials for you to review with your teenager and begin to put a plan in place. Also, taking steps now to foster greater health-related independence in your teen will prepare him to be fully responsible for his own health. Here are a few suggestions:

Have your teen fill out the Know Yourself form included in this packet and then review it together. If your son has any medical conditions, make sure he understands these conditions, is comfortable explaining them to others, and can identify any warning symptoms that indicate a need to seek emergency medical attention.

Along with his health history, make sure that your child knows about any medicines that he takes. Your teen should be confident about the name of his medicine, what the medicine does, the appropriate dose, and any expected side effects. This is especially important for any emergency medications, such as an EpiPen or Albuterol inhaler. If he has questions, encourage him to review his medications with us at the next visit. Also, teach him how to call in for medication refills and allow him to begin making the phone calls.

Make certain your child knows what he is allergic to, how to avoid allergen exposures, and what to do if exposed. If your child has a food allergy, make sure he can read ingredient labels and ask appropriate questions about food items. It may be helpful to prepare together a list of safe foods for eating out when in restaurants or at parties.

Allow your teen to be as independent as possible for his own healthcare and involve him in decisions being made. At age 18, healthcare decision-making legally becomes his responsibility. During visits at All Star encourage him to do most of the talking, to ask questions and to prepare a list of questions before the visit. It may also be appropriate for him to start calling and scheduling some of his own appointments. Provide him a copy of the health insurance card and have him bring any required co-pays to the appointments.

If you have individual concerns on preparing for this transition, please discuss these with us at your next visit. While this may seem like a big step for your teen, we are confident that we can take another successful stride towards growing up together.

Sincerely,

The All Star Team