

**13-17Y**  
**PEDIATRIC**  
**CARE ADVISOR**



# Well Child Care Adolescent/Teen



Use this Care Advisor guide created by Facey pediatricians for tips on managing your child's nutrition, safety and more.

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# Nutrition

Offer nutritious foods with variety for every meal and snack. Encourage your child to drink water, milk no more than 3 times a day and juice infrequently. Discourage your child from drinking soft drinks. Limit your child's intake of sweet and junk food like chips. Limit sugar and fat. Teach your child how to make healthful food choices outside of the home.

Limit TV, video games, and recreational internet use to 1 hour per day. Encourage your child to be active and play outdoors.

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## Physical Exams

Regular health maintenance, or "physical" exams are an important part of keeping a teenager healthy. We do physical exams to track growth and development and to detect health problems. We look at family or behavior problems because these can affect health. We also look at any school or social difficulties. We look at safety, diet, and sexual issues, and give immunizations against preventable diseases.

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## Teeth

Be sure to brush twice daily and floss daily. Schedule a dental exam every 6 months.

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## Vaccines

If your teenager hasn't been for a physical since before age 11, your child will be getting vaccines today. Tdap, Menactra and HPV. There will be an additional Menactra vaccine at > 16 years old and 2 additional HPV vaccines 2 and 6 months after the initial injection. Upon review of the vaccine record there may be "catch up" vaccines required. Yearly flu vaccines are recommended in all children in the Fall.

You can find more information on vaccinations online at:  
[http://www.facey.com/ped/child\\_care.php](http://www.facey.com/ped/child_care.php)

# Development & Behavior

This is a time of tremendous change. Adolescents are growing rapidly at this age, both physically and intellectually. Teenagers feel a need to separate themselves from their families. Friends become more and more important. Many teenagers prefer spending time with their friends over spending it with family.

Changes in clothes, hair styles and interests reflect a teenager's healthy need to separate. Teenagers are finding out who they are and how they fit into the world. Some rejection of parents and their ideas and values is a normal part of this process. Teenagers may need the love and support of their parents, now more than ever.

Teenagers often become sensitive about their bodies during these years. With puberty, teenagers begin to sweat more, produce more oil, and have body odor. Acne may develop. Arms, legs and feet grow quickly and can seem out of proportion. This can cause clumsiness. Teenagers are concerned about these changes in their bodies. Most worry about how they look. They do not like to be teased. They need privacy.

Sports, hobbies, and clubs help teenagers learn to feel self-confident and connect with healthy peers. How well they do socially is an important measure of self-worth for teenagers. Most begin to develop circles of friends. Parents can help their teenager feel competent and responsible by including them in decision making and chores at home.

All these things give teenagers a chance to learn how to deal with success and failure. These are important lessons for later in life. Along with these challenges, teenagers face choices about drug use, drinking and smoking. They need their parents' guidance with these things, too.

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# Safety

- Safety issues are very important. Accidents are the leading cause of death in this age group.
- If there are firearms in your home, they should be kept unloaded and locked up. Use trigger locks. Keep ammunition locked away in a separate place. Teach your teenager never to handle or play with guns unless supervised by an adult.
- Discipline can be a difficult issue at this age. Discipline helps young people prepare for adulthood and self-control. Discipline must be consistent and loving. Teenagers need limits, but it is important that parents be flexible. Teenagers should be involved in establishing family rules. This makes it more likely that the rules will be followed.
- Talk to your teenager about sex. Most teenagers are interested in the subject. If the topic embarrasses you, admit it and discuss it anyway. This is an opportunity for you to talk about the values you associate with sex. Otherwise, teenagers learn about sex only from the media and their friends. These sources do not always present sex in a way that helps young people understand it.
- Talk to your teenager about smoking, drugs, and alcohol. Young people learn from their parents' behaviors.
- Limit time on the computer that is not used for schoolwork. Monitor what sites and chatrooms your teenager is visiting. Chatrooms are often used by sex predators to find victims.
- Suicide is one of the leading causes of teenage death. If you suspect your teenager feels depressed or is thinking about suicide, take it very seriously. Talk to us. Do not ignore it.
- Always use seat belts in cars. They should include a lap belt and shoulder strap.
- Your teenager should always wear a helmet when riding a bicycle, skating or skateboarding.



## The Next Visit

Your child's next appointment will be in 1-2 years.  
Vaccines may be given at this visit.

### *About this guide*

This information was compiled and edited by Facey Medical Group pediatricians. Please contact your doctor's office if you have questions about this information.

live healthy  
enjoy life