



# Turning 18: What it Means for Your Health

Turning 18 may not make you feel any different, but legally, this means you are an adult.

## What does this mean?

- After you turn 18, your doctor talks to **you**, not your parents, about your health.
- Your health information and medical records are private (or confidential) and can't be shared unless you give the OK.
- It is up to you to make decisions for your own health care, although you can always ask others for help.

## Things to know

- The confidentiality between you and your doctor is legally known as the Health Insurance Portability and Accessibility Act, or HIPAA.
- This law gives privacy rights to minors (people who are under age 18) for reproductive and sexual health, mental health, and substance abuse services. Check your state's minor consent laws for more information.

## What needs to be done?

- If you want to share medical information with others, your doctor will ask you to fill out a form that allows them to see your medical record and be with you during your visit.
- If you need help making decisions, talk to your family, your support team, and your doctor about who needs to be involved and what you need to do to make sure they can be a part of the conversations.

## Additional resources

- If you want extra support managing your health or making decisions, the [National Resource Center for Supported Decision-Making](#) has information to connect you with resources in your state.

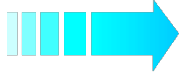

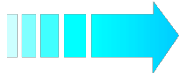






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## PLANNING TO MOVE FROM PEDIATRIC TO ADULT CARE? HERE'S HOW THEY CAN DIFFER

Health care for youth is different than health care for adults. In adult care, you are in charge of your own care and involve your parents/caregivers if you choose. These are some of the changes that happen when you move to adult care.

**Please circle any items in the Adult Approach to Care column that you have questions about.** Bring this to your next doctor visit to start a conversation about any questions you may have.

Pediatric Care (Where you are now)	Adult Approach to Care (Where you will be)
Your parent/caregiver is with you for most or all of your visit.	 You see the doctor alone unless you agree for others to be present.
Your parent/caregiver helps answer questions and explain your medical conditions, any medicines, and medical history.	 You answer questions and explain your medical conditions, medicines, and medical history.
Your parent/caregiver is involved in making choices about your care.	 You make your own choices about your care, asking your parents/caregivers as needed.
Your parent/caregiver helps make appointments and get your medicines.	 You make your own appointments and get your medicines.
Your parent/caregiver helps with your care and reminds you to take your medicines.	 You take control of your care and take medicines on your own.
Your parent/caregiver can see your health information, including test results.	 Health information is private unless you agree to let others see it.
Your parent/caregiver knows your health insurance and pays any charges at the visit.	 You keep your health insurance card with you and pay any charges at the visit.
Your parent/caregiver keeps a record of your medical history and vaccines.	 You keep a record of your medical history and vaccines.
Many pediatric specialists provide both specialty and some primary care.	 Adult specialists often do not provide primary care, so you need to have a primary care doctor along with a specialist.

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