Getting ready to make the switch to adult care?
Learn how things work.
Getting ready

Moving to a new adult health-care team can bring mixed emotions, including excitement, fear, relief or sadness. You have probably gotten to know SickKids and many of the people who work here. When making the switch to a new centre, it helps if you know more about how things work.

A time for transition

One of the many changes that come with becoming an adult involves changing where you receive health care. Another change is that you – and not your family – will be the primary person responsible for your health needs.

- At SickKids, we provide family-centred care, so we involve your family in decision-making.
- Adult care is patient-centred, it focuses on your needs and wishes. You are the one making the decisions.
- You can expect to be alone when you see your adult health-care providers during your visit. If you want your parents or someone else to be with you, you can request that.
Tips for adult care

Be GLADD

Give information

Know about your medical history and current medications. Tell your team what works best for you.

Listen to the suggestions

Your new team knows a lot about adult health care.

Ask questions

Write questions down before your visit so you don’t forget. If you don’t understand something, ask for an explanation. There are no silly questions. Get all the information you need.

Decide on a plan

Choose a plan that is good for your health and works best with your lifestyle – for school, work and socially.

Do it

Get involved with your care! Take your medications and attend your medical appointments.
It is a good idea to carry your health card, hospital card, and MyHealth Passport with you at all times.

www.sickkids.ca/myhealthpassport

Some common concerns are:

- Relationships and sex
- Family planning: contraception, planning a healthy pregnancy/fathering a child, parenting options
- Health insurance (to pay for medications and personal care supplies)
- Post-secondary education
- Managing finances (working, income supports, funding)
- Moving out on your own
- Where to get community supports and services

These questions and concerns are normal. Discuss them with your health-care team.

You may also have questions about becoming an adult with a chronic condition.

Continued care is important

Once you turn 18, you can no longer be admitted to SickKids overnight or use the emergency services. Talk to your health-care team about the best place to go for urgent care or emergencies while making your transition.

People with chronic health conditions stay healthier if they have lifelong follow up. It is important to keep in contact with your primary care provider regularly (at least once a year — even when you are healthy).
How to prepare for adult clinic visits

Remember, this is YOUR health-care appointment.

Plan ahead

• Bring a support person or family member to the clinic if this will make you feel more comfortable.

• Think about how you will be getting to your first appointment and give yourself enough travel time. For example, find out how you will get there, and where the building and clinic is located.

Be in charge of your medications

• Keep a list with names and dosage amounts of your medications, including vitamins, supplements and over-the-counter medications.

• If you are put on a new medication, write it in your MyHealth Passport.

• Before your appointment check your prescriptions for the number of repeats. If you only have a few repeats, be sure to ask your doctor for a refill prescription.

Know your health

• Be able to discuss any special health care needs, precautions or treatments related to your health condition with your new team.

If you are put on a new medication, update your MyHealth Passport.
☑️ Appointment checklist

☐ Health card
☐ Hospital card (if you have one)
☐ Name and address of primary care providers and specialists
☐ A list of questions or issues you want to talk about
☐ Your current medication list with your pharmacy’s phone number
☐ Any medical or personal supplies you may need
☐ Knowledge about:
  • Your condition
  • Your past procedures and surgeries
  • Your medications
  • Any other medical problems you have
  (Don’t be afraid to write information down to help you remember)
☐ Your MyHealth Passport (you can create this by visiting www.sickkids.ca/myhealthpassport)
☐ A book or a magazine to help pass the time while you are waiting
☐ A snack or some cash to buy something to eat or drink
☐ Your phone to track your appointments (and keep you busy while you wait!)

Tip

You will be asked to make decisions and give consent to treatments. Bring a support person or family member with you if this will make you feel more comfortable.
Taking charge of your health-care appointments

- Make sure you keep track of your appointments (phone, agenda, calendar, etc). You most likely won’t get reminder phone calls. (You could ask about this if reminders help you.)

- Make a list of all the team members at the clinics you visit. Know their names, their roles, and how to contact them.

- If you realize an appointment time is not convenient for you, it is your responsibility to book a new appointment time.

- If you miss an appointment it will be your responsibility to rebook.

- Ask who is in charge of scheduling appointments. Talk to this person if there is more than one health-care provider that you would like to see on the same day.

- Follow-up after two weeks if you have not heard about things you discussed during your visit: test results, referrals, or new tests bookings.

You are the most important part of the team.

Your teams at SickKids and at your adult-care clinic wish you the very best in this important step toward adulthood.
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Resources

- **Good 2 Go Transition Program** - [www.sickkids.ca/good2go](http://www.sickkids.ca/good2go)
  Provides helpful information about transition preparation

  Phone: 1-800-445-1822
  Helps Ontarians find a family health-care provider (physicians, nurse practitioners)

- **211 Ontario** - [www.211ontario.ca](http://www.211ontario.ca)
  Phone: 211
  Information and referral to community and social services

- **Got Transition.org** - [www.gottransition.org](http://www.gottransition.org)
  Provides tools and resources on transition

- **Healthcare Transition Initiative Website** - [http://hctransitions.ichp.ufl.edu/gladd](http://hctransitions.ichp.ufl.edu/gladd)
  Information on how to talk with health-care professionals

- **Kids Help Phone** - [www.Kidshelpphone.ca](http://www.Kidshelpphone.ca)
  Phone: 1-800-668-6868
  Provides free and confidential counselling and support for youth

- **About Kids Health** - [www.aboutkidshealth.ca](http://www.aboutkidshealth.ca)
  Provides expert-reviewed information about everyday health and complex medical conditions

- **Easy for You to Say: Q&As for Teens Living with Chronic Illness or Disability** (2012) Author: Miriam Kaufman, Firefly Books. Available at public libraries or through major booksellers

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