

Developing Healthy Habits and Skills

Moving through your teen years into adulthood is an amazing time. You are getting the chance to practice making decisions and choices on your own. When you have a chronic health condition or disability, you have some additional decisions to make in order to keep your body healthy for the long haul. It is important for you to think about choosing, such as:

- How to get your prescriptions filled and remembering when to take them.
- Making and keeping appointments with your doctor and getting to them on time.
- Getting and keeping health insurance.
- Learn how to make healthy snacks and meals.
- Finding an exercise routine that you enjoy.



Medical Care

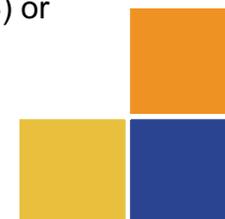
How to locate adult health care providers:

- Many pediatric doctors and therapists (health providers) only see patients up to their 18th or 21st birthday.
- By the time you reach the age of 15 you could begin talking to your current doctors and therapists about how to find new providers.
- By the time you are 15 you could also begin creating a "Portable Medical Summary" that lists all of your medical conditions, allergies, medication and equipment needed, health history and location of your health records.
- A sample of a Portable Medical Summary can be found at www.medicalhomeinfo.org/tools. Once you have filled it out, make enough copies so you can hand one to each of your new health providers.
- It is smart to schedule a first visit with your new adult health providers before you have an urgent health need.



Paying for Medical Care

- If you are covered by your parent's health insurance, it may be possible for the medical insurance to continue into adulthood if arrangements are made with your parent's employer.
- If you go to work, it will be important to find out if your new job offers health insurance. If insurance is offered, find out if desired health providers and hospitals are covered by the insurance.
- Some 18 year olds (and older) with disabilities are eligible for SSI (Supplemental Security Income from Social Security). If you find you are eligible for SSI, you are also eligible to receive state Medicaid health insurance (although this often requires a different application). There are also new work incentive programs within SSI that make it possible to work at a job and still receive SSI and Medicaid. For more information call 1-800-772-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778) or check www.ssa.gov



School Issues

- Students who receive special education services (and are on an Individual Education Plan - IEP) are often able to remain in school until they turn 21 if they do not receive a regular education diploma.
- Plans for transition need to be written into your IEP each year beginning no later than age 16 (but earlier planning is smart). A good model for transition planning is the Person Centered Planning model available at www.ilr.cornell.edu/ped/tsal/pcp/.
- If you are college-bound you may want to contact the Disability Service office at the college(s) you are interested in attending to learn about support that may be available at college. Here is a link for Oregon colleges: www.ode.state.or.us/links/disability.
- The George Washington University Health Resource Center has excellent information about financial aid for students with special needs: www.heath.gwu.edu

Other Helpful Resources:

- Oregon Vocational Rehabilitation Services www.oregon.gov/DHS/vr/index.shtml
- Oregon Developmental Disabilities www.oregon.gov/DHS/dd/index.shtml
- Oregon Mental Health Division www.oregon.gov/DHS/mentalhealth/index.shtml
- Oregon Center for Children and Youth with Special Health Needs www.ohsu.edu/outreach/cdrc/oscsn/index.html
ph. 1-877-307-7070
- Oregon Department of Education – Transition Toolbox www.ode.state.or.us/gradelevel/hs/transition/transtoolboxnews.aspx
- Oregon Parent Training and Information Center www.orpti.org
ph. 1-888-891-6784

If you aren't able to get onto the internet at home or at school, try your closest library.

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Attention Teens with Special Health Needs



**It's never too early to
think about planning for
adulthood!**

