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Now your teenager is 15...

As your teenager grows up, you may find they are **taking more responsibility** for their own day-to-day diabetes care. Your teenager may already have been told about, or introduced to, **adult diabetes services** by their current diabetes clinic or specialist.

The decision about the timing of the transfer from a paediatric or young adult clinic to an adult setting will be made together with your teenager's current diabetes team.

You may wish to consider getting your teenager their own Medicare card, as they are eligible for this from the age of 15 years. Diabetes health professionals encourage young people to **get their own card** at this age because it is a good time for them to begin to **understand how** the healthcare and Medicare-funded **systems operate**. Visit your local Medicare office, call **132 011** or go to servicesaustralia.gov.au.

Frequently asked questions

1. Do I still get to see the doctor with my teenager at the adult clinic or specialist's rooms?

At this age, most of the consultation time will usually be with the young person alone to allow for a confidential interaction. This will allow your teenager to begin developing skills in dealing with health professionals on their own. Parents may be asked to join at the beginning or end of the appointment if agreed to by all parties.

2. How do I find out if there are young adult diabetes clinics and/or private endocrinologists in my local area?

Ask your teenager's paediatric diabetes team or your doctor. They will be able to advise you about the best available options for your teenager.

3. How do I find a diabetes team that is interested in young people with diabetes?

Ask your teenager's paediatric diabetes team – they should be able to advise you about a team that has a particular interest in diabetes and young people in your region. They will also be able to refer you to a private endocrinologist and other diabetes health professionals if that is more suitable.

4. How do I keep my teenager interested in looking after their diabetes?

You can encourage your teenager to see their diabetes team for regular check-ups and to continue to manage their diabetes. If their interest is fading, perhaps they could try to join a group for young people with diabetes. Meeting other young people in groups like this can help them feel less isolated and encourage them to take care of themselves and their diabetes. Young people's camps and peer support groups are a great way for teenagers to meet others and expand their support network.

If your teenager is not currently using continuous glucose monitoring (CGM) or flash glucose monitoring (Flash GM) now might be a good time to consider whether this is something they would like to try, particularly as they become more independent and are learning more about how different factors affect their glucose levels. Talk to your teenager's diabetes team about how to access subsidised CGM or Flash GM products through the NDSS. Find out more here: ndss.com.au/devices-and-technology.

Head here

Check with your state or territory diabetes organisation to find out about the peer support programs they offer.

If you think that your teenager may be experiencing diabetes burnout (when a person with diabetes feels so overwhelmed by the constant demands of managing their condition that they start to ignore or neglect their diabetes), talk to your teenager's diabetes team about where to seek help from a social worker or counsellor.



Feedback and information

If you have any comments on the information you have received, please email us at:
ndss@diabetesaustralia.com.au

If you do not wish to receive further correspondence from us, please go to ndss.com.au and update your personal details.

Life can be tricky being a teenager. Adding diabetes to the mix can make this time even more challenging.

During the teenage years, families need to consider making the move from their existing paediatric health service to an adult care provider.