

Differences Between Pediatric and Adult Healthcare

As you grow up, your health needs change. It is important to see a provider who is trained in managing the health of adults.

What is different in adult care?

While everyone's experience is different, the changes below are common to many people. Some things change slowly, and some more quickly.



PEDIATRIC CARE

You and your family many have known your providers, nurses, and health team for a long time.

You know what to expect.

Your healthcare team may know a lot about you, so you don't need to explain much.

Parent(s) often stay with you during your visits.

Parent(s) are told about your health information.

Parent(s) help answer questions from the provider.

Parent(s) make decisions about your treatment.

You might be seen by a team of providers and other members of your health team at the same visit.

You might have several support services.

Your healthcare team focuses on your present and future possibilities, your growth, and education.

ADULT CARE

Your healthcare team and their roles may change. It may take time for you to get to know your new providers, nurses, or staff

A primary care provider may manage more of your general health needs

Your healthcare providers may not know much about you, so you will need to explain more about yourself.

You decide if a friend, parent, or caregiver stays with you during visits.

You decide who can receive information about your medical care or conditions.

You make the final decisions about your treatment.

You may have to see providers or other members of your health team at different locations, on different days.

Visits may be shorter and more focused. You will need to be prepared to speak up and ask for what you need.

Insurance may not pay for the same services, equipment, or supplies as in the past.

Discussions of adult issues like sexuality, family planning, mood, drugs, and alcohol may be a greater focus of your visits.

Adapted from Intermountain GRAD Program, Intermountain Healthcare, Children's Health, www.GRADprogram.org, 2016. © 2021 Intermountain Healthcare. All Rights Reserved. Updated 2024.