

TRANSITIONING TREATMENT RESPONSIBILITY FROM CAREGIVERS TO ADOLESCENTS & YOUNG ADULTS

During adolescence, youth begin to become more independent and develop greater autonomy in different areas of their lives. For adolescents with a chronic medical condition, getting older also means that caregivers often begin to give their child more responsibility for managing their condition. This transition period can be challenging as it often requires family members to negotiate different degrees of treatment responsibility. This transition should occur slowly and match the adolescents' readiness to take on more self-care responsibilities. Below are tips to help you with this transition.



TREATMENT KNOWLEDGE

Assess your teen's knowledge of their condition and treatment regimen.

- * This will give you an idea about your adolescent's understanding of their illness and ability to assume responsibility for their treatment. This information can help you know which tasks your adolescents can complete versus which tasks they may need more help with.

KNOWLEDGE AREAS TO ASSESS IN ADOLESCENTS

Medication and Refills	Name, dose, how often is it taken Ordering medication refills
Medical Appointments	How to schedule an appointment, how often do I need to go?
Dietary Restrictions	Are there any dietary restrictions or recommendations that need to be followed?
Other Healthcare Maintenance Tasks	Do I need routine blood or health screenings that I need to complete? Do I need any special vaccines?



ESTABLISHING RESPONSIBILITY

- * Establish clear guidelines regarding who is responsible for each treatment related task.
- * Practice an increased or gradual transition of responsibility from caregiver to teen.
 - * For example, you may start by teaching your adolescent how to complete a task (e.g., ordering a medication refill), then complete the task together, and finally, allow your teen to assume full responsibility while the caregiver supervises.
- * Even after transitioning responsibility, you should continue to monitor your adolescent's treatment regimen in order to ensure the treatment is being carried out.
- * Transitioning responsibilities for health care is based on each family's unique needs and may look different across families depending on the adolescent's ability and readiness to take on responsibilities for tasks.

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EXAMPLES OF DIVIDING RESPONSIBILITY

Responsibility	Caregiver	Teen
Medication Adherence	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Teaches adolescent the proper medication and dosage to take at prescribed times 2. Helps adolescent navigate barriers to taking medication 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sets an alarm to take medications 2. Takes on responsibility for filling and using a pillbox, with adequate supervision
Medical Appointments	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Teaches adolescent how to make a medical appointment 2. Helps adolescent create a list of questions or concerns to ask 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stores contact information for healthcare providers 2. Actively engages with providers during healthcare appointments
Medication Refills	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Teaches adolescent how to make refills 2. Monitors adolescent requesting a refill 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stores contact information for the pharmacy 2. Keeps track of when refills are needed
Other Healthcare Maintenance Tasks	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Teaches adolescent how to read nutrition labels related to dietary modifications 2. Teaches adolescent about when routine blood work is needed 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Knows required dietary modifications and begins make dietary adjustments 2. Knows when blood work is needed and what to expect at appointments

PROBLEM SOLVING



- * Discuss potential barriers which may interfere with taking medications or completing specific aspects of a treatment.
- * Problem solve as a team to come up with alternative solutions, or determine who should be in charge of a specific domain of the treatment.
- * For example, although a teen may generally be responsible for a specific task, you may need to take on greater responsibility when the teen is sick or overwhelmed.

TALK TO YOUR MEDICAL PROVIDER



If you have questions about a certain aspect of treatment responsibility – talk to your teen’s medical provider with your adolescent to understand the reasoning.

PRAISING PROGRESS

Transitioning responsibility from parent to teen can be a challenging task! Offer praise to your teen for their efforts to take on increased responsibility and independence.