



What to Expect: Transferring to Adult Care

The transfer from pediatric to adult care is an important milestone in your healthcare journey. Most of our Neurology patients transfer from Boston Children's Hospital between the ages of 22-26, but some people may be ready earlier (ages 18-21). The Neuroscience Family Advisory Council has some information about how adult care might look different from pediatric care.

Key points

- There are steps that you need to take in order to have a smooth transfer to an adult provider.
- An adult provider will care for you differently than your pediatric provider.
- There are important things to bring with you to an adult Neurology appointment.

What will my adult care experience be like?

Visits with your adult care team will be different than they are in pediatrics. Here are some things you can expect:

- Pediatric care is family-centered. In adult medicine, the care patient-centered.
- During the visit, the doctor will expect to speak directly to you (as the adult patient), instead of your parent.
- At first, visits might feel less personal while you build a relationship with your doctor.
- Visits might be shorter and might even feel rushed.
- You may have a copay due at the time you check into your visit.
- You may be asked to fill out a long medical summary (with allergies, current medications, symptoms, etc.) while you're in the waiting room.
- In pediatrics, the environment is usually full of color with child-friendly artwork or fun activities. In adult care, the environment is usually less colorful and may be 'spa-like' or mellow.
- The videos, books, magazines or posters in the clinic or hospital will be geared toward adults and common adult conditions (such as Alzheimer's).

What can I do to prepare?

Transferring to an adult provider can be a stressful experience for some people. Here are some things you can do to prepare and to make the experience easier.

- Talk to your provider here at Boston Children's about what steps you can take to help prepare you before you transfer.
- Look at your new provider's website for photos or video tours of the clinic before you go. This might help you navigate more easily and can help with anxiety before the first visit.
- Get to your appointment at least 15-30 minutes early. This will allow you to find the office with less stress.
- Have the phone number to the clinic ready to call in case you get lost or are running late.
- Bring a list of symptoms and questions to talk about with your new doctor.
- Write down your medical history ahead of time to lower your stress on the day of the appointment. Some practices have an option to do this online before your visit date.
- Ask to sign a "release of information" form if you want your new provider to speak to anyone other than yourself about your care (your parent or support person).
- Get familiar with your new doctor's online patient portal, if they have one. Some offices have this as an option to schedule appointments, request medication refills and contact your provider.
- Confirm that the scheduled visit time still works for you. It's better to cancel/reschedule in advance, before the day of your visit. Some adult providers will stop seeing patients who no-show or cancel late frequently.
- Take notes during the visit and ask questions.
- Advocate for yourself. It's OK to remind the doctor that you're still a young adult and that you might need a little help getting used to adult care.

What should I bring to my first visit?

- ☐ Insurance card
- ☐ Government issued ID (license, state ID)
- ☐ Check or credit/debit card for a co-pay, if applicable
- ☐ A notebook and pen to take notes during the visit
- ☐ Your list of questions you have for the doctor and/or a symptom tracker
- ☐ A list of your current medications (name, dose, timing). Tip: a photo of the prescription labels or bringing the actual medications with you might help.
- ☐ Your calendar for scheduling a follow-up visit