

Adolescent Confidentiality Policy

Adolescence is a time of rapid physical and emotional change. Teenagers are beginning to establish their own identity, and should begin to take responsibility for their own healthcare. Many teenagers do have health concerns that warrant professional advice. Sometimes they may not feel comfortable sharing these concerns with parents, teachers, or even peers. We believe we have an obligation to provide the best possible care to our adolescent patients. It is essential that they feel free to share any information with the expectation that it will be kept private.

Parents are encouraged to come with their adolescents to healthcare visits and remain active and involved in their healthcare. Starting at age 12, we will request the opportunity to spend a few moments speaking with your adolescent alone. The information discussed will be considered private. This means it will not be shared with others without the teenager's consent.

Often in our discussions, there are things we feel should be shared with parents. We ask the teenager permission to speak with parents, and most of the time, they agree. If they do not, we may try to convince them by explaining our reasons. In rare situations, we have no choice but to break confidentiality. This would be if we think the adolescent is in extreme danger of hurting himself/herself or others.

We look forward to working with you and your adolescent throughout the teen years as a resource to provide help, information, and encouragement.