

**THERE ARE SOME IMPORTANT THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT HEALTHCARE TRANSITION...**

- You will need to understand your health condition to be successful in higher education and the work force.
- If you have an IEP, your school is required by law to begin transition planning with you when you are 14.
- At 18 you are considered an adult, you are legally able to make decisions about your healthcare.
- Your health insurance eligibility may change.

You can transition at your own pace, everyone is unique and everyone has strengths and challenges.

**SOUND LIKE A LOT OF WORK? IT MAY BE, BUT WITH THE RIGHT INFORMATION AND PEOPLE TO HELP YOU ALONG THE WAY, YOU CAN MAKE A HEALTHY TRANSITION FROM A YOUNG TEEN TO AN ADULT.**



**YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION ONLINE...**

Rhode Island Department of Health,  
Office of Special Healthcare Needs  
[www.health.ri.gov/family/specialneeds/](http://www.health.ri.gov/family/specialneeds/)

Healthy and Ready to Work  
[www.HRTW.org](http://www.HRTW.org)

The Rhode Island Parent  
Information Network (RIPIN)  
[www.RIPIN.org](http://www.RIPIN.org)

Rhodes to Independence  
[www.rhodestoindpendence.org](http://www.rhodestoindpendence.org)

**TO GET INFORMATION OR MATERIALS ON HEALTHCARE TRANSITION, CALL THE HEALTH INFORMATION LINE AT 1.800.942.7434**



**READY?  
GET SET, GO!**

*Graduate to  
Adulthood...*

*How Healthcare  
Transition Works*



**A GUIDE  
FOR TEENS**

*“It’s really important to get a doctor who talks to you about everything, someone you feel comfortable talking to”*

**Q:** ALL RIGHT, SO...WHAT IS HEALTHCARE TRANSITION?

**A:** Healthcare Transition is about **YOU!** It’s about getting involved in things that have to do with staying healthy.

Healthcare transition is taking responsibility for your own health needs and not depending on anyone else to do it for you, like your parents.



**Q:** OKAY, SO IT’S ABOUT ME...BUT WHAT CAN I DO?

**A:** There are steps **YOU** can take everyday.

- Become more independent by taking care of your needs.
- Learn about how to stay healthy.
- Find out about your medical history (make a copy of your immunization record).
- Keep track of your appointments & commitments.
- During doctor's visits, be ready to ask & answer questions about your health.
- If you take medication, learn what it's for & when & how to take it.
- Think about your future and plan how you will get there.
- Have an adult doctor by age 21.

**Q:** WHY DO I HAVE TO THINK ABOUT IT NOW?

**A:** It takes time and practice to become responsible and independent. As your body grows and your feelings and relationships change, so will your healthcare needs. There’s a lot you need to know, so take the time to ask your parents and doctor questions.

## QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR DOCTOR...



Can you explain my medical condition to me and make sure I can explain it back to you?

When do I need to switch to an adult doctor?

How do I choose an adult doctor?

What happens when I go away to college or move?

Can you help me to understand my medications?

## QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR PARENTS...

Will your insurance still cover me when I turn 18?

Are there important papers that I should have? Can you help me create a system to get organized?

Was anyone ever sick in our family? What is my medical history?

Can you tell me what I should talk to the doctor about?

I want to be more independent so... what do you do for me that I can do for myself?

*“We all should have started to get ready for adulthood when we were younger”*