

Welcome to Adulthood!

On your 18th birthday, you became a legal adult and are now responsible for making your own decisions about your health and medical care. This can feel overwhelming, but we want to assure you that we will continue to support and educate you so that you can always be fully informed of your healthcare and treatment options.

If you haven't already begun to do so, it is now necessary that you become knowledgeable about any medical conditions you may have, any medications you take, and what you need to do in order to stay healthy. It is also very important that you become familiar with the medical history of your close family members (parents, siblings, grandparents), as this information will be relevant to medical conditions you may develop in the future. Up until now, your parents probably managed this information, but now is the time for you to prepare for independent decision-making about your health.

As an adult, we are by law not allowed to share or discuss your medical information with anyone but you without your written permission. Some young adults feel more comfortable continuing to have a parent or other family member have the ability to communicate with the doctors and other staff members at Northampton Area Pediatrics. If you are not yet comfortable managing all of your healthcare needs independently, you can sign a release of information form that will allow us to communicate with family member(s) of your choosing. This release can be revoked at any time. Even if you sign a release allowing us to speak to your parent(s), you should continue to work toward greater understanding of your medical history to prepare you for eventually becoming more independent.

Understanding your medical history is necessary in order to ensure you are receiving appropriate medical care at all times, whether your future includes attending college, joining the military, or joining the workforce. Being an active participant in NAP's MyChart patient portal is an easy way to access much of this information at the push of a button. However, it is imperative that you also learn this information without the help of technology, in case you ever find yourself needing to seek medical care without access to MyChart.

As you begin your journey into adulthood, remember the importance of continuing to receive routine medical care here at NAP: yearly well visits, recommended follow up appointments as advised by your PCP, and recommended vaccines. If you seek medical care while away at college, be sure to have those records forwarded to your PCP here at NAP.

