

## Doctors and What to Expect

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### Finding a General Practitioner (GP)

If you don't already have one, it's time to get a General Practitioner (GP).

It is important that all families have a GP. Even though you have diabetes and see a diabetes specialist regularly, it is still important to have access to a GP for other things like immunisation, injury, minor illnesses and other routine care. GP's are there to look after your overall health and to support you with your diabetes care.

If you are going to a group general practice it is a good idea to try and see the same doctor each time you visit. That way you will get to know each other and they will be familiar with your medical history.

Choosing a GP is a personal thing. A good GP is someone you feel comfortable talking to, knowing they are listening to what you are saying and are 'taking you seriously'. If you don't feel comfortable with your GP then it is important to find one you like, as they will be an important part of your transition to adult services, particularly in areas without resident endocrinologists.

Remember your GP isn't there **just** to write insulin scripts for you!

### Doctor consultations

When visiting your doctor (GP or specialist) for a consultation there are things that should happen on both sides to make the visit successful.

There are certain things that you should expect from your doctor or health professional. They include:

- Treating you with respect and as an individual
- Providing you with information in a way that you can understand
- Involving you in the decisions about your treatment
- Listening to you and encouraging you to ask questions
- Respecting your privacy and confidentiality.

Think about your visit and write down any questions you have before your visit and take them with you.

There are certain things you need to do at each visit. They include:

- Arriving on time
- Turning off your phone, or putting it on silent
- Saying what you think and being honest and respectful
- Knowing your treatment and if you need a prescription
- If you don't understand something ask to have it explained to you again.

It is also important that you are familiar with your own story (medical history) and are confident in telling it to health care professionals and others connected with your welfare.

## Confidentiality

It is important to understand the issues around confidentiality.

When you were younger, most of the discussions with health professionals about your diabetes were directed to your parents. As you are now getting older it is time for you to talk to members of your diabetes care team, that are of concern to you. This doesn't mean you are being encouraged to keep things from your family, it encouraged that you have open and honest communication with them.

It is important that you feel comfortable discussing anything with your diabetes health care team, and that when you turn 16 years of age, to understand that what is said during that discussion will stay confidential, or just between you and them. In other words your doctor can't talk about you or your health to other people unless you say they can.

The only time health professionals can break this rule is when they think you may be at risk of:

- harming yourself
- harming someone else, or
- being harmed by someone else

In these situations, the health professional is legally required to report these events. This is called mandatory reporting.

So make sure you discuss the issue of 'confidentiality' with your doctor and other health care professionals. You should feel confident that your doctor and other health care professionals are happy to talk with you alone about your healthcare.

## Reference:

NSW Agency for Clinical Innovation. *Getting Connected. Information for Young People.* 2005. Found at:

[http://www.aci.health.nsw.gov.au/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0003/164244/Information\\_for\\_young\\_people\\_July\\_2011.pdf#zoom=100](http://www.aci.health.nsw.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0003/164244/Information_for_young_people_July_2011.pdf#zoom=100)