



Minors' Rights to Health Care*

District of Columbia law allows minors to self-consent for many health care services. A big part of getting the health care you need is knowing how to start. Regardless of the type of health care provider you need to see, the same basic steps can be followed.

What to Do

- Talk to someone you trust about any physical or mental issues you are experiencing
- Be able to describe what is wrong
- Know your medical history and your family's medical history
- Know what to take with you
 1. ID
 2. Insurance card
 3. Referral form
- Take notes and ask questions if there is anything you don't understand

What You Can Do

Self-consent means you can get some medical care on your own including:

- Contraceptive Services
- Prenatal Care
- STD/HIV Services
- Treatment for alcohol and/or drug services
- Outpatient mental health services
- Abortion services

Minors are encouraged to talk with their parents or guardians about their health care needs.



An independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.



HEALTH BILL OF RIGHTS FOR DC TEENS

DC law permits a minor** of any age to self-consent for prenatal care; contraception; the prevention, diagnosis and/or treatment of substance abuse, sexually transmitted infections, psychological or mental disturbance; and abortion. In addition, every young person has the right:

- To take responsibility for his/her health and physical fitness
- To be treated with courtesy and respect by all staff without regard to his/her gender, culture, language, appearance, sexual orientation, color, presence of disability, HIV status, transportation ability, or source of payment.
- To get good care and the right types of health services, which include health education, regular check ups, dental and vision care, mental health, STD checks and sexual health, and drug and alcohol treatment by staff who are comfortable and experienced with young people.
- To be presented with honest and thorough health education, guidance, and care to improve health and well being especially in regards to nutrition, exercise, safety, sex and sexual identity, drugs, alcohol, tobacco use and preventing violence.
- To include family, friends, and partners in his/her care at his/her request.
- To get a full explanation of what's confidential and what's not. If the doctor or other staff has a duty to talk with his/her parents or caretaker about certain issues, the information will also be discussed fully with the teen patient.
- To be introduced to his/her doctor, nurse, or other health care provider by name at the beginning of each visit or encounter.
- To be given a clear explanation of health care benefits and health plan procedures.
- To be informed about where to find services and how to get them.

If you are married; have been in the armed forces; living apart from your parents and managing your own affairs; employed and contributing more than half to your own support while living with your parents, you are considered emancipated and can manage your own health care.

