

Questions & Answers For Teens & Young Adults About Your Health Care Exam

Why do they ask about such personal stuff?

Asking questions is an important way, along with the physical exam, that your health care provider finds out about your health now and any health risks you may have that could affect you later. Just like questions about diet and exercise, all teens and adults are asked about whether they smoke, drink, use other drugs, or have sex.

It's embarrassing to talk about...

BUT, by being open and telling the truth you better your chances of staying healthy! Doctors and nurses want you to know that some things you may do are really risky to your health – like not using condoms for sex. Asking you about your sexual activity helps them (doctors and nurses) to know if you are at risk for sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). Based on what you tell them, they can then check you and get you the right medicine.

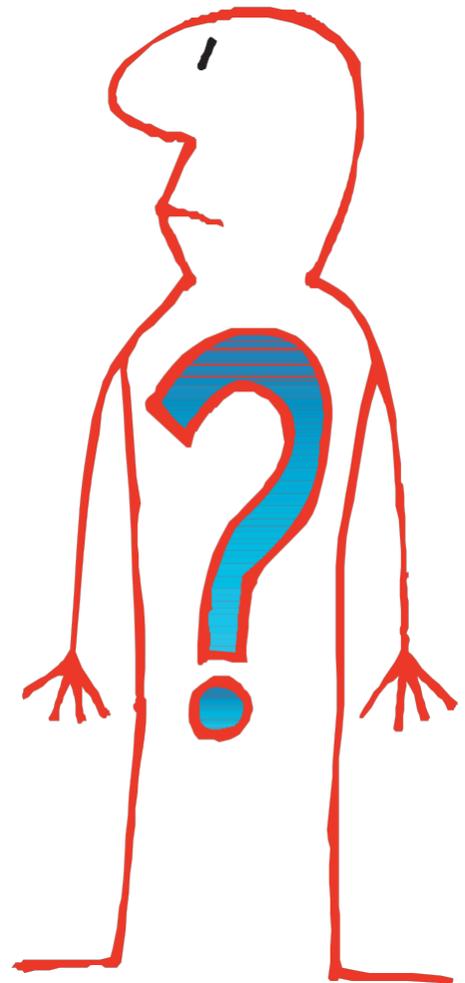
This is my private business.

Who are they going to tell?

Well, you need to know that by law your health care provider is not allowed to tell other people most stuff, but if you are worried ask them. Ask if they will or how they will keep secret what you tell them. You can always ask to be alone to speak with your doctor or nurse about your personal life, if you don't want anyone else (like a parent) to hear what you are talking about.

I'm not comfortable with the physical exam.

If you are nervous about being alone with your doctor or nurse during the exam, you can always ask for a nurse, friend or family member to stay with you during the visit.



Adapted with permission from Spokane Regional Health District.