



Hot Potatoes!

Parenting Help
When Things
Get HOT!

Free - Help Yourself!

Teen's Questions, Doctor's Answers

Teens often have questions about their health but don't always feel comfortable asking adults for information.

To make things easier, we compiled some common questions, and then sat down for a "video visit" with Dr. Kurt Farchmin and Dr. Catherine Hansen. This newsletter contains condensed versions of the doctor's responses. The video with the doctor's full answers is available on Sawtooth Mountain Clinic's YouTube channel:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j8wk_mnpQpQ



If I'm under 18, can I be treated without my parent's knowledge?

Sometimes, but you might have to pay for it yourself. However, if money is an issue, there are ways that we can help. Just ask.

There are certain conditions that allow you to be treated with your own consent:

- drug and alcohol issues
- any care needed for pregnancy
- diagnosis of pregnancy
- sexually transmitted infections

It's best if your parents can be part of the conversation. Our providers can help by being there for that discussion. But if talking with your parents is out of the question, our providers are still here for you. In fact, there are some medical records that your parents can't even see unless you give your permission. Unless a provider is worried that you are a danger to yourself or someone else, *anything* that you want to talk about will be kept private, even if it's not on the list above.



In this issue:

- What will you tell my parents?
- Who can see my information?
- Will you call law enforcement?
- What are you testing for?
- What if I'm pregnant?



If I tell you that I smoke pot or drink alcohol, will you tell my parents or call law enforcement?

Your providers are obligated by law NOT to tell your parents or the police that you drink or smoke pot unless you are doing so in a way that puts you (or someone else) in danger. Providers are here both to answer your questions and to protect you, so unless they feel that you are at risk, they will keep your alcohol and drug use private.



Who can see the information in my health records?

While any health care staff can see your medical records, there are multiple layers of privacy protection, and, if you are related to someone that works in the clinic, there is additional security to control access to records. However, if you are prescribed any medication during a visit, that medicine will appear on your medication list, and it would also show up on insurance paperwork.

All Sawtooth Mountain Clinic employees are bound by HIPPA confidentiality laws (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act). We are dedicated to protecting your right to privacy.



When I pee in a cup, what are you testing it for?

The most common reason for a urine test is to check for an infection. If you want to have your urine tested for drugs or sexually transmitted infections, talk to your provider. But rest assured, we aren't going to do any sneaky testing without your knowledge.

Taking care of ourselves can take a lot of support, and the staff at Sawtooth Mountain Clinic is here to help you. Just call (218) 387-2330 for an appointment.



Pregnancy

How can I get "Plan B?"

The best way to prevent pregnancy is to not have sex or to use a reliable method of contraception (the pill, an IUD, or condoms and spermicide). If you did have sex when you weren't planning to, you can get a type of "Plan B" contraception. Plan B is emergency contraception that you take after you have sex. It's available over the counter or with a prescription. It most effective the earlier that you take it. It can prevent pregnancy, but not sexually transmitted infection. If the unplanned sex was the result of a sexual assault, it's especially important to come to the clinic to get checked out and to connect with one of our providers about your next steps.

How do I know if I'm pregnant?

Even if you haven't started having your period yet, if you're having sex, you can still get pregnant. A missed period is usually one of the first signs of pregnancy, but teen's periods are not always regular, so you might not know if you've missed one. You could feel nauseated, or your breasts might feel tender. The best way to know is to take a "pee" test. They are very accurate. You can get them over the counter, or take one here at the clinic. The results will be private.