



10- to 12-Year Checkup

Date: _____

Weight: _____

Height: _____

BMI %: _____

“Preteens want independence, but still need lots of guidance at this age!”

—Kaiser Permanente dad

Eating



Make it easy for your child to get a variety of healthy foods.

- Eat together as a family as often as possible.
- Make sure your child gets a healthy breakfast that includes protein every day. Help them learn to prepare their own.
- Aim for at least 5 servings of fruit and vegetables and 3 servings of dairy products (milk, low-sugar yogurt, or cheese) per day.
- Take your child shopping with you to help pick out healthy foods they'll eat.
- Have healthy snacks on hand that are easy for kids to grab, like fruit, cut vegetables with hummus dip, nuts, and string cheese.
- Serve water with meals and pack a water bottle with your child's lunch.
- Limit sweet drinks like soda and juices. Treat them like an occasional dessert.
- Ask us about programs like WIC or Cal-Fresh if you need financial support for food.

Parenting



Help your child make healthy and safe choices.

- Ask your child to tell you about their day, friends, and activities. Get to know their friends.
- Encourage your child to come up with solutions to their problems, with your support.
- Help your child find healthy ways to deal with stress, like exercising, listening to music, spending time in nature, or journaling.
- Talk with your child about not using tobacco, marijuana, alcohol, or other drugs. Many young teens are tempted to try vaping and Juul (a flavored form of nicotine). Be sure they understand nicotine is dangerous and highly addictive.
- Keep all medications out of reach.
- Check in with your child if you're concerned they're dealing with feelings of sadness, depression, or anxiety. Ask how you can help. If things don't improve, let us know.

Puberty

You're probably noticing changes in your child's body these days. Puberty includes times of rapid growth ("growth spurts"), including underarm and pubic hair, breast development in girls, and penis and testicle growth in boys. Many girls also start their periods around this age. During this time:

- Give your child the privacy they may want.
- Talk with your child about how their body is changing. Reassure them that this is normal.
- Provide an age-appropriate book to read, either on their own or with you. Share links to trusted websites with information for tweens, such as kidshealth.org.
- Encourage your child to ask questions about body changes and sex. Answer them honestly and simply. Most parents find that having a series of conversations instead of 1 big "talk" is easier and more effective. We have resources to help if you or your child feels awkward.

Technology



Monitor your child's screen time.

Technology can have both benefits and drawbacks in your child's life, but you're in control.

- Limit screen time (phone, tablet, computer, TV, and video games) to less than 2 hours per day.
- Use parental controls and apps that restrict internet access to inappropriate content.

- Delay giving an internet-enabled smartphone to your child as long as possible. If you need to communicate with them when they're away, consider a basic phone that allows only phone calls and texting to preapproved people.

Set limits on screen time:

- Frequent social media use increases feelings of anxiety or depression among children and teens.
- Too much screen time can negatively impact sleep and school performance.

School and friends



Know your child's friends and their parents.

As kids become more independent, it's still very important to keep up with what they're doing.

- Show interest in your child's schoolwork and activities.
- Get in touch with teachers if you or your child have any concerns.
- Set a routine and make a quiet place for doing homework.
- Use a planner or organizer to help your child keep track of schoolwork.
- Know your child's friends and their parents, where your child is, and what they're doing at all times.
- Ask how your child feels about relationships with their friends. If there are any signs of bullying or other negative behavior, help them navigate the situation in a healthy way.

Healthy habits



Help your child thrive as they grow.

- Encourage fun activities they enjoy, or have them join you in taking walks or actively playing together. Your child needs at least one hour of physical activity every day.
- Don't smoke, vape, or let others smoke around your child.
- Protect your child from the flu and other serious diseases with all recommended immunizations. At this visit we recommend:
 - **HPV vaccine.** This vaccine helps prevent cancer in both boys and girls. It's given in 2 doses and can be given as early as age 9.
 - **Tdap booster.** Your preteen needs a booster shot to stay protected against tetanus and pertussis (whooping cough).
 - **Meningococcal meningitis vaccine.** This shot protects against swelling around your child's brain.
- Set a good example. When you wear your seat belt, eat your veggies, and get enough sleep your child notices.
- Have your child apply sunscreen with an SPF of at least 15 when they'll be outdoors.
- Make sure your child is brushing their teeth with fluoride toothpaste twice a day and flossing once a day. Visit the dentist twice a year for regular checkups. Need help choosing a low or no cost dentist? Visit smilecalifornia.org for a list of dentists who accept Medi-Cal.

Safety



Keep your child safe at home and on the road.

- Children need booster seats until they're at least 4 feet 9 inches tall and a seat belt fits properly. (Many children this age still need their booster. If your child does need one, keep using it, even if they complain.)
- Children who are 4 feet 9 inches or taller may use the vehicle seat belt if it fits properly. All children under age 13 should ride in the back seat.
- Lock away anything dangerous, including medications, cigarettes, alcohol, and vaping liquid.
- It's safest not to have a gun in your home. If you must have a gun, store it unloaded in a locked case. Keep ammunition in a separate locked container. Teach your child not to touch guns and to tell an adult if they find one.

Your next checkup is in 1 to 2 years.

- ✓ Call our 24/7 Appointment and Advice Call Center at 866-454-8855 if you have questions or concerns about your child's health.
- ✓ Download our app, **My Doctor Online**, at the App Store or Google Play.
- ✓ Visit kp.org/mydoctor for more resources.

This information is not intended to diagnose health problems or to take the place of medical advice or care you receive from your physician or other medical professional. If you have persistent health problems, or if you have additional questions, please consult with your doctor. If you have questions or need more information about your medication, please speak to your pharmacist. Some photos may include models and not actual patients.