

Congenital Heart Disease

Making the Move to Adult Care



With congenital heart disease (CHD), **your heart needs lifelong, ongoing care and monitoring.** Plan early to stay connected with CHD experts who know your heart condition.

Over 1 million
U.S. adults
live with CHD

Nearly all
(97%)
children with
CHD survive into
adulthood

Yet,
fewer than
1 in 10
see an adult
CHD specialist

As you grow,
your heart care should
grow with you. Staying with
specialized care into adulthood
– even if you're feeling well –
can help protect
your heart health
throughout your life.



Preparing to move to adult care



Transition – preparing for adult care

- ✓ Start discussions early (~ages 12-13)
- ✓ Builds skills, confidence
- ✓ Eases worries about the future

Transfer – the move, “handoff” to adult care

- ✓ The actual switch to an adult CHD expert (~age 18)
- ✓ Ensures continued care and follow-up

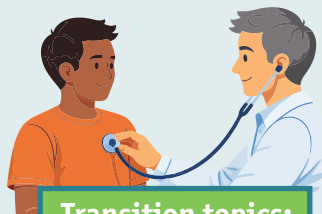
Early childhood

Pediatric heart care
Parent takes lead role



Teen years (ages 12-17)

Transition visits to teach teens
skills, self-advocacy



Adult (ages 18-21)

Adult-centered heart care



Transition topics:

Self-care and speaking up • Understanding health history, keeping medical records
Managing medications • Discussing age-related topics – safe sex, pregnancy risks, alcohol, drugs, emotional health

Why stay in care?

It saves lives, prevents gaps in care and can boost:

- Quality of life
- Sense of control, peace of mind

Regular visits with a congenital heart specialist can help:

- Catch heart changes early (valve, rhythm, or heart function problems)
- Avoid urgent procedures, hospital stays
- Know when treatment is needed to live longer and feel better

For more information, visit **CardioSmart.org/CHD**

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