

Preventative Care Visits of Adolescents and Health Behaviors

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Image copied from CDC "Teen Health Services" (2019)
https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/protective/factsheets/OneonOneTime_FactSheet.htm

Background

- Estimated percent of adolescents that do not attend an annual preventative visit is 19%-46%.
- Most childhood vaccines are near completion around age 10 and the last vaccination series is typically given at ages 11-12 years.
- Health behaviors provide information including risks of the patient's lifestyle: social behaviors, personal safety habits, tobacco, drug, and alcohol use, sexual health, diet, physical activity level, emotional health, and academic functioning.

Nursing Applications

- Check vitals at every visit. Communicate findings to the provider and to the patient. Abnormal values could be asymptomatic and go unnoticed until adulthood.
- Educate the patient and family of the importance that the patient having one-on-one time with the provider. This allows for discussion of sensitive matters and helps adolescents transition into young adulthood.
- Utilize the EHR to identify patients that have not had a preventative visit, or identify patients with documented health issues that need a follow up.
- Plan ahead for scheduled patients and review the EHR for any concerning health trends and screenings needed.
- Provide preventative counseling and education when the provider has insufficient time to discuss health behaviors.
- Education should focus on the health of the patient's behaviors, instead of the measurement that is out of range, such as the patient's weight.

Question

In pre-teens and teens aged 10-18 in the United States, how do preventative care visits compared to no preventative care visits affect the health behaviors of adolescents?

Statistics About Child and Adolescent Health Conditions

- 1 in 5 of 6- to 19-year-old children are classified as obese with a BMI \geq 95th percentile (CDC, 2021b)
- 4.7% of children aged 12- to 17-years-old in the United States are underweight (CDC, 2020f)
- 1 in 7 children aged 12- to 19-years-old have elevated blood pressure or hypertension (CDC, 2020d)
- 7% of children aged 6- to 19-years-old have high cholesterol (CDC, 2021c)

Study	Description	Results
Increasing Delivery to Preventative Services to Adolescents and Young Adults: Does the Preventative Visit Help?, by Adams, et al. (2018).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level III quasi-experimental study that utilized bivariate and multivariate analyses. • Population of adolescents 10- to 17-years old & young adults 18- to 25.- years old. • The adolescent population was 12,832 adolescents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preventative services overall increased 7% - 19% at preventative visits. • A finding of 30% - 40% increase in discussions about health behaviors. • Those that had a preventative visit had more alone-time with the provider compared to the group that did not have a preventative visit. • However, 2/3 of adolescents did not have any alone time with the provider.
Pediatrician Communication About High Blood Pressure (BP) in Children With Overweight/ Obesity During Well-Child Visits, by Bismar, et al. (2020).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level IV mixed-methods analysis study of well-child visits. • Study of audio recordings along with demographic information about patients and parental surveys. • Population of 126 children, 6- to 12-year-old patients. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 patients were identified as having hypertensive BP readings at 3 or more visits and received zero communication about secondary causes of hypertension. • 29% of patients found to have elevated BP, yet 85% of this group received no direct communication about their BP. • Of the remainder, 80% of children were asked to follow up for their BP. • And only 40% were provided therapeutic counseling about diet, lifestyle.
The Lack of Diagnosis and Screening for Pediatric Obesity in the Retail Health Setting: Implications for Quality Improvement Measures, by Guardi, et al. (2020).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level IV retrospective correlational study that used a quantitative secondary analysis of electronic health record (EHR) data. • Study population was 3- to 18-year-old patients. • 2,227 subjects aged 12-18 years old. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 834 subjects found to have a BMI \geq 85th percentile. • 99% of these patients had no documentation of nutrition screening. • 99% of the patients with a BMI \geq 85th percentile did not have a formal diagnosis of "overweight" or "obese." • Only patients with a BMI in the 99th percentile had a formal diagnosis of "obese."

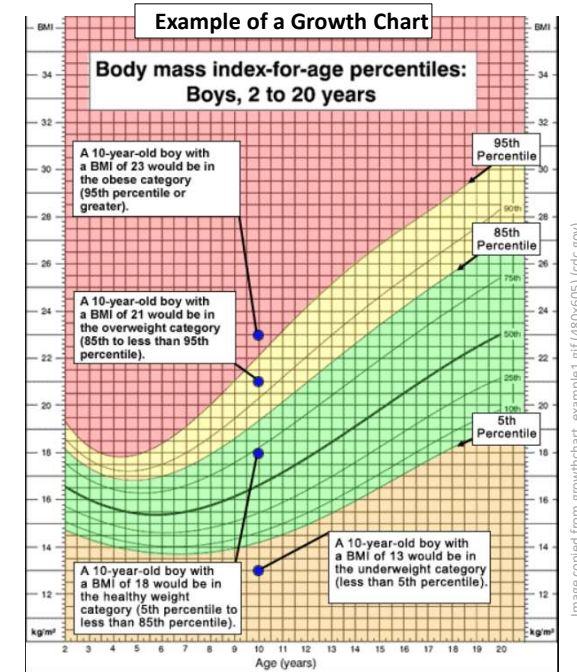


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Conclusion

- There is an increase of preventative services and evaluation of health behaviors when adolescents attend preventative care visits compared to those that do not attend preventative visits.
- Many findings of missed opportunities to provide information and education about health behaviors.
- Studies identified a lack of documentation of provider discussions of health behaviors and lack of health screenings performed during the visits.
- Changes are needed to provide preventative services at routine and acute visits, to increase preventative care.
- There is a need for future studies. There are few RCT and longitudinal studies available about pre-teens and teenagers, particularly with preventative medicine.