

# Medical Services That Can Be Provided to Teens Without Parents' Permission

A minor is a person under the age of 18. In general, parental consent is needed before a minor receives medical treatment from a physician. However, there are some exceptions under Georgia Law. Teens under 18 years old can receive the following services without permission from parents or anyone else.

## Pregnancy, Prenatal Care, and Childbirth

- Under Georgia law, any female may give consent for treatment, regardless of her age, for treatment related to pregnancy, birth control (contraceptive care, prescriptions, and counseling), or child birth.
- A minor may consent to all health care services related to pregnancy, including counseling, pregnancy tests, and labor and delivery services, without notifying a parent (unless she chooses to do so). A minor parent may consent to all medical care for the child.
- A provider is not required to disclose medical records or other information regarding health care services related to family planning, pregnancy, and childbirth to parents without the patient's consent.

## HIV Testing and Counseling & Treatment

The Georgia Department of Human Resources states that all county health departments offer HIV counseling and testing, both confidentially (names are recorded so health departments can contact infected persons to offer treatment and help with notifying sex or needle sharing partners) and anonymously (no identification is collected).

## Substance Abuse Counseling

A minor may consent to medical services and counseling related to substance abuse. Parental consent is not required for outpatient treatment.

## Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)

Any minor may consent to testing and treatment for an STI without a parent or guardian's consent.

## Emergency Care

In cases of emergency, consent to medical care is implied. "Emergency" means a situation in which the proposed surgical or medical treatment is reasonably necessary (according to competent medical judgment), a person authorized to consent is not readily available, and any delay in treatment would jeopardize the minor's life or health.

*Please Note: This information is intended as a guide and does not provide individual legal advice or assistance. Please check with your legal counsel for site-specific clarification about minors' rights and confidentiality and disclosure issues, including any new policies related to the HIPAA privacy rule.*

