

# Let's talk about...

## Helping Your Teen in the Hospital

Supporting a teenager in the hospital is about finding a balance. You want to make sure they get the medical care they need while also respecting their privacy and need to feel independent.

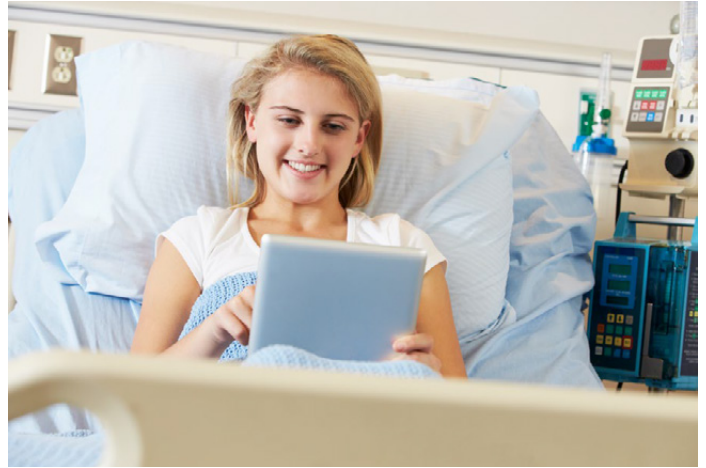
### Understanding Your Teen:

- **How They Think:** Teens have more advanced ways of thinking and care deeply about what their friends think.
- **Common Worries:** They may worry about how their body looks or feel stressed about being away from their friends and family.
- **Fears:** They often fear pain, losing their privacy, or feeling like they aren't "themselves" anymore.

### How They Might Act:

If your teen is stressed, you might notice them:

- Refusing to follow rules or help out.
- Pulling away from people or wanting to be alone.
- Feeling sad, anxious, or grumpy.



### Ways You Can Help:

- **Give Them Space:** Respect their privacy and let them have time alone when they need it.
- **Let Them Choose:** Whenever possible, let them make decisions about their care. Ask them to explain how they feel to the doctors.
- **Be Honest:** Tell them the truth about why they are in the hospital. Trust is very important right now.
- **Keep a Routine:** Encourage them to do normal things, like brushing their teeth or washing their face.
- **Stay Connected:** Help them talk to their friends through phone calls or video calls.
- **Support Feelings:** Offer ways for them to express themselves, like writing in a journal, listening to music, or making art.
- **Set Boundaries:** Keep the same basic rules and expectations you have for them at home to help things feel more normal.

For more information or to connect with a Child Life Specialist, please visit: <http://ucdavis.health/childlife>