

Physical Exam: Teen Boy



What happens during a physical exam?

A physical exam is an important part of staying healthy. Physicals should be done yearly and before starting sports. The healthcare provider will examine your teen's eyes, which may include checking vision. And the provider will examine your teen's ears, which may include checking hearing. The nose, throat, neck, mouth, chest, belly (abdomen), back, and legs and arms are also part of the exam. The provider will assess growth and puberty changes. They may also check for high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and obesity. The provider may also talk with your child about high-risk behaviors. These include safety, seat belt use, smoking, alcohol, drugs, and sexual activity.

During the physical exam, the healthcare provider will examine the genitals, including the penis, testicles, and scrotum. The provider may ask your teen to cough while examining the scrotum. This can be embarrassing. But it's done to help check for inguinal hernias or tumors.

- An inguinal hernia is when part of the intestine, or bowel, pushes down inside the scrotum from the abdomen. In rare cases, the bowel can become trapped inside the scrotum, causing serious problems. Hernias may be felt as your teen coughs and the bowel is pushed downward. Surgery can correct hernias.
- Tumors are growths that occur all over the body, including the testicles. Testicular tumors in teens are rare. But the provider may check for this during the exam. The provider will direct your teen how to do self-exams.

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