

NEED TO SEE A GP AND DON'T HAVE YOUR CARD?

1. Ask the receptionist to get your Medicare number from your file.

Or

2. Keep your Medicare number written down on something in your wallet.

Or

3. Ring 13 20 11 to find out your Medicare number.

It is not essential to have the card with you when visiting your GP. Knowing your Medicare number will do.

WANT YOUR OWN MEDICARE CARD?

Some young people get their own Medicare card as they work or study away from home, or want to be able to visit a doctor at any time without having to chase up their parents' card.

To apply for your own Medicare card, you must:

1. Be at least 15 years old,
2. Have two forms of ID (birth certificate, student card, passport, bank book), and
3. Complete an application form.

These forms are available from your local Medicare office, or you can phone Medicare on 13 20 11 and ask for a form to be mailed to you. Once you get your card, your parents will get a new one without your name on it.


ABOUT CONFIDENTIALITY & PRIVACY.

Your doctor cannot pass on information about you to anyone without asking you first. This includes your parents, even if they have known the doctor for 20 years and are friends. You can talk to your doctor about anything. If you have a question, just ask.

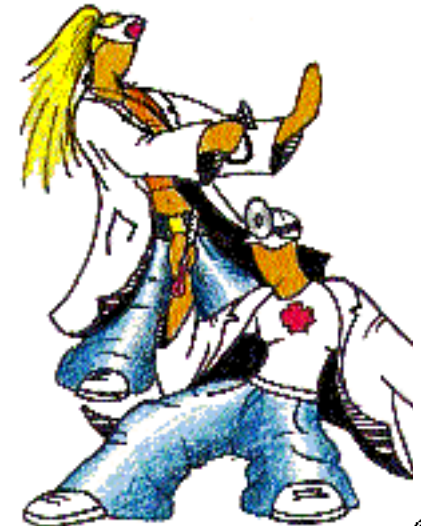
Sometimes though, for your own safety, other people need to be informed. For example if someone is harming you, or if you are at risk of harming yourself or at risk of harming someone else.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Northern Rivers Division of General Practice would like to acknowledge the following for providing information for this brochure: the Barossa, Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Ryde, and Mid North Rural SA divisions of general practice and the AMA Youth Health Advocate Program.


NORTHERN RIVERS
DIVISION OF GENERAL PRACTICE
16 CARRINGTON STREET (PO BOX 519),
LISMORE, NSW 2480
PH (02) 6622 4453 FAX (02) 6622 3185
EMAIL: MANAGER@NRDGP.ORG.AU
WEBSITE: WWW.NRDGP.ORG.AU

VISITING YOUR DOCTOR.



"What's up Doc?"

WHAT YOUTH NEED TO KNOW.

ABOUT YOUR DOCTOR.

WHAT IS A GP?

GPs are called general practitioners because they look at the health of the whole person. This includes their mental health as well as their physical health. There is an endless list of issues your GP can help you with, such as:

Methods of contraception

Depression

Drug & alcohol issues

Eating disorders

Lumps/moles/pimples/rashes

Headaches/hearing/eyesight/foot problems

Nutrition & fitness

Relationship problems

Pregnancy

Sexuality issues

Stress management

MAKING AN APPOINTMENT WITH A GP

You can phone or call into the GP's practice to make an appointment. Check the yellow pages under medical practitioners.

Most appointments are 10 -15 minutes. If you think you need a longer appointment, ask the receptionist for a longer appointment when you book.

When you arrive at the surgery let the receptionist know which doctor you have an appointment to see.

Sometimes you may have to wait for your

appointment if the doctor is running late. If the time you have to wait becomes a problem, discuss it with the receptionist. One way to avoid waiting is to ring before your appointment time to check if the doctor is running on time.

HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF YOUR APPOINTMENT

Your doctor needs all the facts to work out what is wrong with you. Tell your doctor how you feel, even if it seems trivial. Be honest and talk openly about your fears or worries. Tell the doctor if you are taking any other medications, recreational drugs or complementary medicines (eg. herbal vitamins, tonics), as they may have an effect on the way prescribed medicines work.

In return, you can expect your doctor to treat your problem and tell you, in plain language, about what is happening to you and any risks or side effects of your treatment. What you discuss will be kept private, unless you or someone else is at risk of harm.

If you would like to take someone with you for support, that is ok.

PAYMENT

1. Bulk billing - this means you pay nothing. The doctor uses your Medicare number to charge the government for your visit.

Or

2. The doctor gives you the bill for the visit,

which you pay. You then take your receipt to your local Medicare office with your Medicare number to claim some of that money back (a rebate).

Or

3. In some cases the doctor charges more than the Medicare rebate. You will be asked to pay the difference at the time of your visit. Medicare will send you a cheque in the doctor's name for the balance, which you must pass on to the doctor.

ABOUT MEDICARE.

WHAT IS MEDICARE?

Medicare is a government system that partly pays for doctors' services.

Every family in Australia has been issued with a Medicare card. The one number covers every member in the family. The Medicare card is needed at all health visits. In some cases duplicate cards can be issued so that more than one family member can hold a card.

WHAT ABOUT MEDICARE CARDS?

To avoid problems when visiting a GP, you need to be enrolled with Medicare and have a valid Medicare number.

Most young people are registered with Medicare through their parents' card.

If you already have a GP, the surgery may have your Medicare number on file.