As young people with SCD enter their teenage years and mature into adults, the responsibility shifts from the caregiver to the teen themselves. Teens and young adults with SCD also transition from a pediatrician to a doctor who treats adults.

**ADULT SICKLE CELL CARE CAN BE MORE FRAGMENTED AND CHALLENGING TO NAVIGATE**

Once they are no longer eligible for pediatric care, young adult patients may experience or may face reduced access to:

- Preventive care
- Close medical follow-up
- Kidney disease
- Heart disease
- High blood pressure
- Blood transfusion complications

SCD morbidities more likely in older adolescents and adults:

- Kidney disease
- Heart disease
- High blood pressure
- Blood transfusion complications

As young people with SCD enter their teenage years and mature into adults, the responsibility shifts from the caregiver to the teen themselves. Teens and young adults with SCD also transition from a pediatrician to a doctor who treats adults.

**Key factors contributing to these negative outcomes include:**

- Reduced access to quality care
- Inadequate disease knowledge
- Loss of insurance
- Poor adherence to treatment

**Following the transition period, young adult patients may experience:**

- Increased use of health care services
- Increased risk of death in the first two years post-transition

**~40% re-hospitalized**

**~20% visited the emergency room**

Being proactive can help young adults stay on track with their care.

- Find a trusted physician who is right for you
- Set up a care schedule to stay on track
- Communication is key
- Reach out for help

- Work with your pediatric care team to find an adult care doctor knowledgeable about sickle cell disease.
- Schedule regular visits, starting within two months of your last pediatric visit.
- Know your medical history and share it with your doctor.
- Managing your own care for the first time can be confusing and scary. Local advocacy organizations can help you find a support network and other online resources.

**TAKE EXTRA CARE DURING COVID-19**

People with sickle cell disease are at greater risk of a serious COVID-19 infection.

- Minimize your risk by:
  - Following social distancing guidelines and wearing a mask
  - Using telemedicine when seeing care from your doctor
  - Taking advantage of online classes and request special accommodations if attending classes in-person
  - Maintaining your overall health by eating a balanced diet

References: