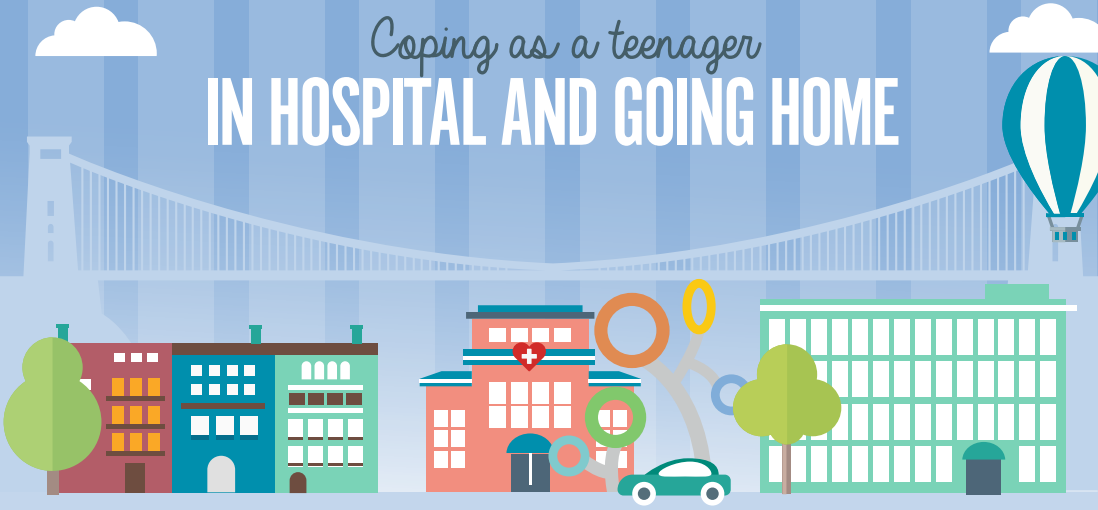


# *Coping as a teenager* IN HOSPITAL AND GOING HOME



As a teenager, you might have lots of different feelings and emotions about coming into hospital and having treatments. You might feel positive that you are getting treatments that will help you feel better and or help manage your symptoms. You might also have lots of questions and worries about what to expect while you are in hospital and when you are recovering at home. In this toolkit, you will find lots of strategies and tips about how cope if you are worried, how to keep doing the things you enjoy and staying positive whilst having treatments.



# Top tips and strategies

You might find the following ideas helpful:

1

Learn about your illness or why you're in hospital

It can help to know what to expect. Being in the know can help you feel less worried.

2

Talk

Try to not keep things bottled up; it's a lot better to talk than to stay silent. Having a good old rant or even a cry on someone's shoulder can really help to relieve the burden of feeling stressed.

3

Ask questions

It's okay to ask questions. If you are unsure about something or just want further clarification, ask a nurse or doctor to make sure you're in the know.

4

Take control

Get involved in decisions about your stay in hospital. Whether this is choosing what you are going to eat for dinner or what time you want to get up in the morning, all these choices can help you feel more in control.

5

Do the things you used to do

If possible try and continue to do the things you love to do. Keep in contact with friends, watch the latest films or listen to music – all this everyday stuff is really important and can help you feel less stressed.

6

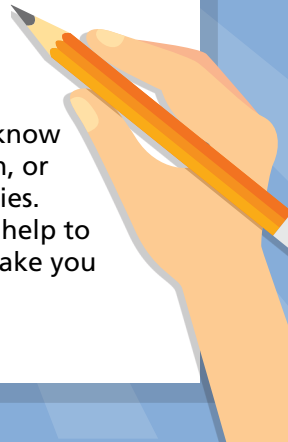
Do something you enjoy everyday

It can help to think about the things you fill your day with. Can you find time to do something that you enjoy each day, this might be connecting with friends, a hobby or spending time reading and listening to music. Try and think of the small things that lift your mood.

7

Laugh

Have a chat with someone who you know will make you laugh, or watch a comedy series. Having a laugh can help to relieve stress and make you feel a lot better.



8

### Sleep

Aim to get 8 hours a night, this can help with being able to deal with emotions and feeling well the next day. Have a look at the 'I have trouble sleeping toolkit' for some ideas that might help if you're struggling.

9

### Get creative

Throwing yourself into a project, such as creating a blog, playing the guitar or making something can really help to manage stress.

10

### Exercise

This doesn't have to be a marathon or trekking a mountain. Just getting up and moving around, whether that's a few laps of the corridor or a pool, or even just doing some stretches in bed can help to relieve the feeling of tension that comes from stress. Make sure you check with the nurse or doctor before starting exercise.

11

### You can choose your friends

Make sure you are hanging out with people who respect you and make you feel great. You don't want to be hanging out with people who make you feel stressed or embarrassed.

12

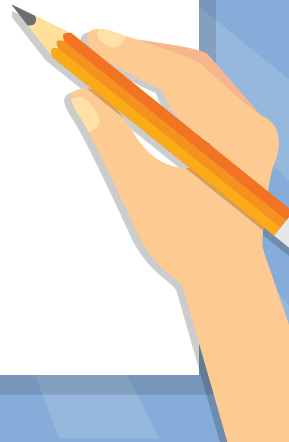
### Look after yourself

Having quality you time can help recharge the batteries and make you feel more relaxed. Pamper yourself and let yourself unwind.

12

### Get organised

Have some tasks and goals to work towards each week. Be mindful to not do too much though. Achieving targets and goals, even small ones, can help you to feel positive and manage any stress and frustrations you feel.



13 *Have a routine*

Eating, sleeping and getting up at the same time each day can help you feel more in control and make your life feel more co-ordinated.

14 *Try something new*

With more time on your hands this is a great opportunity to learn a new skill. Think about any interests or things that you would like to achieve.

15 *Treat yourself*

It's important to give yourself a break and be kind to yourself. Treat yourself to whatever will help you feel good. This could be watching a film, having your favourite food or taking part in an activity.

16 *Accept help*

Although accepting help can be tricky it can also make your life that bit easier. Have a think of things people could do

which would be helpful; this could be picking up your favourite food or bringing in a new book. Next time they ask how they can help you'll be ready!

17 *Talk to others in a similar situation*

Talking to people who are in a similar situation to you can help you feel less lonely. It can be stress relieving to talk to someone who knows what it's like. If you are in hospital there may be people on the ward going through something similar or you could find out about charities or support groups focused on your condition.



# WHAT SUPPORT IS AVAILABLE?

- Your healthcare team are there to help support you with both your physical health and other things that are going on for you. They may be able to help provide support and ideas or know of additional services in the hospital that can help you.
- Some teams have a psychologist as part of the team who you can talk to about what is going on. They will have an understanding of stress and be able to help you think and process what is going on and find ways to manage. A member of your healthcare team can make a referral.

## Links to appropriate resources

1. 'Off the Record' is an organisation that runs groups for young people, you can find out more at [www.otrbristol.org.uk/what-we-do/](http://www.otrbristol.org.uk/what-we-do/) or by texting 07896 880 011
2. Alongside this they have produced an online resource called 'The resilience lab' which can be accessed at <http://www.otrbristol.org.uk/the-resilience-lab/>
3. You might also find information on the 'NHS Go' app that you can download onto your phone.
4. <https://youngminds.org.uk/>



**These toolkits have been written by NHS clinical psychologists and neuropsychologists working for University Hospitals Bristol. They have been co-designed with service users and healthcare staff. These toolkits are only intended to provide general advice and information. Please discuss your individual needs with your doctor or specialist nurse. If you would like more information about psychology services please go to:**

**<http://www.uhbristol.nhs.uk/patients-and-visitors/support-for-patients/psychological-health-services/>**

We would like to thank patients and other healthcare staff for their contributions to this toolkit.

For access to other patient toolkits please go to the following address:

**<http://www.uhbristol.nhs.uk/patients-and-visitors/support-for-patients/psychological-health-services/resources/>**

For this leaflet in large print, audio or PDF format, please email **[patientleaflets@uhbristol.nhs.uk](mailto:patientleaflets@uhbristol.nhs.uk)**

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