HEALTH CARE

Keeping youth healthy is one of the key ways the Oregon Youth Authority helps youth build better lives.

OYA provides a centralized system of health care services for all youth in close-custody facilities.

Medical professionals are in charge of all health care decisions.

OYA offers a level of health care consistent with community standards including preventive services, education about healthy living, and assessment and treatment for acute and chronic needs.

OREGON YOUTH AUTHORITY

Our mission is to protect the public and reduce crime by holding the youth in our care and custody accountable and providing opportunities for reformation in safe environments.
Most youth who come to the Oregon Youth Authority have no primary care physician. In many cases they have not received health care in years or have received health care only from hospital emergency departments and urgent care clinics. For these youth, their first true regular health care begins when they are placed in OYA’s care and custody.

All youth receive a health care assessment when they arrive in close custody. Health care begins at intake – at Hillcrest Youth Correctional Facility (YCF) in Salem for males and at Oak Creek YCF in Albany for females. Health care professionals obtain youths’ medical histories and conduct complete physical, dental, and mental health assessments.

Youth are caught up on immunizations. Routine as well as screening blood work is done for youth based on indications, diagnoses, and risk factors; and young women are checked for anemia. Pap smears are provided for females, when indicated. An OB/GYN is on contract to provide prenatal care to pregnant young women at the Oak Creek facility. All youth receive screenings for sexually transmitted diseases.

OYA continues to provide or oversee care for all youth in close-custody facilities after intake. OYA health care staff or contractors provide medical, dental, psychiatric, and psychological health care on an ongoing basis. Medications and other treatment options are provided as necessary. If a youth experiences a medical emergency, the agency transports the youth to a local hospital for care.

Throughout each youth’s stay in close custody, OYA medical professionals stress prevention. This includes monitoring moles, teaching youth how to perform self-exams, promoting avoidance of drugs and tobacco, educating youth about oral hygiene, discussing safe sex, talking about the importance of diet and exercise, and explaining the health risks of obesity.

Youths’ medical records are entered and maintained in an electronic health record system. That system enables OYA to share information with community medical providers to allow for continuity of care when youth are released from OYA custody.

OYA pays for medically necessary health care services for youth in close custody. Once youth are paroled to community placements, the Oregon Health Plan or private insurance covers the health care they receive from local providers.